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How the Spirituality of the Resurrectionists Transformed the Cultural Environment. *The Lord's Prayer* of Father Piotr Semenenko and Feliks Count Sobański¹

COME LA SPIRITUALITÀ DEI RESURREZIONISTI TRASFORMÒ L'AMBIENTE CULTURALE.
IL PADRE NOSTRO DI PADRE PIOTR SEMENENKO E CONTE FELIKS SOBAŃSKI

Summary

The text is an attempt to present the influence of the spirituality and ideas preached by the Resurrectionist fathers on the culture and art, including architecture and the cultural environment of the Polish territories in the second half of the 19th and early 20th centuries. The postulates concerning the need to change the way society functions (towards a civil society), to work on an increase of parish structures and communities operating within local societies, as well as the thorough education of priests and the renewal of liturgical life, were of particular importance to the congregation. The change in thinking towards ideas close to those of the Resurrectionists became evident, among other things, in a tendency particularly prominent in the erection of so-called village cathedrals, or neo-Gothic churches, which became centers of community revival and raised the status of the neighborhood by providing appropriate space for the renewal of the splendor of the collective liturgy and space for educational and charitable works. Feliks and Emilia Sobański, originally from Obodówka in Ukraine, settled in Guzów in Mazovia since 1865, would consciously embrace the idea of secular involvement in the religious development of Poles, the growth of the presence of

1 The author would like to express his gratitude to Mr. Marcin Brzeziński and Mr. Michał Sobański of Warsaw for providing information on Feliks Sobański's foundation, with fragments of the Our Father prayer, and for their assistance in the preparation of this article. The foundational activities of Feliks Sobański have been a subject of interest to both men for years and are part of a large-scale revitalization project of the park and palace complex in Guzów carried out by the Feliks Count Sobański Foundation.

Christian principles in politics, economy, philanthropy, education, science and art, and thus – in the long run – the rebirth of Polish statehood. Feliks Sobański particularly profoundly experienced his faith in the context of the Lord's Prayer words, which accompanied him throughout his life and which he put into action through charitable works – he founded orphanages, shelters, hospitals, as well as places of worship – that were part of the architectural landscape of the Polish lands. His attitude derived from personal contacts with the fathers of the Resurrectionist order and benefited from Father Piotr Semenenko's lectures on the Our Father prayer. Individual invocations of the Lord's Prayer appeared on places of worship and charity founded by Sobański, including: the chapel at the Guzów palace, the chapel at the Ophanage in Guzów, above the entrance to the Classrooms for Boys in Warsaw, and on the office building of the Sobański palace in Aleje Ujazdowskie in Warsaw. The constant use of fragments of the Lord's Prayer in order to mark the buildings he founded was an extremely conscious manifestation of piety, simplicity and charity. Feliks Sobański, by placing the message in public space, would probably have assumed that it could be decoded by many, nevertheless it is difficult to identify specific recipients. The permanent (at least in assumption) inscription on the building is, or rather becomes, a permanent element of the space, assigned to carry the values contained in the inscription and influence others with them. The use of passages from the Lord's Prayer, a text fundamental to Christianity and widely known (at the time of the message's transmission), is an interesting use of *pars pro toto*, when a "part" stimulates thinking about the "whole" and a peculiar public confession of faith by Feliks Sobański, resulting from a deliberate embodiment of the Christian attitude following the teachings of the Resurrectionist fathers. It seems that the concept of marking buildings with invocations from the Lord's Prayer, applied by Feliks Sobański and Emilia Sobańska, has no counterpart in the Polish territories, as well as it has not yet been possible to point out semantically similar European realizations.

Keywords: Piotr Semenenko; Count Feliks Sobański; Countess Emilia Sobańska; Lord's Prayer; Resurrectionists; Guzów

Sommario

Il testo è un tentativo di presentare l'influenza della spiritualità e delle idee predicate dai Padri Resurrezionisti sulla cultura e sull'arte, compresa l'architettura, e sull'ambiente culturale dei territori polacchi nella seconda metà del XIX e all'inizio del XX secolo. I presupposti relativi alla necessità di cambiare il modo in cui funziona la società (verso una società civile), di lavorare su un incremento delle strutture parrocchiali e delle comunità che operano all'interno delle società locali, così come sulla formazione approfondita dei sacerdoti e sul rinnovamento della vita liturgica, erano di particolare importanza per la congregazione. Il mutamento di pensiero a favore di idee vicine a quelle dei Resurrezionisti si manifestò, tra l'altro, in una tendenza particolarmente evidente nell'erezione delle cosiddette Cattedrali di Villaggio, o chiese neogotiche, che divennero centri di rinascita delle comunità e elevarono lo status del quartiere, fornendo uno spazio appropriato per il ripristino dello splendore della liturgia collettiva e uno spazio per le opere educative e caritatevoli. Feliks ed Emilia Sobański, originari di Obodówka in Ucraina, stabilitisi a Guzów in Mazovia dal 1865, abbracciarono consapevolmente l'idea di un coinvolgimento laico nello sviluppo religioso dei polacchi, dell'aumento della presenza dei principi cristiani nella politica, nell'economia, nella filantropia, nell'istruzione, nella scienza e nell'arte, e quindi – a lungo termine – della rinascita dello Stato polacco. Feliks Sobański sperimentò in modo particolarmente profondo la sua fede nel contesto delle parole del Padre Nostro, che lo accompagnarono per tutta la vita e che mise in pratica attraverso opere di carità – fondò orfanotrofi, case di accoglienza, ospedali, oltre a luoghi di culto – che entrarono a far parte del paesaggio architettonico delle terre polacche. Il suo atteggiamento derivò dai contatti personali con i Padri dell'ordine dei Resurrezionisti e beneficiò delle lezioni di Padre Piotr Semenenko sulla preghiera del Padre Nostro. Le invocazioni individuali del

Padre Nostro apparvero nei luoghi di culto e di carità fondati da Sobański, tra cui: la cappella del palazzo di Guzów, la cappella dell'orfanotrofo di Guzów, sopra l'ingresso delle aule per ragazzi a Varsavia e sull'edificio degli uffici del palazzo Sobański ad Aleje Ujazdowskie a Varsavia. L'uso costante di frammenti del Padre Nostro per contrassegnare gli edifici da lui fondati fu una manifestazione estremamente consapevole di pietà, semplicità e carità. Feliks Sobański, collocando il messaggio nello spazio pubblico, presumibilmente supponeva che potesse essere interpretato da molti, anche se è difficile identificare gli specifici destinatari. L'iscrizione indelebile (almeno nell'ipotesi) sull'edificio è, o meglio diventa, un elemento permanente dello spazio, incaricato di portare i valori contenuti nell'iscrizione e di influenzare altri con essi. L'uso di passaggi del Padre Nostro, un testo fondamentale per il Cristianesimo e ampiamente conosciuto (all'epoca della trasmissione del messaggio), è un uso interessante della *pars pro toto*, quando una 'parte' stimola il pensiero sul 'tutto' e una peculiare confessione pubblica di fede da parte di Feliks Sobański, risultante da un'incarnazione intenzionale dell'atteggiamento cristiano secondo gli insegnamenti dei Padri Resurrezionisti. Sembrerebbe che il concetto di contrassegnare gli edifici con invocazioni del Padre Nostro, applicato da Feliks Sobański ed Emilia Sobańska, non trovi una controparte nei territori polacchi, così come non è stato ancora possibile individuare realizzazioni europee semanticamente simili.

