

POLONAISE



STORY OF A DANCE

R. Cwieka-Skrzyniarz

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POLONEZA CZAS ZNOWU ZACZAĆ

Dedicated to the Idea of Poland and to the Ideals of the Old Rzeczpospolita

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*To The Lovers' Of Beauty In An Age Of Vulgarly, Incivility And
Aesthetic Ignorance, This Book Is Dedicated*

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This book was an outgrowth of our first volume, *The Great Polish Walking Dance*, published in 1983. The first book began in 1969 as a mere collection of dance steps. As that collection grew, it became necessary to apply analytic principles to the material and also to take a Historical approach. This work continued and expanded into the present new volume.

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A NOTE TO THE READER

The main topic of the book is the Dance and its performance—this is covered in detail.

Other considerations such as the Historical Context, clothing styles, etc., are secondary to the purpose of this book. We have only given mere introductions to these peripheral subjects.

Persons interested in further study of these topics will find them readily available elsewhere.

ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATIONS

Many of the illustrations are from the books of the following authors : Banach, Gutkowska-Tychlewska, Łoziński, Rameau, and Turnau. The drawings are those of the present author who wishes your forbearance for their amateur quality.

ABOUT THE WORD-PROCESSING

Here and there throughout the text you will come across certain discontinuities, for example, capital letters in Polish where there should be none or excessive page gaps. These are due to using different language softwares, and the author's lack of word-processing expertise. This does not effect the content.

R. Cwięka-Skrzyniarz

**ALL QUOTATIONS FROM ORIGINAL SOURCES ARE
INDICATED WITH QUOTATION MARKS AND ARE
PRINTED IN ITALICS. THE AUTHOR'S TRANSLATIONS
ARE NOT.**

PART I

THE HISTORY

THE EARLIEST RECORDS

The Polonaise is the Queen of Dances or the Dance of Queens.

This restatement of what was originally said of the Minuet may be true or it may be false or it may be both. In any case, the reference to Royalty was stated in order to express something Noble or Spiritual about this Dance, the Polonaise—one of the world's most Beautiful Social Ballroom Dances.¹ We shall explore the living story of this Dance.

This walking-type dance² is perhaps the best known by the World as having some connection with Poland and or Polish Culture. There are a number of variants that will be distinguished by us. Its most permanent features have been (and still are), a walking done by any number of couples of men and women. As a walking dance, it is usually done at a slow tempo. The attitude of the dancers is one of mutual respect for each other, with the men exhibiting aspects of positive gallantry.

About the origin of this dance, it is difficult to speak with absolute certainty. Searching for the early history of this dance two aspects must be considered—records of its music and its choreographic structure. A number of theories or ideas which have been put forth concerning the origin of this dance are listed below:

- a) That the dance was first done as a parade in cadence before the newly elected King of Poland, Henry III of Anjou, in 1574.
- b) That it was French in origin, since the name Polonaise is French.
- c) That it is of Spanish-Arabian in origin.
- d) That it is not a native Polish dance.
- e) That it was a native dance of the Poznań region.

The five above possible origins are contained in the English language works of one, Mr. Schimmerling.³ There are two main questions here that are raised and repeated by many

¹ Among the Beautiful Living Social Ballroom Dances we include the Viennese Waltz—which is the Most Beautiful?

² The author has not chosen to use any of the known terms, e.g. “Polonaise,” “Polonez,” “Chodzony,” which are usually associated with this dance-type in the title, as it is the aim of this study to show that these names designated a certain specific variation of the more general notion of a walking-type dance. Often one encounters the term “Chodzony” for a walking-dance. However, it will be shown that the Chodzony was and is, generally speaking, surrounded by a particular environment. The term “walking-type dance” is thought of as a matrix, that is, a general scheme or model which will produce specific examples or instances of dances which are related, but different enough one from another.

³ See Schimmerling, *Folk Dance Music of the Slavic Nations* (New York: 1946).

researchers. The issue is simple to ask. Was the Polish Walking Dance native to Poland, or is it a foreign borrowing?⁴ The first four represent the side of foreigners—the last (stated negatively), that of a Polish origin.⁵ Being explicit, most modern Polish researchers hold that the dance is:

native in origin and identify it with a still existing dance called the Chodzony.

We will present the evidence for these viewpoints. Both have their adherents: there is some truth on both sides. Our problem is to determine as best we can whether the truths contradict one another. We shall use both a chronological and subject scheme of presentation. We shall cover the period from the 16th century up to our time. The subjects shall include an analysis of music (for listening and dancing), and choreography as contained first in foreign sources, then in Polish sources.

*i Foreign Sources*⁶

The first appearances of Polish Dance “*in Europe in manuscripts and printed books*” occurred as early as the middle of the 16th century.⁷ The first was in 1544. Various terms used to denote these so-called “Polish Dances” were Polnischer Tantz, Tanec Spolski, Chorea polonica, Baletto Polonoise, Saltus polonicus, Legjel Tantz.

Although these dances are named, for example in Slovak, Hungarian, German, Italian, and Swedish manuscripts as “Polish Dances,” that, per se, is not evidence enough that in fact they were unique Polish Dances of the time. The very term itself “Taniec Polski,” which we translated into “Polish Dance,” as grammatically singular, occurred only in the works written by foreigners or in the collections recorded or printed outside Poland for the period 1550-1750. We shall see that this is not completely true, but substantially so.

Research on the period from 1550 to 1730 has thus far uncovered about 1,500 examples of “Polish Dances” in these foreign sources. This is a huge amount. Especially so since during this same period none of these so-called “Polish Dances” appeared in the Polish Commonwealth! This certainly seems to be a puzzle. The puzzle can only be explained by detailed investigation of how, and by whom, the term “Polish Dance” was used outside of the Commonwealth. As we might have expected, these foreign “Polish Dances” were written in the countries that bordered upon the Commonwealth. The four areas, which contain the majority of the so-called “Polish Dances,” are the Germanic, the Swedish, the Czech, and the Slovak.

Most of the Germanic records come from the areas of active Germanic colonization in Slavic lands, namely, east of the Elbe River and on the Southern coast of the Baltic.⁸ The Carolingian Empire was hemmed in “*by a solidly Slav bloc east of the Elbe.*”⁹

⁴ As the reader may well appreciate, Nationalistic Feelings abound in questions of this type. It is extremely difficult for most people to divest themselves of the raging fires of Emotional Nationalism. People in our modern historical times so easily identify with a Nation-State group/culture, that prenationalistic history is inconceivable to them. Cultural borrowing and interchange are the rules of history—not isolation. A short time ago, it was thought that there were such things as a completely isolated Black-Africa, Japan, or Medieval Europe. Our Earth, from the earliest times, was criss-crossed by trade and travel routes! In Cultural matters, it is never the origin of a thing that matters, but rather what is done with it!

⁵ Immediately we have an additional problem of deciding which Poland? Poland, as with all other countries, has gone through many changes in its history. Poland of the 15th century is not the same as Poland of the 20th century: neither are the People. This will be discussed in greater detail later on. More to the point, Poznań, during the era 1793 until 1918, fell under Prussian-Germanic rule. This represents only ten percent of the historical time that Poznań was considered Polish. We suppose Mr. Schimmerling let his nationalistic feelings get the better of him.