Parole chiave: Piotr Semenenko; Conte Feliks Sobański; Contessa Emilia Sobańska; Padre Nostro; Resurrezionisti; Guzów

One of the defining qualities of artworks and architecture that contribute to the cultural environment is their anchoring in a particular time and place.² Setting aside the imprecision, or rather, the changeability of the definition itself, a work of art is almost always the result of a combination of many factors, the fundamental among which are the philosophical or ideological attitudes of its creators. Over time, its reception undergoes transformations resulting from alterations in the environment in which the item functions and in which it is decoded. Some designations will succumb to entropy, some will be hidden behind a veil of misunderstanding, but also new ones will emerge, resulting from the dynamic nature of how art objects function amongst a changing audience. One of the responsibilities of the art historian is to reflect on the primary values of an artwork through an attempt to answer the question of how it might have been created in a particular way. Following the recognition of the superficial features of a work of art, such as, among other things, the impact of other creations as sources of inspiration, the reconstruction of the chronology of the creative process, the identification of technical

2 J. Mukařovsky, *Estetyczna funkcja, norma i wartość jako fakty społeczne*, in: J. Mukařovsky, *Wśród znaków i struktur. Wybór szkiców*, selection, edition, and introduction J. Sławiński, Warszawa 1970, pp. 43-135; J. Białostocki, *Historia sztuki wśród nauk humanistycznych*, Warszawa 1980.

realities, economic factors and personal traits, there should be a consideration of the philosophical basis that conditioned it.³

Among the fields of the influence of ideas, created and proclaimed by members and supporters of the Resurrectionist congregation, is the field of culture and art in the broadest sense, which includes architecture and landscape/cultural environment. Marzena Kosińska⁴ and Janusz Hochleitner⁵ have already written about the creative artistic inspirations in the circle of the Resurrectionists; Maria Nitka⁶ and Dagny and Rafał Nestorow contributed to the topic in this volume.⁷ The following paper is a contribution to further research and is intended to present – using the individual example of the couple Feliks and Emilia Sobański – a proposal for reading their Christian attitude in the context of the activities of the Resurrectionist congregation.

The founders of the Resurrectionist Congregation postulated, among other things, the need for change in the functioning of the then existing social structures towards – today we would say – a civil society. Among such activities, also aimed at avoiding the restrictions imposed on Polish religious practices by the administrations of the partitioning states (within the doctrines of Habsburg Josephinism, Prussian Kulturkampf and Russian Tsarist autocracy and their appropriation of Panslavism), was the proposal to work on the growth of the importance of parochial structures. According to it, it was the parish that was supposed to become autonomous over time as well as the place for the creation of areas of liberty for the clergy, liturgical services, and church-based associations. At a time when centralized actions were being obstructed, enlightened representatives of the clergy and the lay state were expected to re-christianize the society through a revival of togetherness, starting with an attempt to create a parish as a “community of communities” by further strengthening this sense on a regional or national level. The

3 Roman Ingarden in 1947 wrote “even a work of architecture is never directly a real building – it always contains two layers: 1) a layer of specifically visible ‘heavy’ forms, and 2) in specific compositions or sequences of unveiling appearances” (R. Ingarden, *Spór o istnienie świata*, vol. 2, part 1, Warszawa 1987, pp. 215-216). Among extensive literature on the subject: K. Lynch, *Obraz miasta*, transl. T. Jeleński, Kraków 2011; *Krajobraz i doświadczenie*, ed. B. Frydryczak, M. Salwa, Warszawa 2020; M. Salwa, *Krajobraz. Fenomen estetyczny*, Warszawa 2021.

4 M. Kosińska, *Bogdan Jański – przyjaciel i duchowy przewodnik artystów*, speech delivered at the conference organized by the Elbląg Branch of the Bogdan Jański School of Higher Education [Wydział Zamiejscowy w Elblągu Szkoły Wyższej im. Bogdana Jańskiego] on December 7th, 2004, followed by the defense of a doctoral thesis on the subject.

5 J. Hochleitner, *Twórcze inspiracje artystyczne Bohdana Jańskiego. Przyczynek o potrzebie rozumienia sakralnego wymiaru sztuki*, <http://biblioteka.xcr.pl/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/Hochleitner-Tworcze-inspiracje.pdf> [access: 5.12.2023].

6 M. Nitka, *Program ikonograficzny i ideowy kościoła Zmartwychwstania Pańskiego*, “Facta Simonidis”, 16 (2023), no. 3, pp. 145-173.

7 D. Nestorow, R. Nestorow, *Pomiędzy Mentorellą a Paryżem. Artystyczna wizja krakowskiego kościoła Zmartwychwstańców ojca Leona Zbyszewskiego (1832-1907)*, “Facta Simonidis”, 16 (2023), no. 3, pp. 117-144.

Resurrectionists emphasized the urgent need to educate as best as possible priests, who would be capable of carrying out the new tasks of evangelization on a much broader scale than the previous model of the village priest – a provider of the sacraments could deliver.⁸ In these new times, they were supposed to be more of scholarly shepherds leading parishioners with a growing awareness of their faith. It was also important to take care of the beauty and coherence of the common experience of the liturgy, as well as the architectural, aesthetic and semantic adequacy of the space for services and evangelization. Because of the direct contacts of Fathers Piotr Semenenko and Hieronim Kajsiwicz with the precursor of the liturgical movement, Dom Prosper Guéranger, it can be stated that the renewal of liturgical life arrived on Polish territory through the Resurrectionists.⁹

It seems that this field idea implementation and particular proposals from the circle of the Resurrectionists requires consideration that would allow a proper evaluation of their impact on the cultural milieu, including art, architecture and landscape. Certainly, the appearance of the architectural phenomenon of “village cathedrals”¹⁰ in the territories of the former Kingdom of Poland in the third quarter of the 19th century had its origin also in the movement that started within the circle of Fathers Jański, Kajsiwicz and Semenenko. Obviously, in the popular opinion, which was repeatedly expressed in the aesthetic writing of the 19th century, the “village cathedral” refers in its scale and form to the ideals of the Christian faith expressed in the Gothic architecture and onward – cathedral architecture, primarily French. This model is to this day a symbol of Western European Latin civilization easily interpreted in the semiosphere. The factors influencing the popularity of such an architectural solution were also the population growth (the need to expand the size of temples) and, in parts of the Russian partition, the desire to manifest devotion to the culture of Western Europe.¹¹ Several hundred massive, brick, neo-Gothic, almost “cathedral-like” buildings, located in Polish towns and villages, were – together with their accompanying facilities and the associated religious movement – the centers of community revival. They upgraded the status of the area by adding appropriate space