⁶ We chose the foreign sources first because they represent opinions that have reached to the corners of the earth, whereas the opinions of modern Polish dance researchers, are not well known. This is a problem for all small countries without a first-rate military power potential. Political power counts in Cultural matters.

⁷ Zofia Sęszewska, *Saltus Polonici, Polonoises, Lengjel, Tantzok* (Warszawa: 1970), p. 38. All direct quotations are indicated by quotation marks and italics. Everything else are translations.

⁸ This fact was mirrored also in the German army of WWI and WWII which contained a large number of Slavic descendants, both in the ranks and as officers, most of whom came from what is now known as “East Germany.” This is

By the 16th century the Germanics wore down the Slavic population and culture also to the Elbe. However, in the Western Oder River region, and in Northern Poland, the Slavonic population had not yet been eradicated. Many of the rulers of “German” principalities and duchies in this region still had an active Slavic-Polish blood line, besides containing large populations of Slavs, Poles, and mixtures of Germano-Slavs and Germano-Poles.

The most important “Germanic” center for our purposes is the Śląsk and Northern Poland regions. Here German-speaking local composers wrote, not only for their courts, but also for the townspeople. Because of the heavy Slavic-Polish contingent in these colonial towns, composers used Polish rhythms, melodies, or the title “Polish Dance.” This was popular music. Polish words and melodies were also used by German ecclesiastical institutions, especially so during the Reformation, in order to attract the Polish people.

Swedish music of the 17th century contains the second largest collection of “Polish Dances.” However, here the case is opposite to that of the Germanic one, for the “Polish Dance” was written for the Swedish court and upper classes. This came about because of the high political contacts between the Swedish and Polish Courts which at one time were unified—at least in theory.

It may be said that the mutual sharing of the upper class Central East European culture of this time was accelerated by the political conflicts in this area. Sigismund II was the Polish King from 1587-1632. In 1592, John III, King of Sweden, died and left the Swedish throne to Sigismund IV, who was his relative. This embroiled Poland in Swedish politics for a half century. The practical results were Swedish invasions of Poland, and cultural interchange. Stęszewska notes:

. . . that Polish dances
in their used [Social] form
spread, for example,
to Sweden and Hungary
already by the second half
of the 17th century.

“ . . . *ze tańce polskie
w swej użytkowej formie
rozpowszechniły się np.
W Szweji i na Węgrzech
już w II połowie
XVII wieku.*”¹⁰

The Swedes were not uniformly greeted as enemies. Various political factions in the Commonwealth wanted to use Swedish power to achieve their own ends. Thus these people, who were of the upper class, they greeted the Swedes as friends and treated them as guests. Their homes were open to the Swedes who attended the usual round of Polish upper-class parties, balls, and feasts. By the time the Swedes had physically left Poland, they took home with them the rhythm of the Polish dance, the Mazur, as well as the title: “Polish Dance.”¹¹ In the Swedish Musical records there are no examples of Polish peasant dances, for example there are no Krakowiaks, even though they were in that area. This strengthens the view that

analogous with America for geographical areas. As early as 798 Slavic tribes were allied with Charlemagne. Prince Trasco of the Obotrites received Hamburg and its western area from Charlemagne for military services rendered. Incursions onto the primary Germanic lands still occurred 200 years later. “*The Slavs were still invading from their land of the Elbe.*”, Eleanor Dirckett, *Death and Life in the Tenth Century*. (Ann Arbor: 1970), p. 122. Slav culture aside, there has been, and is, a strong Nordic racial strain among the “Polish-Slavs”. The Germans had various plans on how to extirpate Poland – besides murder. In a memorandum written in 1943 by a Dr. Gollert he pointed out that, “. . . *we consider that nearly all Germans east of the Elbe have some Slav touch (cf.[compare] the cheekbones of the German population east of the Elbe). After all, ‘Prussianism,’ which no doubt has been of the greatest importance for the state and folk development of our Reich, is a mixture to a large extent of Teutonic and Slav elements. This combination—in the light of centuries—has turned out to be favorable; hence, a renewed blood mixture of valuable Slav Poles with the German population is not to be condemned.*” From Max Weinreich, *Hitler’s Professors*, (New York: 1946), p. 182. Had Hitler realized this, then modern history, certainly Polish History, could have been quite different. On the other hand a recent study states that, “. . . *certainly there is no question that the Early Slavs constituted a separate race of people.*” P. M. Barford, *The Early Slavs*, (New York: 2002), p. 27.

⁹ Geoffrey Barraclough, *The Curcible of Europe* (Berkeley: 1976), p. 18.

¹⁰ Zofia Stęszewska, “Z Zagadnień Historii Poloneza”, *Muzyka*, (Warszawa: 1960, #2-17), p. 87.

¹¹ The word “Polska”, as a name for a dance, appeared in a Swedish source in 1651.

the Swedes contact¹² with the Poles was not with the lower classes, but only with the upper class.

The Czech and Slovak cases are a mixture of both upper and lower class contact with the Commonwealth. In Slovakia there is a strong component of Hungarian influence also.

The Hungarian-Polish connection is a strong instance of a more general bond among the Historical Peoples of Central Europe. This was a bond between the upper classes. In those pre-nationalistic times, it is more proper to speak of a common East Central European Cultural Sphere for the upper classes with a common set of values and lifestyle. They understood each other. The Czechs, Saxons, Russians, Poles, Swedes, Austrians, Ruthenians, and Lithuanians, all shared political leaders and cultural tastes. One noteworthy example was the Hungarian prince, Stephen Batory, who was elected King of Poland in 1576.

According to the work of Zofia Stęszewska, the music of the region was overwhelmingly in 2/4 time. A 3/4 time is foreign to this area—but it is a Polish time by 1700.

At the beginning of the 18th century the musical records for this region show some dances called “Polish Dances,” but also dances called “Hungarian Dances,” which are written on a Mazur rhythm.

The recent work of Karol Hławicka suggests that a walking dance was very popular in this area, since out of 408 melodies 131 are of this walking dance type.¹³ From a study of sources contained in a 15th century library, Karol Hławicka claims to have discovered the origin of the walking dance in anonymous music from the area of Cieszyń. These “Cieszyńskich Polonezów” (Cieszyń Polonaises) are genuine folk music, according to him.¹⁴

Thus it appears at this point that the Polish Walking Dance Type is closely connected with a folk-peasant-rural peoples dance in the period of the 16th and 17th centuries. Indeed, surveys of 19th century village music of the Cieszyń Region by Mr. Hławicka, show that 57% of all the dances were just this slow Walking Dance called “Wolny.” In fact, this “Wolny” is the most popular dance in all the Śląsk area.

The traveling of the titles “Polish Dance,” took about a century and a half, and may be summarized in the following outline.¹⁵

1550	Śląsk, Western Commonwealth
1550-1600	Northern Polish Coast
1600-1700	Across Baltic to Sweden, further up along the Coast,
1700	Carpathians

The term “Polish Dance,” in foreign sources, was used in a number of different ways. Either a Polish melody was used, or music had some connection with a group of Polish people or society or a Polish composer (residing outside the Commonwealth), or simply a rhythm from Poland has been copied, or some elements thought to characterize Polish music were composed into a “Polish Dance.”