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- 8 S. Urbański, *Formacja życia duchowego w ujęciu głównych przedstawicieli szkoły zmartwychwstańskiej*, Warszawa 1988; W. Mleczko, *Nauka i świętość. Formacja kapłańska w myśli i działalności zmartwychwstańców*, Kraków 2014, pp. 68-72, 346-360.
 - 9 P. Waleńdzik, *Wpływ idei Ruchu liturgicznego na sposób pojmowania liturgii przez kardynała Stefana Wyszyńskiego*, “Studia Prymasowskie”, 3 (2009), p. 250.
 - 10 J. Nowicki, *Paradoksy “wiejskich katedr”. Neogotycka architektura sakralna na prowincji Królestwa Polskiego w latach 1886-1915*, doctoral dissertation prepared under the supervision of Prof. Andrzej Pieńkos, University of Warsaw, Faculty of Arts and Culture Sciences, 2023, manuscript.
 - 11 Idem, *Gotyk polski? architektura jako narzędzie budowania granic rzeczywistych i wyobrażonych w II połowie XIX wieku*, “Politeja. Pismo Wydziału Studiów Międzynarodowych i Politycznych Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego”, 58 (2019), pp. 341-360; P. Paszkiewicz, *Rusyfikacyjna polityka caratu i jej odzwierciedlenie w architekturze i urbanistyce miasta*, in: idem, *Pod berłem Romanowów. Sztuka rosyjska w Warszawie 1815-1915*, Warszawa 1991, pp. 14-39.

for the renewed splendor of the shared liturgy and a place for educational and charitable works or, at the beginning of the 20th century, for scouting and sports movements. Bogdan Jański was one of the firsts to indicate the necessity of active engagement of the religious individual in the transformation of social life through bearing witness in the establishment of various associations and societies.¹² The active apostolate was meant to lead the believers to the Kingdom of Heaven by attempting to build the Kingdom of God on earth as much as circumstances allowed. The significant change, resulting primarily from the proposal to implement Christian personalism,¹³ was the recognition of the potential of the nobility, intelligentsia and working class both in the countryside and in the city, and encouraging them to take responsibility for the matters of the Church. According to the historian of spirituality in Poland, Karol Górski, from the end of the 19th century until the outbreak of World War II, almost the entire Polish religious life was influenced by the Resurrectionists.¹⁴ Among the people who consciously and wholeheartedly embraced the idea of secular involvement in the religious development of Poles, the growth of the presence of Christian principles in politics, economy, philanthropy, education, science and art, and thus – in the long run – the rebirth of Polish statehood, were undoubtedly Feliks and Emilia Sobański. I recall their example because of architectural achievements, deriving directly from the pillars of Resurrectionist teaching: permanent spiritual and intellectual formation, ecclesiality and community, as well as patriotism.¹⁵

Feliks Sobański,¹⁶ son of Ludwik¹⁷ and countess Rozalia née Łubieńska,¹⁸ nicknamed – because of her achievements – “Rose of Siberia” [“Róża Sybiru”] or “Clerical Rose” [“Róża duchowna”], was born in Ladyzhyn (now Ukraine) in 1833. After studying in

12 B. Micewski, *Zagadnienie laikatu u Bogdana Jańskiego*, “Resurrectiana”, no. 2, Poznań 1972; J. Grabowski, *Misja chrześcijan świeckich w myśli i działalności Bogdana Jańskiego*; W. Gulczyński, *Świeccy w Kościele i świecie – wizja apostołstwa świeckich według Bogdana Jańskiego*, “Zeszyty Historyczno-Teologiczne Zmartwychwstańców”, 6 (2000), no. 6, pp. 93-106.

13 Among others: E. Mounier, *Personalizm. Przystępne wprowadzenie w świat osoby*, in: idem, *Wprowadzenie do egzystencjalizmów oraz wybór innych prac*, ed. J. Zablocki, transl. E. Krasnowolska, Kraków 1964; J. Maritain, *Podmiotowość człowieka*, transl. J. Fenrychowa, Kraków 1988; S. Kowalczyk, *Wprowadzenie do filozofii J. Maritaina*, Lublin 1992; K. Wojtkiewicz, *Personalizm św. Tomasza z Akwinu w “Traktacie o człowieku”*, Olsztyn 1999, pp. 579-613; B. Smolka, *Narodziny i rozwój personalizmu*, Opole 2002; W. Słomski, *Duch personalizmu*, Warszawa 2008.

14 K. Górski, *Genealogia religijności polskiej XX wieku*, “Znak”, 9 (1957), pp. 266-283.

15 They were synthetically characterized by: W. Mleczko, *Nauka i świętość*, pp. 367-375.

16 S. Konarski, *Sobański Feliks Hilary Michał Ludwik (1791-1837)*, in: *Polski słownik biograficzny*, vol. 39, ed. H. Markiewicz, Warszawa-Kraków 1999, pp. 422-423.

17 W. Śliwowska, *Sobański Ludwik*, in: *Polski słownik biograficzny*, vol. 39, pp. 411-414.

18 Eadem, *Pierwsze organizacje pomocy dla więźniów i zesłańców syberyjskich w zaborze rosyjskim (ośrodek wołyńsko-podolski pod patronatem Ksawery Grocholskiej i Róży Sobańskiej)*, “Przegląd Historyczny”, 78 (1987), no. 3, pp. 411-449; R. Sobańska, *Pamiętnik rodziny Łubieńskich ofiarowany rodzeństwu przez Różę z Łubieńskich Sobańską*, Warszawa 1851.

Odessa, he successfully administered the large family estate with centers in Obodówka and Wasylówka.¹⁹ Following the example of his closest family, he engaged in social, philanthropic, and political activities. The latter resulted in his imprisonment – as a person “aiming to detach parts of his province from the Empire” – in the Peter and Paul Fortress in St. Petersburg. In 1856 Feliks Sobański purchased the Guzów estate, located in the Łowicz district, and several months later married Emilia née Łubieńska, of Łubna.²⁰ The Sobański couple decided to move their main residence to Guzów only in 1865:

Feliks Sobański inhabitant of the Obody estate in the Olgopolsky district of the Podolsk Governorate, with an application dated April 21st [May 3rd] of this year, submitted two excerpts from the land registry of the Guzów estate in the Łowicz district of the Warsaw Governorate, requesting the legalization of these acts, which were to serve the applicant to obtain permission for him to relocate from the Empire to the Kingdom.²¹

The request was granted and the owner of Guzów settled there together with his wife Emilia, sons Michał and Kazimierz and daughter Wiktoria.²² In 1866 Sobański was formally inscribed, along with his family, in the permanent population registry books of the Guzów municipality.²³ From that time on, he became involved in the activities of the Polish community in Warsaw and the Guzów area, and at the end of his life, in the Polish colony in Paris. In 1886 he handed over the estate to his son Kazimierz. Kazimierz, managing a powerful estate, did not forget about his duties to society and often followed in the footsteps of his father: he was a member of the boards of the Society for the Care of Historical Monuments of the Past, the Society of Agricultural Settlements and Craftsmen's Settlements,²⁴ the Society for the Care of Impoverished Mothers and Their Children, the Hospital in Skierniewice, the Agricultural Circle of the Błoński District, the

19 The estate counted circa 9,000 “souls.”

20 The wedding took place in the Warsaw church of the Holy Cross 30/09/1857.

21 The Central Archives of Historical Records in Warsaw [further as AGAD], ref. 1/196/0/-/4689a: “O Przesiedleniu Feliksa Sobańskiego z Imperium do Królestwa Polskiego”, copy of the record 6/18 May 1865 no 4980, no 5422, Dyrektor Główny Prezydujący Wydziału Cywilnego do Kommissya Rządowa Sprawiedliwości do Ministra Sekretarza Stanu Królestwa Polskiego w Sankt Petersburgu, pp. 1-2r.

22 AGAD, ref. 1/196/0/-/2966: “O Przesiedleniu Feliksa Sobańskiego z Imperium do Królestwa Polskiego”, copy of the record 9/21 September 1865 no 6523, M.S.S.C.P. do Sekretarza Stanu przy Radzie Administracyjnej Prezydujący Wydziału Cywilnego do Kommissya Rządowa Sprawiedliwości do Ministra Sekretarza Stanu Królestwa Polskiego w Sankt Petersburgu, pp. 1-2r.

23 AGAD, ref. 1/196/0/-/2966: “O Przesiedleniu Feliksa Sobańskiego z Imperium do Królestwa Polskiego”, A copy of the letter from the Secretary of State to the Administrative Council to the Minister of the Secretary of State of 15-27 April 1866, no 9184, pp. 3-4v.

24 “Rocznik Towarzystwa Osad Rolnych i Przytulców Rzemieślniczych”, Warszawa 1872-1920.

orphanage for children of employees of the Guzów estate.²⁵ The whole family remained in extremely close contact with Jadwiga née Sobańska's son, Michał Piotr Radziwiłł, who resided in neighboring Nieborów, and who was considered an art connoisseur and a man of many talents, who probably contributed to Sobański's artistic initiatives. The deep participation of Michał Piotr Radziwiłł²⁶ and his wife in the life of the community of religious people can be evidenced by the fact that after their deaths it was considered to initiate their beatification processes.

The testimony of the Sobański couple's social and religious commitment is preserved in correspondence addressed to Michał Piotr Radziwiłł. On December 9/22, 1900, Michał Sobański wrote a letter from Obodówka to Michał Piotr with Christmas wishes:

When one expects and looks forward to the arrival of the savior, when one strives with one's heart for Bethlehem, what comes to mind are those who not only with words, but with deeds and with their whole lives cry out to Heaven: Thy Kingdom come [...]. One cannot think of Bethlehem without thinking of Nazareth [a play on words referring to the Warsaw shelter "Nazareth" – P.J.], and with this blessed name yours also comes to mind.²⁷

The reference to the line of the *Lord's Prayer* is characteristic of the experiencing of the faith of both Feliks and his sons: not just reciting the words of the prayer, but putting them into action and validating them with their whole lives. This attitude seems to derive precisely from Feliks Sobański's personal contacts with the fathers of the Resurrectionist order, and, in this regard, from his knowledge of Father Piotr Semenenko's lectures on the *Our Father* prayer. While they were published in 1896, the nine lessons "presenting the thought of God and the Wisdom of God included in this Divine prayer"²⁸ were published for the first time more than thirty years earlier in the pages of the then influential "Poznań Review" [Przegląd Poznański],²⁹ which in the 19th century no other equaled "he

25 S. Konarski, *Sobański Kazimierz Maria Franciszek (1859-1909)*, in: *Polski słownik biograficzny*, vol. 39, pp. 427-428.

26 This is evidenced, for instance, by the correspondence stored in AGAD, The Radziwiłł Archives of Nieborów [further as ARN], ref. 1/355/0/2/976; Letters from Feliks and Michał Sobański to Michał Piotr Radziwiłł.

27 AGAD, ARN, ref. 1/355/0/2/53: Correspondence package. Letter from Michał Sobański to Michał Piotr Radziwiłł, Obodówka, 9/22 December 1900, c. 55.

28 Citation from the imprimatur note of Father Józef Sobierajski, included in the publication of the work: P. Semenenko, *Ojciec nasz*, Kraków 1896.

29 *Ojciec nasz (ciąg nauk O. Piotra Semenienki)*, "Przegląd Poznański", 32 (1861), pp. 1-21, 33 (1862), pp. 133-163; see also W. Misztal, *Znaczenie zjednoczenia z Chrystusem według o. Piotra Semenienki*, in: *Sluga Boży o. Piotr Semenenko CR i zmartwychwstańcza szkoła duchowości*, ed. W. Misztal, W. Mleczko, Kraków 2011 (Duchowość Klasztorów Polskich: Przekaz i Komunikacja, vol. 3), pp. 49-63.

level of comprehensive substance and the elitist intellectual character.”³⁰ The extensive considerations dedicated to the relatively short text of the prayer demonstrate its richness, intricacy and the consequences for the Christian of reciting, receiving and assimilating it. In the understanding of Father Semenenko, aware of and appreciating earlier studies of the Lord's Prayer, these lessons are a contemporary program for the permanent rediscovery of its depths given for new times. The impact of these teachings on the *Lord's Prayer* is impossible to overestimate, if only because they are taught to Polish seminarians in Rome and used by many religious congregations and seminaries on Polish territory.

Feliks Sobański had been maintaining contacts with the Resurrectionist Order since his stays in Paris and Rome. Presumably, these took place as early as 1880, when on September 7th he received the hereditary title of Count from Pope Leo XIII. The papal document recorded at the time:

from serious and by all means trustworthy testimonies, we have concluded that you and your family, famous since your grandfathers and ancestors, prosperous in numerous goods, value highly a special devotion to piety and religion, graciousness towards the poor, obedience to the Most Holy See of Peter, and are recommended to the highest praise of all virtues. We have therefore come to this deliberation, that we should honor such qualities and excellent merits of yours with an exquisite title passing also to your descendants, which would be for you and your descendants a sign of permanent papal kindness.³¹

From an analysis of his biography and achievements in social, religious, educational and patriotic fields, it is evident that his attitude was the realization of the ideals proclaimed by the Resurrectionists and the fulfillment of the tasks they designated for the laity.

We only know of a few letters from Feliks Sobański addressed to the General House. One of them, written in Cracow, informs about a family event (his son's wedding on February 5th, 1889), but mainly concerns scholarships for clerics departing to study in Rome.³² According to Stanisław Konarski, Feliks Sobański's biographer, over the years the count had sponsored residencies for several students from the Polish territories. Most of the clerics presumably went to the Polish College run by the Resurrectionists. We also know that he would regularly make annual, large contributions to the General

30 C. Lechicki, *Polskie czasopiśmiennictwo katolickie w latach 1833-1914*, “Kwartalnik Historii Prasy Polskiej”, 20 (1983), no. 1, pp. 19-42.

31 Archivum Apostolicum Vaticanum [further as AAV], ref. Sec. Brev., Reg. 5771: Breve of Leo XIII granting Feliks Sobański and his sons Michał and Kazimierz the title of Papal Counts, pp. 253r-257v.

32 Archives of the Congregation of the Resurrectionists in Rome [further as ACRR], Laici no 51109: Letter from Feliks Sobański to father Walerian Przewłocki, Cracow, 24/01/1889.