¹² There may have been a different sort of contact with Swedes which involves a Polish Dance. A secondary source relates the following story. “In 1506 Samuel Laczynski, a distinguished soldier and courtier, was in attendance at the wedding of King Sigismund I of Poland to Princess Bona Sforza of Milan in Cracow, which was the capital of Poland. According to contemporary chronicles, this colourful knight fought a duel with a visiting Swedish envoy who dared to make fun of some intricate figure in a traditional Polish dance. Samuel, known for his fencing skills, first engaged his opponent quite gently but, once wounded, lunged forth with such fury that he cut off the Swede’s head with one stroke . . .” As we shall learn there are no intricate figures of the Polish Dance of this study. This could have been an early form of the Krakowiak Dance of which there is an early mention of “crab-like steps.” Christine Sutherland, *Maria Walewska*, (New York: 1979), p. 16.

¹³ Karol Hławicka, *Tance polskie ze zbioru Anny Szirmay-Keczer* (Warszawa: 1963), p. 27.

¹⁴ In Karol Hławicka’s newspaper article “Na Składach Starych Polonezów,” *Gwiazda Polarna* (Stevens Points, Wisconsin, February 17, 1971), p. 16.

¹⁵ Zofia Stęszewska, “Renesans i Barok jako Okres Wykształcania się cech narodowych w tanecznej muzyce Europejskiej,” *Pagine* (Warszawa: 1974).

All of these different word usages have been hidden under the title, “Polish Dance” from 1550 to 1730. Up to now, people have thought that the term “Polish Dance” denoted one type of Polish dance, namely the same dance as the late 18th, 19th, and 20th “Polonez.”

According to Zofia Stęszewska’s work, this is not the case. The most devastating piece of evidence for her view is that all of these “Polish Dances” are in 2/4 time, whereas the true Polish Walking is in 3/4 time! During the 200 years or so that “Polish Dance” appeared in Europe, they conformed to the general European mode at that time of slow dances done in 2/4 time.

Yet one cannot believe as startling a conclusion as Zofia Stęszewska’s earlier works present. She then turned to examining the influence of folk dances upon court music and dances of the time period in question.¹⁶ The main result of this research is that in order to identify an ethnic or national dance one needs both the melody and the rhythm. Unfortunately at this time in European musical notation, the rhythm was not given. However, the main conclusion of this work is that court dances use the “and” count which precedes a measure of music, whereas folk dances do not.

This apparent subtlety developed because of the growing sophistication in terms of aesthetic needs of European Courts. And this “and” beat is used for 3/4 time dances, which brings us to our concern. When did 3/4 time arise in Poland? When did 3/4 time arise in Europe?

At the beginning of the 18th century in Poland, there are definitely identifiable records of the Mazur rhythms (a 3/4 rhythm), including one with the “and” beat—the Court Form. This division had to develop slowly. Zofia Stęszewska places the 3/4 rhythm in the 17th century (1626). This also implies that the Court dance was based upon a folk form. Near the end of his life Karol Hławicka reported that he uncovered the Polish Mazur rhythm in melodies sung by Polish Protestants in 1558¹⁷ as well as among the melodies of Czech Hussities. As stated in the present work, Mr. Hławicka thinks that both the Mazur and the Polish Walking Dance originated from the Śląsk region, which bounds the Czech region. It must be pointed out that “rhythm” is not “tempo.” Although there was 3/4 music, the speed or tempo at which the dance is to be done is lacking. Thus we have from 1626, at least, either a Mazur rhythm, or the Polish Walking Dance rhythm.

It has been held that 3/4 time music arose from 2/4 music. But this was caused by the various usages which foreigners put to the term “Polish Dance.”

It was precisely this mixing of the rhythms of their European dances with a Polish element by foreign composers that led so many early dance scholars to point to a European origin for this and other Polish dances. This is natural enough since these scholars knew European musical rhythms, elements, and forms better than they did the Polish counterpart.

In our present case, a Spanish origin was sought for the Walking Dance. Two examples of such an origin were supposed to be the Bolero and Fandango.¹⁸ This origination was deduced by making a comparison of rhythm and accent. These dances are similar in meter: 3/4 time with an accented marching character. However, these comparisons were made in the 19th century using the contemporary form of the Polish Walking Dance, which we shall see has undergone at least 100 years of development.

In the older scholarly literature the opinions of the Swedish musicologist, Tobias Norlind, are influential. Norlind also worked exclusively from tablature music. His view is that:

“In the second half of the 16th century Polish dances were introduced into Germany. Subsequently, German composers began to write dances in Polish style, which

¹⁶ Stęszewska, “Renesans i ... , p.39.”

¹⁷ Karol Hławicka. “Przenikanie i wzajemne wpływy elementów muzycznych polskich i czeskich w folklorze cieszyńskim,” *Z Zagadnień Folkloru Muzycznego Na Śląsku Cieszyńskim*, (Katowice: 1977), p. 18.

¹⁸ Schimmerling picked the Bolero and Karol Kurpiński, a noted Polish dance composer, chose the Fandango. Kurpiński stated this opinion in the periodical *Tygodnik Muzyczny*, (Warszawa: 1820, no. 11).

*appeared under various names such as choreo polonia, polsche dantz, taniec polski, ballet polonais, la polanaise, polonese, polonessa, polonaise. Most of these dances were in two parts, the first in double time, the second in triple time. . . the first part of the dance became the Polonaise.”*¹⁹

As has already been stated, the first half of the above question is in doubt. Tobias Norlind’s analysis is usually associated with the medieval musical term “porportio,” and his theory may be called the Porportio Theory. The musical manuscripts and tabulatures were divided into the two parts. Part I was in 2/4 rhythm, part II in 3/4 rhythm. In time, the two parts developed after their own fashion as is indicated below.

Part I	2/4	Polish Mazur
Part II	3/4	Polish Walking Dance

However, as pointed out above, it is the second part that contains dance rhythms for all of Europe. Examination of the so-called Polish dances in the 3/4 Proportie reveals rhythms of the Galliard, Courante, Volta, Chaconne, and Sarabane among others. Thus it was easy to claim that these dances fathered the Polish Walking Dance.

The basis for the view, held by earlier scholars, of a foreign origin of the Walking Dance, was based only on the similarity of musical phrase endings: that is to say, only upon an examination of a single measure. In effect, these scholars hold that one could make a judgment about a dance by examining a measure of music! This is stated as being the case by the musicologist Paul Nettle. However, he does state—but without presenting any evidence—that there was a phrase ending which was peculiar only to Poland in the 16th-18th centuries, and that this is supposed to be the origin of the Polonaise.²⁰

How a phrase ending is supposed to bring into being a complete musical phrase or that which comes logically prior is not stated. Zofia Stęszewska took a sensible modern approach. She examined not only endings but also what she terms “ethnic phrases,” which is a musical unit of more than one measure. This phrase is not only a more complete unit, but it is also a dancer’s unit—what a person would dance to. It is easier to dance consistently to a long phrase, than to one measure of music.

Zofia Stęszewska’s recent research leads her to state that:

*“There is no reason to support the opinion that the dance are emancipated Porporties.”*²¹

This puts to rest the claim that the origin of the dance was exclusively foreign. We are left with either a pure native origin, or a mixed origin. Our question remains. When did 3/4 time dances arise in Europe and in Poland? The earliest records indicate the year 1702 in Northern Poland!²² The composer was Iohan Fischer who published his piece in Hamburg, but who spent six years working all along the Polish Northern Coast! When the rest of Europe was still 2/4 timing the “Polish Dance,” he wrote his in 3/4 time. Since we are now in Northern Poland we may now consider the Early Polish Sources and then the 18th Century Commonwealth Records. Incidentally, while all these pieces of music are called “Dance” or “Dances,” there is not one shred of evidence that they were actually danced to. This “Dance” music is contained in music books written for the lute or other small stringed instruments—usually called Tabulature music. The contemporary upper class European mode for

¹⁹ Schimmerling, *Folk Dances...*, see the Polonaise section. Tobias Norlind stated this theory in 1911.

²⁰ Paul Nettle, *The Story of Dance Music* (New York: 1943), p. 267. The use of Zofia Stęszewska’s unit phrase examination was explained to the author during personal interviews in 1972.

²¹ Stęszewska, “Renesnas i ...”, p. 39.

²² Zofia Stęszewska, “Polonica z Okresu od XVI do Początku XVIII wieku w Zbiorach Muzycznych Północnych Ziem Polskich,” *VI Ogólnopolska Konferencja MuzykoLogiczna*, (Gdańsk: 1972).

tabulature music at this time was music for listening and playing. This is not to say that one could not dance to this music, only that the function of tabulature music is that of artistic listening.

While it appears that Polish dances appeared throughout Europe in tabulature form, the most expert analysis reveals that this music has little to do with any recognizable Polish dance. The music is of different rhythms, melodies, and form. The name “Polish Dance” has little real connection with Poland: it is only a geopolitical connection.

ii Early Polish Dance Records

Early Polish dance records include musical tabulatures and dance descriptions from diaries. Listed below are the names of Polish and foreign dances contained in the literature of townspeople and the upper class. The period covered in from 1495 to 1650.²³

Polish Dances

Goniony, Cenar, Plesne
Cielace, Music, Gesie
Skoczne, Pomorskie
Chłopskie, Cynary
Świeczkowy, Mieniony
Śpiewany, Kowal
Niemiec, Taniec Polski
Hajduk, Lipka, Fortunny
Maciej, Konrad, Młyński
Taniec Wielki
Taniec Mały, Mikas
Wyrwany, Obertasy

Foreign Dances

Italian
English
Pavan
Saltarella
Galliard
Pergameska
Passamezzo
Curant
Russian dance
March
Guella belle

Among the Polish dances above the “Goniony” occurs most often in this time period. Concerning the choreography of these dances, we have only fragmentary descriptions. Swiecznikowy was a game dance done with the dancers carrying lighted candles, and chasing each other.²⁴

Of more importance to us are the entries “Taniec Wielki” and “Taniec Polski,” which are described as walking dances.²⁵ These terms refer not to Polish dances, but to a single type of dance—“The Great Dance,” and “The Polish Dance.” The term, “taniec polski”²⁶ shall increase in usage and come to denote a specific type of dance.

. . . ‘taniec polski’ in the
17th century was known

“. . . ‘*taniec polski*’
wieku XVII znany był

²³ Zofia Stęszewska, “Z Zagadnień Staropolskiej Muzyki Tanecznej,” *Z Dziejów Polskiej Kultury Muzycznej*, (Kraków: 1958), p. 247.

²⁴ This could be the origin of the German royalty dance, “Frackeltanz,” which was used to celebrate weddings. “It was a torchlight promenade wherein the bride and groom exchanged partners so that everyone could dance with the bride and groom. Throughout this entire dance the Polonaise step was done.” Gaston Villier, *A History of Dancing* (New York: 1848). The last time that this dance may have been done was on May 22, 1913, when Prince Ernest Augustus was married to Princess Victoria Louise. “*The highlight of the wedding day was not the actual ceremony but the centuries-old Torch Dance, which always concluded nuptials at the Prussian Court.*” Virginia Coweles, *1913* (New York: 1968), p. 77.

²⁵ In 1660 Łukasz Gołębiowski, “Gry I Zabawy,” *Zwyczajy I obyczaje Polaków*, Vol. 8, (Warszawa: 1830). In 1669, Jan Pasek, *Pamiętniki* (Warszawa: 1955), p. 296.

²⁶ We shall now leave the Polish terms, untranslated, in context. The context shall indicate what these “technical terms” mean. From now on, important data in the Polish language will appear above with a side-by-side translation, thus providing a source book in Polish Dance.

by other names.

pod inna nazwa."²⁷

It is for this reason that one encounters the statement that the "taniec polski," "taniec wielki," "pieszy," "wolny," "powolny," and "chmiel" designate one and the same dance—an early walking dance. It is Zofia Stęszewska's considered opinion that these terms designate the ceremonial walking dances of the peasant class of the 17th century Poland.²⁸

It is only toward the close of the 16th century that foreign dances begin to appear. This coincides with Poland's so-called "Golden Age" of the late Renaissance and Reformation. This was brought about by increasing contacts with Western Europe, one result of which was the wholesale adoption of European manners and entertainment by the ruling classes. It is again important to point out that the use of foreign dances and manners is an indication of one's so-called "sophistication." This "cosmopolitanism"²⁹ is usually spearheaded by that class of people, which has the most free time and money—usually the upper classes of any given society. Within any given class the most cosmopolitan members are its most alienated members, that is the most rootless, the least substantial members of that class having done little and having nothing to lose: they are society's radical segment.³⁰

The enduring problem of how, when, and what caused the peasant dance to spring into existence always remains in the background. This cannot be answered directly because the peasant illiterate class cannot leave records of non-material things. We must therefore depend upon written observations, and these are so scant that one cannot make any inferences one way or the other. The most we can say is that the music existed in the 16th century.

However, if we turn our attention to the upper classes which does leave records (it writes its own history), we can say some things, though not about the absolute origin of an early dance.

In turning to the Polish Upper Class, we must investigate the entire structure of Polish Society within the time period of our interest. This is necessary because the dance or dances done reflect the character of a class, as well as that of the class's self image. The self-image and class-characters are the "selectors" of dances, and also change dances. This is the mechanism that produces variations of a type.

²⁷ Zofia Stęszewska, "Z Zagadnień Historii Poloneza," p. 88.

²⁸ Perhaps not so much Poland, as of the Central East European and Slavonic peasant class, whose dances are characterized by some as the circling of the entire community. Many 19th century writers maintained that this peasant form was derived from old Slavic rituals.