House,³³ and visited the headquarters at least several times, including in 1893, when he participated in a thanksgiving Mass organized by the Resurrectionists in the basement of the Basilica of Santa Maria Maggiore to mark the 50th anniversary of being ordained by Holy Father Leo XIII. Years later, however, he took the initiative to re-gather the Polish Nation in Rome and repeat prayers for a similar intention, for example at the tomb of St. Peter the Apostle, in the Mamertine Chapel or the church in via San Sebastianello.³⁴ According to the family memoirs, the Sobańskis had a fixed annual schedule: “the route always remained the same: Vienna, Carlsbad, Naples, Rome, Paris, Warsaw and return to Podolia – in July.”³⁵

There were also other representatives of the Sobański family in close relations with the Resurrectionists. Rozalia (Róża) Sobańska, Feliks Sobański’s mother, remained in direct contact with Father Walerian Kalinka, to whom, before her death, she confided materials relating to her campaign to support the Siberian exiles. The distinguished Polish historian called her activities “the truly golden books of the Polish pilgrimage.”³⁶ In the 1830s, Bogdan Jański and Aleksander Jełowicki were frequently approached by Izidor Sobański, for whom the Roman Resurrectionists arranged exequies following his death in Paris in 1847.³⁷ Father Piotr Semenenko, Father Aleksander Jełowicki and Father Hieronim Kajsiewicz were associated with: Hortensja Jełowicka née Sobańska, Seweryna Izidorowa Sobańska née Potocka, Wiktoria Sobańska née Orłowska, Ludwika Sobańska née Wodzicka,³⁸ and Ewelina Juliuszowa Sobańska née Bogusz.³⁹ The influence the latter had on the functioning of the congregation and her generosity towards it was so substantial and recognized that the Junosza coat of arms was placed in the presbytery of the temple on the most prominent stained glass window with the image of the Risen Christ, next to two others – the coat of arms of Pope Leo XIII and the coat of arms of

33 ACRR, Laici no 51110.1: Letter from Feliks Sobański to an unknown Resurrector, Warsaw, 02/05/1884; Laici no 51110.2: Letter from Feliks Sobański to an unknown Resurrector, [s.a., s.l.].

34 ACRR, Laici, no 51110.3: Letter from Feliks Sobański to father Paweł Smolikowski, Rome, 12/03/1902.

35 *Marii z Grocholskich Hieronimowej Sobańskiej wspominki nikle*, ed. B. Riss, Grodzisk Mazowiecki 2002.

36 W. Kalinka, *Z Syberii. Z papierów Róży Sobańskiej*, “Przegląd Polski. Pismo poświęcone polityce i literaturze”, 15 (1881), vol. 2, pp. 3-59, 213-273; vol. 3, pp. 406-455.

37 A.A. Zięba, *Sobański Izidor (1791-1847)*, in: *Polski słownik biograficzny*, vol. 39, pp. 424-426.

38 In the late 19th century, Ludwika Sobańska née Wodzicka advocated for painter Stanisław Pstrokoński, who needed help during his stay in Rome, with a letter from Obódka. See ACRR, Mulieres no 56366: Letter from Ludwika Sobańska née Wodzicka to an unknown Resurrector, Obodówka, 16/09/1891.

39 Ewelina Sobańska (née Bogusz) got married around 1840 to Juliusz Sobański, who was a distant relative of Feliks Sobański. Unfortunately, very little is known about the history of the marriage. Ewelina presumably influenced the arrangement of the general chapel and was also heavily involved in the construction of the temple on San Sebastianello. It is probably her very figure – in the entry “Mrs. Sobańska” – appears repeatedly on the pages of the majority of correspondence between the founding fathers and the Superiors General. Her contacts with the Resurrectionists are also confirmed by the inscription on the mass utensil tray given to Father Piotr Semenenko, which is stored in Rome at the General House.

Roch III Przeździecki – alongside an inscription of great significance “...BENEFACTORUM CONGREGATIONIS...”. I am convinced that further archival research will make it possible to clearly show her figure against the background of other lay benefactors of the congregation.

After his father's death, Michał Sobański, who felt that he was the heir and successor of his father's charitable works, also pursued contacts with the monks. During World War I, he was extremely proactive in this field among the Polish emigration in Russia, and after Poland regained its independence, he joined the wave of transformations. During the extremely financially difficult year of 1921, Michał Sobański – as president of the Piotr Skarga Society⁴⁰ (based in the Archbishop's Palace in Warsaw) – was seeking support for an initiative to develop Catholic writing in Poland. The Society's idea was to establish two newspapers with editorial boards in Warsaw: one for the capital, the other distributed all over Poland. In a letter to the Superior General of the Resurrectionists,⁴¹ he addresses “the undoubted merits of the order, which contributed to the obtaining of the Miracle of the Resurrection of Poland” and the urgent need to resist the flood of Protestant propaganda coming from America to Poland. According to him, the financial support from the American Catholics through the order of the Resurrectionists “would be in accordance with the providential mission of the order and would be, as it were, an Apotheosis, of the services provided to the country.” The reply from Rome came rather quickly. It tempered the hopes of the Society's president for support regarding funding of the dailies, but also announced the immediate arrival of the superior in Warsaw, during which a meeting between the two was to take place.⁴²

Feliks and Emilia Sobański, during more than 50 years of their marriage, were involved several times in organizing institutions and erecting buildings serving purposes of worship and charity.⁴³ They renovated the temple of St. Michael the Archangel in Obodówka,⁴⁴ most likely also the chapel in Czeczelnik,⁴⁵ as well as the burial chapel in the cemetery in Wiskitki (the facility currently accommodating the mortal remains

40 The Piotr Skarga Society in Warsaw was active until 1936. Societies under similar names also functioned in Lviv and Cracow.

41 ACRR, Laici no. 51111: Letter from Michał Sobański to Superior General, Warsaw, April of 1921.

42 ACRR, Laici no. 51112: Letter from Superior General to Michał Sobański, Rome, 21/05/1921.

43 AGAD, ref. 1/227/0/3/4689a: Records of securing clerical funds on the Guzów estate. Commitments relate to a number of churches including the church in the New Town in Warsaw. NN., *Z karty zasłużonych. Feliks br. Sobański*, “Kronika Rodzinna”, 1901, no. 20, pp. 390-392.

44 The Church of St. Michael the Archangel in Obodówka (former Braclaw Province), founded in 1822, consecrated in 1850 operated in the second half of the 19th century as the main church of Feliks Sobański's estate in Podolia.

45 The chapel in Czeczelnik (former Braclaw Province), built in neo-Gothic style circa 1845, served as the Sobański family tomb, and after 1917 also as a parish church. In 2018 it was renovated thanks to the efforts of Michał Sobański and after reconstruction was brought back to service.

of more than 80 people).⁴⁶ In 1873, Feliks financed the expansion of the church of All Saints and Stanislaus the Bishop⁴⁷ in Wiskitki, and between 1894 and 1895 the local parish house and vicarage. It is possible that the temple's stained-glass windows were made in Innsbruck upon his request, as evidenced by the choice of images of the patron saints of his sons Kazimierz and Michał together with heraldic elements.⁴⁸ He also contributed to the furnishing of the parish church as its patron.⁴⁹

In 1878 Feliks Sobański, as the owner of several hundred parcels of land in Ruda Guzowska (now Żyrardów),⁵⁰ granted a site for the construction of a temple. He also co-financed an architectural competition for the design of the church, organized by the Society for the Encouragement of Fine Arts [Towarzystwo Zachęty Sztuk Pięknych]. This enormous "village cathedral", in a way evident even to a layperson, referred to the church of St. Michael the Archangel and St. Florian the Martyr in Warsaw's Praga district.⁵¹ On August 17th, 1901, the bells cast in Antoni Włodkowski's workshop in Węgrów were consecrated in Żyrardów. One of them was financed by Feliks Sobański, which was evidenced by an inscription placed on the instrument: "I PROCLAIM THE GLORY OF THE NAME OF THE SOBAŃSKI FAMILY: FELIKS, EMILIA, KAZIMIERZ, MARJA, MICHAŁ, MARJA" [GŁOSZĘ CHWAŁĘ IMIENIA SOBAŃSKICH: FELIKS, EMILIA, KAZIMIERZ, MARJA, MICHAŁ, MARJA].⁵²

In 1898, the St. Augustine's Church in Warsaw was to be adorned with three altars⁵³ funded by Feliks Sobański, among which only the main one was realized. The marble mensa, probably made in Naples, had the inscription: "FELIKS ET AEMILIA SOBAŃSKI MISERICORDIAM DEI SPERANTES A. 1898."⁵⁴ The later expanded altarpiece was decorated with marble sculptures associated with the Neapolitan workshop

46 M. Brzeziński, *Kaplica grobowa Łubieńskich i Sobańskich na cmentarzu w Wiskitkach*, foreword M. Sobański, T. Łubieński, A. Dziuba, Warszawa-Guzów-Wiskitki 2020.