²⁹ We place these terms in quotation marks because these are evaluative terms that are capable of different interpretations. Thus, the quotation marks indicate a warning to the reader. There is another side to this, however. If the adoption of "foreignness" is an experiment for artistic merits or cultural understanding, that is good. If it increases or enhances a person's sense of beauty of morality, then it is self-justifying. In order to do this one must know one's own background inside out. One must have exhausted all the possibilities of one's native culture before searching for something else. The evil of cosmopolitanism is that it is simply a mindless pursuit often of what is ephemeral and "fashionable," without substance. It is "culture" for the bored.

³⁰ Zofia Stęszewska, "Z Zagadnień Staropolskiej ...", p. 225.

POLISH SOCIETY AND THE SZLACHTA

Now we shall turn to the structure of Polish society in regard to its character as revealed in its politics, customs, and manners. Polish society, up until rather recent times, was a Gentry Society, similar in certain respects to 19th century England and the American South. However, as distinct from the English case, Poland-Lithuania was *not* a hereditary kingdom. As a matter of fact, this gentry structure, more or less, continued for over 200 years without a king. It was this Gentry Society that held Poland-Lithuania together. This was unlike other states which were held together by loyalty to a dynasty of rulers, such as the Hapsburg monarchy in Austria.

As has been recently pointed out “class” is not the proper term to use in describing pre-modern Poland-Lithuania. A more accurate term is “caste.” For castes economic status is not as important as is custom, as is heredity or the law. Somehow “castes” came into existence and their existence is taken for granted. Their function in society defines the “caste.” Any social-economical feature is secondary to the “function-of-the-caste.” Caste has more of a human-social meaning than an economic one. “*The social estates were defined by their intended function within society.*”³¹ It is only with the rise of Industrial Poland that the modern understanding of the term “class” can be applied to Poland.³²

The main division in Polish-Lithuanian society was between the landowners-defenders of the country and the workers. In our case, the workers were overwhelmingly agricultural workers. The landowner-defender caste was, and is, known as the “Szlachta” caste.³³ They either owned their land, which peasants worked on, or they held their land in fief in a semi-feudal relationship.

Opinions differ as to their numbers. In 1791, 8% of the population were of the Szlachta caste, while in Western Europe it was 2% at most:

At the end of the 18th
century every 6th Pole
was a Szlachta.

“*W końcu wieku XVIII
co szósty Polak
był szlachcicem.*”³⁴

³¹ N. Davis, *God's Playground*, (New York: 1982), Vol. II, p. 201.

³² Perhaps a more flexible term would be the hybrid term, “caste-class.”

³³ “*In West Slav languages the word ‘nobility’ (szlachta, slechta) comes from the German ‘Geschlecht’, which means race or family and denotes the importance of descent.*” Piotr Wandycz, *The Price of Freedom*, (London: 2001), p. 31.

³⁴ Andrej Zajaczkowski, *Główne Elementy Kultury Szlacheckiej w Polsce* (Warszawa:1961), p. 6. According to a census taken in 1662 there were 270,660 Szlachta in only the provinces of Wielkopolski, Malopolski, Mazowsze, and Prus Krolewski! This was 12% of the population. Relative to the “ethnic Poles,” the Roman Catholic Szlachta were 16%.

Then, by the next century, their numbers increased:

<p>. . . the Szlachta numbered about 15% of the population of our Land (in France only 2%).</p>	<p>“ . . . <i>plaszcy większość szlachty, stanowiącej około 15% na ludności Ziemiach naszych (Francji tylko 2%).</i>”³⁵</p>
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In 1827 a census was taken in only the area of the Congress Kingdom.³⁶ The Szlachta numbered 301,971 out of a population of 3,163,097 or about 10%.

From this we see that the Polish social structure appeared to be top heavy with the Szlachta caste. Identification with other Western countries is futile, since they were aristocracies. Aristocracies were characterized by a very small number of people controlling their society. The classical example is France of the 18th century, where enormous wealth and privileges were literally only for a handful of people. In Poland, on the other hand, the Szlachta community was too numerous to permit the Szlachta class to become itself, a class of Aristocrats.

One factor which helped to bring to the Szlachta a caste consciousness of itself, was the great variety of people³⁷ in East Central Europe:

<p>The Polish Szlachta, compared to the entire population of the state, were either homogenous by being (Polish or Polonized), the rest of the population formed a mosaic.</p>	<p>“<i>Szlachty polskiej w stosunku do całej ludności państwa była bowiem etnicznie homogeniczny (polska lub Spolonizowana) reszta ludności zas tworzyła mozaikę.</i>”³⁸</p>
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The above quotation, as good as it is, speaks of a later time when the Szlachta, besides being conscious that they formed a caste also identified with being “Polish,” that is, they became “nationalistic.” Prior to this, they were a general population group spread far and wide from the center of Poland. At that time, it was a common political program and shared lifestyle with which they identified; they developed a, “caste-consciousness..”

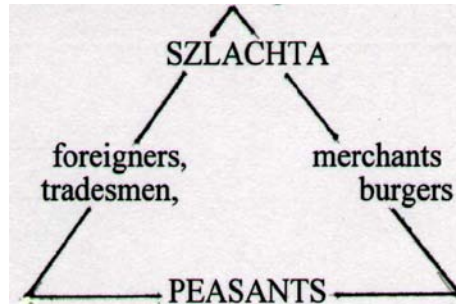
In General, Polish society prior to the age of competitive, ego-striving capitalism, may be characterized as is shown in the following scheme.

³⁵ Stanisław Wasylewski, *Życie Polskie w XIX Wieku* (Kraków: 1962), p. 30.

³⁶ At the congress of Vienna, the entity known as the Congress Kingdom was created. It was a Constitutional monarchy, with the Czar of Holy Russia, Alexander I, as its King. Alexander I was a friend of the Poles (for a short time), and this arrangement was viewed as a good one for both sides. “It was an agricultural country to the extent of 80%. Half of the cultivated land belonged to the gentry, while the rest belonged to the peasants.” Stanisław Arnold and Marian Zychowski, *Outline History of Poland* (Warszawa: 1962), 91. While this may be distasteful to some, we have only to reflect on our own times: “. . . the fact is that a mere five percent of the population probably owns close to 2/3 of the private property in America,” Peter Barnes and Larry Casalino “Who Owns the Land,” *Clear Creek* (San Francisco: December 1972), p. 18. As of 1997 the top 1% of the American population owned as much wealth as does the lower 90%—a great imbalance.

³⁷ This “great variety” of people within every single State led to the violent dissolution of all these States, Poland included. This is the best argument against the presence of minorities in States.

³⁸ Zajączkowski, *Główne Elementy . . .*, p. 6.



The middle merchant class was comparatively weak in Poland. As a class, it was predominately composed of German nationals and Jews. This middle class acted as intermediaries between the peasants and Szlachta. However, these two castes—the Szlachta and the peasants—were not so philosophically different as might be expected.

The Szlachta were not uniformly Polish but had a multi-ethnic composition. They did share however a common cultural-political outlook.

i Szlachta Values, Virtues And Behavior

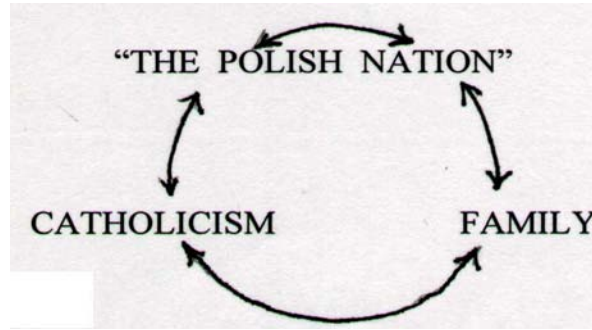
Now we can turn to an examination of the ideology or ideals of the Szlachta culture. It must be kept in mind that there has never been a uniform class or caste of people. When we speak of shared ideals or a common lifestyle we only imply that only what is shared is shared by most of the people of that particular group. There are always exceptions, disagreements, differences among individuals. Secondly, we, from the vantage point of time, can and have a preference for a class's behavior. This is a *construction* on our part, whose details and workings at the actual time of historical existence may not have been explicitly known to the individuals of that class. The point is that real life is very often “confusing” when compared to “life-in-theory.”

It is very easy for a historian to say what political or cultural decisions that an individual or class or caste should have made. The fact that they often did not do or think what the historian said they should have done or think, is a lesson for us to never forget how difficult it is to apply logical schemes to life. All we can hope for is to feel and understand as others felt and reasoned in their historical situation.

We shall now, for the purpose of simplification, assume that the Szlachta class was absolutely uniform in its values and that this was so for hundreds of years. We shall construct a “thesis ideology” and explain their values for their points of view.

The Szlachta prized rural Virtues over urban ones. Being a caste of landowners all aspects of the land and its beauty were important to them. They view as their relationship to nature to be one of harmony with the natural rhythms of the growing season. Rather than thinking of progress as a straight line, they pictured life in a circular term. Life is a connected whole. All the parts of nature are interdependent to one another, and so is society. In its purist form, there are no rights, only responsibilities. One individual caste has certain responsibilities to others. In its pure form, there are then no such things as privileges.

This view is usually known by the term “organic.” Its most thoroughly worked out examples, on a large scale, are in the Orient: most notably China and Japan. The family and the relationships among individuals are taken to be the model for Society. In Japan and China all society was thought of as being one family, with the Emperor as its father. In Poland, this organic picture—with the family as its model—did not, unfortunately, go beyond the



individual families of the Szlachta class. The Polish variation of “organicism” was influenced by Individualism, or by Egoism, and by the possession of material things. Thus in the Szlachta class feudalistic rights and privileges usurped for a long time the place of responsibilities.

Overstressing the family-nature of their own caste, the Szlachta welcomed the Catholic Church, which is also based on a familiar ideological model.³⁹ Thus in time the relationship was seen to be one of equivalency.

But this mode would fit even the peasant class. This however, unfortunately, the majority of the Szlachta would not accept. They ruled out the other classes by identifying only their caste as the sole representative of Historical Poland, which was easy to do, since their caste had a monopoly on affairs.⁴⁰ They equated:

SZLACHTA CASTE = “THE POLISH NATION”

Although the rest of the people had the same religious and familiar values as the Szlachta caste, they could not be considered to represent “the Polish nation,” since they were not of the Szlachta caste.

The Szlachta Community came to see its existence as a buffer between Eastern and Western Europe—a buffer between monadic invaders of Asia and Europe. This was one reason for their existence. This, connected with the idea that they could help bring Catholicism to the Russian lands, came to constitute their “mission.” In this venture they were protected by God, who proved his protection by certain signs such as Poland’s revival after many years of fighting and invasions in the 17th century and King Sobieski’s (Polish King 1674-1696) delivery of Vienna from the Turkish Army in 1682.⁴¹

By stressing the family, the knowledge of the exact connection between a person’s past and present became very important. One’s genealogy, the lineage of one’s family and relatives, was important for the identifying members of society.

Thus the families of the Noble, this Szlachta caste, required all the attributes of their counterparts in the West replete with family crests and family genealogies. Members of the Szlachta had to make up their genealogy.⁴² Usually, if they went back far enough, they chose ancient Roman times even to the illustrious heroes of the Trojan War.

³⁹ There is nothing unusual about the fusion of Identity and Religion. It has occurred throughout human history. “*In many areas, German nationality and Protestantism were considered as inseparable as Polish nationality and Catholicism.*” R. Blanke, *Orphans of Versailles*, (Lexington: 1993), p.79.

⁴⁰ This monopolization of power became codified in the 14th century. In 1346 and 1347 at meetings held by the Szlachta of Malopolska and Wielkopolska, a number of statutes were written which: “. . . sanctioned the strivings of the gentry to close its ranks and refuse entry to other social elements.” Arnold and Zychowski, *Outline* . . . , p. 36. This tendency spread to other parts of Eastern Europe and increased in time.

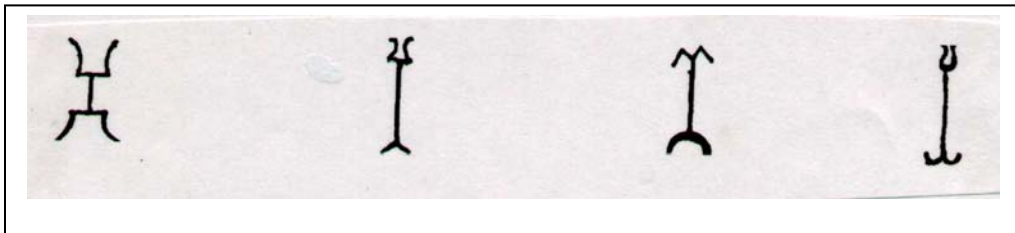
⁴¹ This explanation was used both as a rationalization for the privileges of the Szlachta, as well as propaganda for Western Europe. Unfortunately, the nation of Poland as a “buffer,” made her an enemy of modern Russia and the Steppes, when she was undermined by Western Europe-politically and culturally.

⁴² It is important to note that Poland did not have a native office of heraldry. This led to a certain amount of self-ennoblements in early Poland. Wandycz, *The Price of Freedom*, . . . , p. 62.

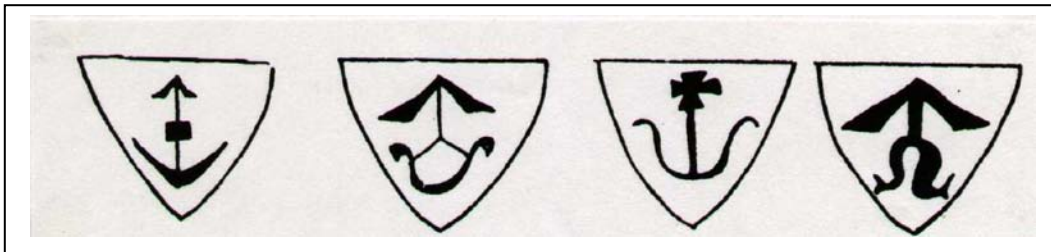
A general Polish mythology developed which called into being the “Sarmatian” people as the original forefathers of the Szlachta community. These people came from the area between Poland and Lithuania. Many people traced their families back to these “Sarmatians.”