47 Witold Okrasa, *Największy skarb Wiskitek*, Warszawa 2023, p. 12.

48 Suggestion included in the study of Danuta Czapczyńska-Kleszczyńska, *Witraże w kościele parafialnym w Wiskitkach*, the Parish Archive in Wiskitki.

49 Witold Okrasa, *Największy skarb Wiskitek*.

50 K. Matuszewski, *O architekturze u obcych i u nas. Uwagi ze stanowiska estetycznego*, "Biblioteka Warszawska", 3 (1881), p. 393.

51 K. Zwoliński, *Zakłady żyrdowskie w latach 1885-1915*, Warszawa 1979, p. 197.

52 Institute of Art Polish Academy of Sciences (further as IS PAN), Corpus Campanarum Poloniae, file Żyrardów.

53 The State Archive in Warsaw (further as APW), ref. 72/202/0/vol. XI, p. 300.

54 The same inscription is at the base of the altars in the palace chapel in Guzów dated 1894, and the chapel of the paralytic refuge in Nowowiejska Street). A similar inscription is placed on the communion tin dated 1907 – the 50th wedding anniversary of Felix and Emilia S) gifted to the chapel in Guzów: "Felix et Emilia Sobański Misericordiam Domini Sperantes 1897".

of Francesco Jerace. They include the Holy Family, St. Felix de Valois, St. Teresa of Avila⁵⁵ and two sculptural groups designed for the side altars: St. Anna teaching the Blessed Virgin Mary and St. Monica teaching St. Augustine.⁵⁶

The chapel erected at the Sobański residence in Guzów, however, is the closest to the teachings of Father Semenenko, who undoubtedly inspired Feliks Sobański. It was built in the 1890s during the modernization of the palace. It was designed in neo-Gothic style by architect M. Meyer,⁵⁷ and was executed by a Viennese construction company (with the participation of the Warsaw architect Władysław Hirszel), which introduced relatively minor changes, mainly of the layout.⁵⁸ The chapel's vocation of St. Felix de Valois refers to the patron saint of Guzów's owner. The façade includes a bas-relief with a depiction of the Holy Trinity, and an inscription above it: "OUR FATHER WHO ART IN HEAVEN HALLOWED BE THY NAME". Inside, until the renovation conducted in the 1990s, the inscription painted on the beam structure was visible: "THY KINGDOM COME," while below, on the bronze door to the tabernacle, featured an image of Jesus behind the table, on which half a loaf of bread was shown, and below was engraved the inscription "GIVE US THIS DAY OUR DAILY BREAD." According to an unreliable oral account by the locals, within the chapel there was also a plaque with the inscription: "FORGIVE US OUR TRESPASSES AS WE FORGIVE THOSE WHO TRESPASS AGAINST US."⁵⁹ Outside the building, on the axis of the presbytery, there is a bas-relief (designed in 1895) depicting *Christ quieting the storm on the lake* by Maria Gersonówna, accompanied by the inscription; "DELIVER US FROM EVIL AMEN". Thus, we are dealing here with a homogeneous architectural structure, into which – as intended by the founder and owner – were interwoven verses of the *Lord's Prayer*, transforming the building into a living prayer.

Against the wall of the building that used to serve as an orphanage or hospital for the local community, located near the palace (now 1 Ogińskiego St.), stood a type of

55 W.A. Szota, *Serce Muranowa. Odzyskane dzieje kościoła św. Augustyna na Nowolipkach. 1622-2022. 400 lat Nowolipia i Nowolipek*, Warszawa 2022, p. 109.

56 Currently in the Church of the Visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary in the New Town in Warsaw.

57 Г. Васильевич Барановский, *Архитектурная энциклопедия второй половины XIX века*, С.-Петербург, 1904, vol. 4, pp. 43-44, and published in Paris, edited by P. Planat "La construction Moderne", 12 (1886-1887), p. 30, tabl. 5-7.

58 The cornerstone was consecrated in 1892, the chapel in 1894.

59 This information could not be confirmed in situ or through archival records. The inscription with this passage of the *Lord's Prayer* was placed more than one hundred and twenty years after the construction of the palace chapel above the entrance to the temple dedicated to Blessed Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński, newly erected by the Sobański family. Description of the foundation process included in the speech of Mr. Michał Sobański delivered on October 8th, 2023, during the consecration ceremony of the church: *Konsekracja nowego kościoła w Guzowie – 8.10.2023*, <http://palacwguzowie.pl/aktualnosci/konsekracja-nowego-kosciola-guzowie-8-10-2023/> [access: 5.12.2023].

architectural chapel decorated with a bas-relief of the *Prayer of Jesus in the Garden*. It was crafted by the artist Sławomir Celiński, a Cracow native, who was active for many years in the nearby Nieborów.⁶⁰ The inscription “THY WILL BE DONE ON EARTH AS IT IS IN HEAVEN,” incorporated this site into the code of the inscribed idea (*Écrire l'idée*). It was part of a larger entity, including several other locations of the sender's activity, affecting a much larger audience than just the residents of Guzów.

In 1905, in Bartniki near Skierniewice (the Radziwiłłs' train station), Feliks and Emilia founded a church as a votive offering for their fifty years of marriage. The temple, built over two years following designs by the Cracow architect Teodor Talowski, was consecrated in 1907. Two years later, along with adjacent buildings, a forest, farmland and a meadow in the village of Grabie, it was donated to the Congregation of the Resurrection of Our Lord Jesus Christ (CR). This was formally completed only in 1920 thanks to Michał Sobański, the founders' son, who officially invited priests from the congregation of the Resurrectionists to minister in Radziwiłłów, handed over the parish church along with the buildings, 30 morgens of field and forest to the order.⁶¹ The Archbishop of Warsaw, Aleksander Cardinal Kakowski, by decree issued on November 29th, 1922, established the parish by the church of St. Antoni Padewski under the same name, and on the first day of 1923 placed it under the perpetual administration of the Congregation of the Resurrection. The first administrator of the parish was Father Stanisław Grycz.⁶²

Another foundation was the St. Roch's Shelter for Paralytics in Warsaw (now 10a Nowowiejska St.), initiated in 1875. On August 16th, 1876, the cornerstone of the building and a chapel belonging to it was laid.⁶³ It was maintained by Feliks Sobański⁶⁴ and further expanded over time.⁶⁵ Since 1919, the shelter was officially run by the Felician Sisters as the Count Sobański's Shelter for Paralytics,⁶⁶ named after St. Roch. Its tympanum

60 A. Melbechowska-Luty, *Celiński Sławomir*, in: *Słownik artystów polskich i obcych w Polsce działających. Malarze, rzeźbiarze, graficy*, vol. 1, Wrocław 1971, p. 123.

61 ACRR, Laici no. 51111, Letter from Michał Sobański to Superior General, Warsaw, April 1921; ACRR, Provinciae Polonia. Documenti et Epistolae, 1909-1948, Novitiate in Radziwiłłów, no. 64675-64676.

62 M. Gorożankin, *100-lecie parafii św. Antoniego w Radziwiłłowie Mazowieckim*, “Gość Łowicki”, 2023, no. 2, 15.01.2023, <https://lowicz.gosc.pl/gal/pokaz/8017151.100-lecie-parafii-sw-Antoniego-w-Radziwil-lowie-Mazowieckim/51> [access: 5.12.2023].

63 “Przegląd Lekarski”, 1876, no. 135, p. 39.

64 AGAD, ref. 1/247/0/3/7617: Ob otkazach w polzu prijuta dla paralitow imieni [Fieliksa] Sobanskago. (About the donations to the shelter for paralytics named after Feliks Sobański.)

65 “The construction of a new three-story residential wing in the building of the Feliks Sobański paralytic shelter on Nowowiejska Street has been completed. The construction was carried out through small donations and company savings and thanks to this the facility will accommodate a dozen more residents” (“Kurier Warszawski”, 1897, no. 191, p. 4).

66 M.P. Lenart, *Prowincja Krakowska Niepokalanego Serca Najświętszej Maryi Panny Zgromadzenia Sióstr Felicianek*, vol. 2: *Leksykon domów*, part 5: *Strzyżów-Żółkiew*, Kraków 2004, pp. 157-161.

features a bas-relief of the Healing of the Paralytic, while the establishment's premises are decorated with a large bas-relief made in 1897 by Maria Gerson Dąbrowska⁶⁷ (the daughter of painter Wojciech Gerson), depicting a scene of Christ calming a storm on a lake, identical in composition to the bas-relief from the palace chapel in Guzów.⁶⁸ The plaster piece probably served as a model for the the Guzów bas-relief and later decorated the interior of the Warsaw institution. Today, charitable activities are continued by the Special Institution for the Chronically Ill (Blessed Hanna Chrzanowska Hospice) in Warsaw, still run by the Congregation of the Sisters of St. Felix of Cantalice. Within short distance from the facility was a Home for Single Women and an Orphan Shelter (then 32 Nowowiejska Street), also endowed by the Sobański family.

In close vicinity of the buildings mentioned above, the Sobańskis maintained a Classroom for Boys, located on what was then Kaliksta Street (now 17 Braci Jana and Jędrzeja Śniadeckich St.), a so-called Showroom, with the capacity to accommodate 300 people, and a spacious courtyard where facilities for physical development were placed.⁶⁹ It was an institution for both religious and physical education temporarily co-existing or co-run by the order of the Dolorist Brothers to whom Feliks Sobański made a donation.⁷⁰ In the supraporte of the entrance from the courtyard to one of the building complex⁷¹ was placed a bas-relief depicting Jesus standing on a rock and a naked bearded man facing him, kneeling on his right knee. Unfortunately, the work is in a poor state of preservation, and it is left only to speculation whether the elements behind the male figure's back are fragments of wings or other parts of the scene. The iconography of the representation could then be interpreted as one of the scenes of the temptation of Jesus. Beneath the composition is the inscription "LEAD US NOT INTO TEMPTATION." Both the scene and the quotation refer to the charitable work conducted there, aimed at saving young orphans from the dangers lurking in the big city.

Another Warsaw charitable work initiated by Feliks Sobański was the Institution of St. Stanislaus the Bishop and Martyr at 11 Syreny St., established for the Felician Sisters

67 E. Szańkowska, *Gerson-Dąbrowska Maria Józefa*, in: *Słownik artystów polskich i obcych w Polsce działających. Malarze – rzeźbiarze – graficy*, vol. 2, Wrocław-Warszawa-Kraków-Gdańsk 1975, p. 316.

68 Gerson's work survived the wartime destruction. During the communist period, it was to be removed, but the determination of Mr. Jan Kamiński, the supervisor of a neighboring construction site, saved the work. Kamiński cut the bas-relief and transported it in pieces to Falenica. Thanks to the commitment of many people, it returned to Nowowiejska Street in 2014.

69 "Kurier Warszawski", 1914, special 355, 24.12.1914, p. 2.

70 The Dolorists, a habitless congregation initially founded by Honorat Koźmiński under the name of the Congregation of the Sons of Our Lady of Sorrows, after 1918 functioned as the Educational-Protective Society "Future" [Przyszłość].

71 Until 1916 it was named Kaliksta. Marian Olszewski's gymnastic institute operated here, then the activities of the Congregation of the Sons of Our Lady of Sorrows (Dolorists) were located here, conducting from 1918 the Gymnasium and High School under the activities of the Educational Society "Przyszłość".

in 1907. Four years later, Michał Sobański erected a new building there, housing an orphanage and a School for Children of Workers.⁷² The building's façade included sculptures depicting St. Felix, St. Teresa and St. Antoni – patron saints of Michał and Ludwika's three children: Felix, Teresa and Antoni Sobański.

A few kilometers away, on the impressive Aleje Ujazdowskie street in Warsaw, on the wall of the left outbuilding of the Sobański palace⁷³ and visible from the street, was placed another stone bas-relief depicting Jesus performing the miracle of the multiplication of bread and an inscription on the border: "OUR DAILY BREAD." It was probably related to the charitable function of the building.

Meanwhile, in Kyiv, the Sobański family founded the "Nazareth" – an orphanage for several hundred Polish children, run by sisters originating from the Family of Mary founded by Archbishop Zygmunt Szczęsny Feliński, and operating at the time as part of the Congregation of Franciscan Missionaries of Mary. It is highly probable that it was modeled on an institution bearing the same name and functioning in Warsaw's Praga district.⁷⁴ In the Kyiv church of St. Nicholas, the Sobański family funded marble sculptures, most likely commissioned from the aforementioned atelier of Francesco Jerace in Naples,⁷⁵ and also equipped the Children's Eating House, located on a plot of land next to the church.⁷⁶ Together with their son Michał, they were made honorary members of the Kyiv Roman Catholic Benevolent Society.⁷⁷ The Sobańskis' activities in Kyiv, as well as in Podolia, remain only partially recognized at this stage of research.

"Every written message also falls into the basic minimal scheme of the communication act, which includes three elements: the sender, the receiver and the message."⁷⁸ In this case, we are faced with a specific sender, driven by the ideas indicated above. Piotr Krakowski noted and analyzed the way building façades functioned in the 19th century, when

façade arrangements appealed not to visual impressions, but to conceptual knowledge. The popularity of judging one's spiritual qualities on the basis of appearances

72 Z.B. Szlęzak, *Prowincja Warszawska pod wezwaniem Matki Bożej Królowej Polski Zgromadzenia Sióstr Felicjanek 1922-1972*, Warszawa 1988, pp. 5-6, 18.

73 The palace was purchased by Emilia Sobańska, née Łubieńska, and reconstructed in 1876 according to the project of Leandro Marconi.

74 Józef Unger's 1914 calendar directly reports that Feliks Sobański supported the Nazarets in Warsaw and Kyiv, *Józefa Ungera Kalendarz warszawski popularno-naukowy ilustrowany na rok 1914*, Warszawa 1914, p. VI.

75 I would like to thank Mr. Marcin Brzeziński for the information on the two sculptures.

76 "Kijów i Wieś", 29 (1905), no. 43-45, 11/24.11.1905, p. 13.