But these “Sarmatians” did exist. They were a group of people whose race was Caucasian⁴³ and who lived as horse riding nomads. According to the early Roman writer, Ammianus Mancellinus, these people did not have slaves, and considered themselves to be all equal and equally noble. This is why the Szlachta turned to the Sarmatians as possible progenitors of their race. These people started to move through the Black Sea area around 400 B.C., and arrived in today’s boundary-reduced Poland during the second century A.D. Since this area and beyond to the Elbe River was already heavily populated with Slavs, the supposed co-mingling⁴⁴ of these horse people with diligent and peaceful farming Slavs could account for the forming of a proto-Szlachta Community.

The Sarmatians had their own spiritual beliefs based upon Nature. They had religious signs called “tamga.” Here are some:



These have been found in recent times in the Polish land of Podolia. These signs survived among some Szlachta families in their coat-of-arms. Here are four:



Thus we see the connection between the Sarmatians and the Central European Szlachta.

As the family was important to the Szlachta it became a very exclusive institution. Marriages were very serious matters because of the new relatives it would make between two entire sets of family networks. We must remember that we are not dealing here with our contemporary nuclear family, but with the extended family.

Within a family the father is the decision-maker and leader with all the resultant responsibilities. However, since it is a family network of mutual interdependence, the father and any other decision maker, must not be too offensive or radical, since the family is a conservative institution which allows freedom for constructive action when those actions are recognized as such by all members of the family.

⁴³ “The Sarmatians were of Indo-European stock, belonging to a branch of the Iranian speaking group. They were closely akin to the ancient Medes, Parthians and Persians.” T. Suliminski, *The Sarmatians* (New York: 1970), p. 22.

⁴⁴ The Hereford World Map of 1280 A.D. locates the “Sarmate” in today’s Poland, whilst “Germania” is located west of Denmark! Be that as it may, there was racial mixing between Germano-Nordics and Slavs. Poland was and is heavily “Nordicized,” but Slavic in temperament.

The wife and mother are in a very high position in Polish families with great emphasis being placed upon the female members as sources of morality. The father also is a source of morality but more in the sense of a moral Law Giver, as is God. Whereas, the mother and wife *inspires* us to be moral—to exist on a higher level.

The notion that people can be encouraged to behave in a good way, that they can transcend their finite, material selves, was a rather common assumption of Polish life. It was just recognition of the fact that people are educable—they can change. The Poles knew that if you educated people to be heroes, then they would act like heroes most of the time.

The wife among Szlachta was more often called “przyjaciół,” “friend,” rather than “zona,” or wife.

One Englishman noted as he traveled through Poland in the year 1593 that:

The Polonians are Courteous
and kind-hearted,
and so use their wives
with much love and respect,
as also these Gentlemen [their]
servants with mildness
and affability.

*“The Polonians are Courteous
and kinde hearted,
and so vse their wiues
with much loue and respect,
as also these Gentlemen
seruants with mildness
and affability.”*⁴⁵

Certainly they treated some of their servants well:

They saw a friend
companion in the wife
giving her as
much independence
as she fancied;
the man required from her
not only sentiment,
but also courage,
and heart,
but understanding
and deeds.

*“Widząc w żonie
przyjaciela,
dawano jej niejako
niezawisłość
od zmiennych warunków upodobania;
wymagano od niej
nie tylko sentymentu,
ale i męstwa,
nie tylko serca,
ale rozumu
i czynu.”*⁴⁶

The children were taught the virtues and values of the Szlachta by example, and the living experiences of their families in their own homes. The home, the land, the Church, these were their best teachers. The house, the physical building in Poland, was identified with the home or the entire lifestyle of the Szlachta. In so-called modern societies, especially Capitalist societies, the home is not the same as the physical buildings; thus, modern societies are more susceptible to rootlessness. For the Szlachta the house, the home was the embodiment of human relationships, of Humanity itself.

This physical house is called a “Dwór” in Polish. It has all these emotional associations of Home, School and Life. This is even so for the poorest of the Szlachta who only being able to build a very small peasant house called it “Dworek.” The Dwór or Dworek usually was situated in the most prominent place in the area. Even though it might be no different than a peasant’s hut, it had to be marked out as belonging to a Szlachta family. Usually a columned front and the family crest were used for this purpose.

The Dwór in imitation of nature was an interdependent system but complete in itself—a microcosm. It was the center of life: it produced everything for the inhabitants—food, personal weapons for self-defense, and their worldview.

⁴⁵ Fynes Moryson in *Shakespeare’s Europe*, (New York: 1967), p. 90.

⁴⁶ Władysław Łoziński, *Życie Polskie W Dawnych Wiekach*, (Kraków: 1964), p. 159.

As mentioned above, this life on the Dwór is a rural life with the Szlachta family owning some land and possibly some villages or towns. Life was relatively “isolated” with most families interested in maintaining their relative status. They were not out to make a profit. That was for the merchant class and fallen Szlachta who succumbed to the view that a man's worth is determined by the amount of money he has accumulated.

More recent sociological and political research has been done on the Szlachta Caste. This new research involves the sophisticated tool or idea of “gesture.” With this tool the following type of questions are being asked. “How do people’s behavior or customs reflect their status in society?” or “What do the people actually do?” or “Why do they do what they do?” and “How are their behaviors conditioned by History?” (Keep in mind that this analysis does not deal with the Artistic Pleasure or Humanity of these behaviors or customs.) To get an idea about this tool of analysis one recent work on “gesture” shall be cited:

The large role [played by] gesture in the Staropolski culture was not up to now, by researchers appreciated, and because of this, up to now in works of the history of customs it has not been mentioned. It is difficult without an analysis of the role of gesture to analyze the Staropolski customs. Gesture in the 16th-17th centuries filled in the life of the Polish Szlachta three functions: it was a center of understanding, a special expression of feeling, a sign of belonging to the circle [persons] of Noble birth. This was very important, especially so as there was such limited other ways to communicate [this], then this led to the tendency toward expressionism (its height occurred during the baroque), there was, therefore, a pressing need, to use outward signs, to indicate [one’s] status in the community (familial, or social).

The range and place of gesture in the Staropolski culture of the Szlachta was additionally influenced or crystalized by two cultures:

“Ogromna rola gestu w kulturze staropolskiej nie była jak dotąd przez badaczy doceniana i dlatego w dotychczasowych syntezach dziejów obyczaju brak o niej wzmianek. Tymczasem trudno bez analizy roli gestu dokonywać analizy obyczaju staropolskiego. Gest w XVI-XVII wieku pełnił w życiu polskiej szlachty trojaka funkcje: był środkiem porozumiewania się, specjalnej ekspresji uczuć, znakiem przynależności do kręgu szlacheckie urodzonych. Był tym ważniejszy, im bardziej ubogo prezentowały się inne środki komunikacji, im większa istniała tendencja do ekspresjonizmu (jej apogeum nastąpiło w dobie baroku), im bardziej naglące było zapotrzebowanie na określanie przez zewnętrzne znaki statusu społecznego (rodzinnego, towarzyskiego).

Range i miejsce gestu w staropolskiej kulturze szlacheckiej określiło dodatkowo jej specyficzne ukształtowanie na styku dwu kultur:

Western and Eastern.