77 M. Korzeniowski, *Za Złotą Bramą. Działalność społeczno-kulturalna Polaków w Kijowie w latach 1905-1920*, Lublin 2009, p. 76.

78 Anna Chudzik, *Inskrypcje w przestrzeni miejskiej. Studium pragmatyngwistyczne (na przykładzie napisów krakowskich z lat 2003-2005)*, Sanok 2010, p. 93.

[...] favored the fact that façades, too, were seen as groups of signs that formed messages about the investors and users of the building.⁷⁹

The façade was the hallmark of the owner or user and referred directly to him or to the activity conducted in the building. Therefore, the careful selection of a particular quote, motto, adage, proverb, prayer invocation sentence, was almost as important as the choice of style or architectural costume, the selection of building materials and decorative detail. Through such endeavors, the building became, according to Krzysztof Pomian's definition, a semiophore that complements space and place.⁸⁰ As a consequence, it introduces a discourse, being able not only to complement, but also to transform them.

When placing the message in public space, Feliks Sobański must have assumed that it could be decoded by many recipients, but it is nevertheless difficult to identify specific addressees. The permanent (at least in assumption) inscription on the building is, or rather becomes, a permanent element of the space, entrusted with the role of transferring the values contained in the inscription and impacting others with them. The use of excerpts from the *Lord's Prayer*, a text fundamental to Christianity and known (at the time the message was broadcast) universally, is an interesting use of *pars pro toto*, when the "part" stimulates thinking about the "whole." This method engages the viewer-receiver in completing the whole prayer. According to some biblical scholars, this very action was used by the dying Jesus on the cross, chronicled by the evangelists as the invocation "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" This verse, familiar to most religious Jews, would therefore be a clear indication to understand the Passion in the context of the following verses of Psalm 22.⁸¹

In the case of the inscriptions commissioned by Feliks Sobański, the choice of the alphabet and the language of the message is also significant, which makes us confront an intentional distinction and, at the same time, the exclusion of part of the recipients. In our case, the privileged recipient is a Polish-speaking person (while Russian-speaking people were excluded), and in the reality of the times – with primary ties to the Christian religion. Undoubtedly, the entire encoded message, complex, geographically and chronologically vast, was possible to be recognized and understood by family members and close acquaintances. It can therefore be interpreted as an action deriving from the long tradition

79 P. Krakowski, *Fasada dziewiętnastowieczna. Ze studiów nad architekturą wieku XIX*, "Zeszyty Naukowe Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego. Prace z Historii Sztuki", 12 (1981), no. 16, p. 58.

80 K. Pomian, *O porównywaniu historii*, in: *Historia. Nauka wobec pamięci*, transl. H. Abramowicz et al., Lublin 2006, p. 97.

81 P. Labuda, "Eloi, Eloi lema sabachtani" (Mk 15,34). *Modlitwa Jezusa Psalmem 22*, in: *Kogo szukasz? (J 20,15). Księga Pamiątkowa dla księdza profesora Henryka Witczyka w 65. rocznicę urodzin*, ed. W. Chrostowski, M. Kowalczyk, Warszawa 2021, pp. 369-382.

of the nobility's realization of *sibi, (Deo) et posteritati*⁸² endeavors. As far as we know, there are no written programme statements about this autonomous concept associated with the Sobańskis' foundations. The inscriptions in Guzów or Warsaw had a local audience, consisting of the occupants of the respective buildings, their neighbors or merely pedestrians, who – when reading yet another inscription – did not suppose that it could correspond with a different one, placed in a different location. The case described here is akin to public confession, a transfer of ideas through architecture and supported charitable acts, including an apostolic call for continued Christian growth, addressed both to those living at the time of the establishment of the institutions, buildings and accompanying inscriptions and artistic decoration, as well as to future generations. The concept of decorating buildings with invocations from the *Lord's Prayer*, applied by Feliks Sobański (and Emilia?), seems to have no counterpart in the Polish lands and is the result of a thoughtful Christian attitude according to the teachings of the Resurrectionist fathers.

Feliks Sobański died on November 29th, 1913, in Paris.⁸³ The pamphlet prepared by the family announcing his death included the meaningful phrase: “The Lord's Prayer was always on his lips. It was the life of his soul and the soul of his life.”⁸⁴ The then commentator from a Warsaw's newspaper supplemented: “There would have been no social frictions and feuds if the wealthy had fulfilled their duties to the poor” and “he knew how to be an evangelical landlord of his estates.”⁸⁵ Several months after his death, the body of the deceased was transferred to Obodówka. During the burial ceremony, Ludwik Paczkowski spoke on behalf of the officials, who emphasized Feliks' role as an employer: “To thousands he gave work at his place – bread. With thousands he shared his daily bread.”⁸⁶ A Polish-language newspaper coming out in Kyiv quoted an inscription on Feliks Sobański's tombstone, arranged by his son and heir, which summarizes the role of the *Lord's Prayer* in the life of the deceased:

“OUR FATHER,” he called out, trustingly and humbly.
As he heard the Savior's encouragement,
Churches he erected and earned with finery,
So that they proclaimed Thy Holy Name.

82 Such a position has been discussed, among others, by A. Betlej, *Sibi, Deo, posteritati. Jabłonowscy a sztuka w XVIII wieku*, Kraków 2010.

83 Pamphlet – obituary of Felix Count Sobański, 1833-1913, <https://onebid.pl/pl/dokumenty-felix-hr-sobanski-1833-1913-ziemianin-dzialacz-spoeczny-i-charytatywny-filantrop-byly-marszalek-braclawski/1415762> [access: 5.12.2023].

84 Memento of Feliks Sobański's funeral, pamphlet from the collection of Michał Sobański.

85 NN, *Zgon dobroczyńcy* “Biesiada Literacka”, 1914, no. 1, 2.01.1914, pp. 15-16.

86 J. Soplica, *Obchód Żalobny w Obodówce*, “Kłosy Ukraińskie”, 1 (1914), no. 7-8, pp. 27-29.

For himself hard, he gilded fate to others,
Through the "Sursum Corda" endures hard toil,
The hospital, the shelter, his every work,
Wore the emblem: Thy kingdom come.

Rebellion – the trait of the weak. He was strong in faith
Surrender to the will – the steel armor,
So, when the hour of sacrifice struck,
He spoke: Thy will be done.

And with hard work, work in sweat,
Our daily bread he begs,
And God's gifts lovingly around
Wisely divides and generously shares.

Forgives guilts, pays good for the evil,
By prayer he fights every temptation
And with wise counsel teaches younger brothers,
That in the cross alone lies our salvation.

In the Lord's prayer had such confidence,
So, save him, Lord!
Those whom he loved and enriched with labor,
May through the Our Father they repay his debt.

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IS PAN, CCP (Corpus Campanarum Poloniae), teczka Żyrardów.

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Fig. 1. Guzów, Façade of the Chapel of St. Felix de Valois.
Photograph P. Jamski, 2020.



Fig. 2. Radziwiłłów, Façade of the Church of St. Anthony of Padua.
Photograph P. Jamski, 2022.



Fig. 3. Guzów, Tabernacle of the Chapel of St. Felix de Valois.

Photograph P. Jamski, 2020.



Fig. 4. Guzów, Apse of the Chapel of St. Felix de Valois.

Photograph P. Jamski, 2020.



Fig. 5. Warsaw, Aleje Ujazdowskie 12, Sobanski' Palace, Junosza coat of arms in the fence of the property.

Photograph P. Jamski, 2022.