The life of the Szlachta was strongly ritualized, going according to strict rules, the knowledge of which obligated everyone; one's own knowledge and behavior revealed [whether a person was] a Szlachta, absence of these traits revealed [that one was] a commoner. A Szlachta had to master a definite way of life, he had to show a knowledge of an entire range of ceremonial gestures, the accompanying words and phrases used on different occasions...

There is the opinion of the theatrical behavior of the Polish Szlachta. Maybe a love of the theater and of the presentation of types,... particularly of the Baroque, certainly under the influence of the Ancient [World] . . .

zachodniej i wschodniej.”⁴⁷

“Życie szlachty było silnie zrytualizowane, toczyło się wedle pewnych reguł, których znajomość obowiązywała każdego; po tej właśnie wiedzy i umiejętnościach zachowań poznawano szlachcica, ich brak demaskował plebejka. Szlachcić musiał opanować określony sposób bycia, wykazać się znajomością całego ceremoniału gestów, towarzyszących słowu lub zastępujących je przy różnych okazjach....

Wysuwa się nawet opinie o teatralności zachowań polskiej szlachty. Być może istotnie zamiłowanie do teatru i przedstawień wszelkiego typu, ... zwłaszcza zaś baroku, w pewnej mierze pod wpływem zafascynowania antykiem . . . ”⁴⁸

This gives us some idea of the intellectual complexities with which some approach the analysis of the Szlachta caste. Ours is a simpler task. Now we shall be more concrete.

The following list of virtues and values and some examples of behaviors are usually understood to be summed up in the phrases “po Staropolsku,” “Staropolskość,” “po Staroświecku,” or after the “Old Polish Mode.” The sum of these traits as a way of life was also called “Sarmarkość,” or “Sarmatism.”⁴⁹

⁴⁷ Maria Bogucka, *Staropolskie Obyczaje W XVI-XVII Wieku* (Warszawa: 1994), p. 81.

⁴⁸ Maria Bogucka, *Staropolskie...*, p.82.

⁴⁹ It must be pointed out that these virtues, although old, are the very same that progressive critics of contemporary life say are needed.

GRZECZNOŚĆ

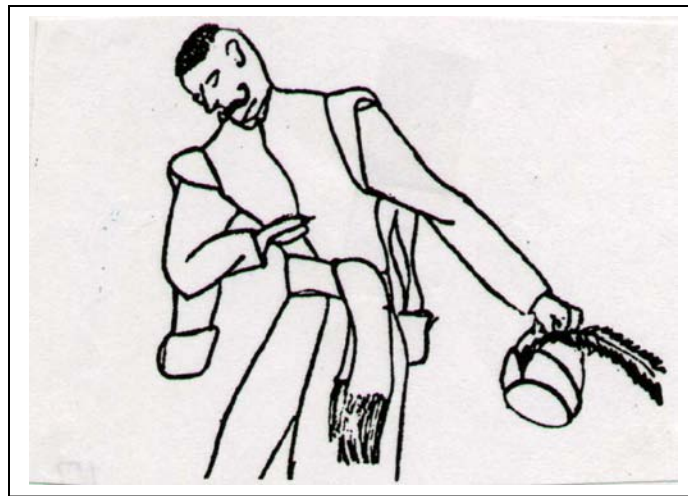
“Politeness,” “courteousness,” “mannerliness.” This is a natural easy flowing politeness based upon respect for other people:

. . . that Grzeczność was not dictated as a foreign imposition.

“... ze grzeczność nie była dyktowana obc¹ impozycj¹.”⁵⁰

This was definitely not a servile boot licking but it could be. These mannerisms became servile as the Magnates, who were mostly Lithuanian and 'Rus Landlords of the “Polish” East (ruling over large tracts of land), gathered around themselves crowds of minor Szlachta as their “clients” or dependents just as happened in Ancient Rome. The Magnates concentrated State Power in their hands at the expense of the Gentry-Szlachta Caste of the entire Republic.

Grzeczność is a value. It was objectified in the following ways: by expansive motions of respect for sweeping bows done by the men to all Szlachta women and men. It actually looked as shown below with the one hand held over the heart, indicating an open-heartedness for others.



This Bow was only done from the waist down, without a deep knee bending. Young men and boys would kneel upon one knee to show greater respect to their parents, relatives, and older people.

Sons would do a special salutation for fathers and grandfathers. They would drop down upon the knee in front of the Personage, and clasp or hug him around the knees or legs, and bow the head. Special forms of address were used for parents, for example for the father: “*Panie ojcze!*” which we translated as “My Honored-Sir Father!” The term “*Jegomość*” was also used for this.⁵¹

This bowing was accompanied by the kissing of one or both hands of the person bowed to.⁵² This is an absolute must. Among men friends’ additional signs of respect is a

⁵⁰ Łoziński, *Zycie ...* , p. 174.

⁵¹ Actually the ceremony of bowing and kneelings goes back at least to the ancient Sumerians, Egyptians and to Biblical times.

⁵² Here is another example from Polish History. It shows how Paderewski, former President of Poland, and his sister greeted each other in 1932. “It’s really touching to see this pair of old people embrace fondly and then kiss each other’s hand with respect.” Aniela Strakacz, *Paderewski As I Knew Him*, (New Brunswick: 1949), p. 150.

hearty two-handed “bear-hug” with kissing of both the cheeks and lips. This is a symbol of human contact, which is found in all humanistic cultures. Once the formalities are over, and a man is accepted as a companion, then these signs of affections indicate brotherhood. These exchanges of greeting and goodbye were also done with and by women acquaintances. These gestures were done with enthusiasm and not as a cold formality.

The complements to greetings are farewells:

Similar to greetings,
with its special ritual gestures
the same happened to farewells,
particularly for sending off
sons to school,
or off to war, for foreign travel
or daughters to a cloister.
One of the most popular gestures
of farewell was kneeling
before
the person [who is not leaving],
who squeezes the leaver’s
head
This squeezing of the head
was done not only
in families,
but also among the wider community
and on different occasions, . . .

*“Podobnie jak powitania,
w specjalny rytuał gestów
obrosły także pożegnania,
szczególnie przy wyprawianiu
synów do szkół,
na wojaczkę, za granice
lub córek do klasztoru.
Jednym z popularniejszych gestów
pożegnalnych było przyklęknięcie
przed
osoba żegnająca,
która odjeżdżającemu ścisła
głowę.
Takie ściśnięcia głowy
spotyka się zresztą nie tylko
w rodzinie,
ale w szerszych kręgach
i przy różnych okazjach, . . . ”*⁵³

So head-squeezing was more than just a gesture; it was a sincere expression of human feeling:

Kneeling as a rule was not done once,
but many times,
with exaggeratedly
deep bows,
removing the hat and sweeping it
on the floor or ground;
[but] for some occasions only
a tipping if the hat was required.
Taking the hat off was a sign
of special respect;
the first
to remove his hat were
the young,
or those of lower social standing
or those bound by an obligation.
Equals removed their hats
simultaneously.
Placing the hat
and removing it,
while reading a letter
from an important person also
was to show the same [respect]

*“Kłaniano się z reguły nie raz,
ale po wielokroć,
przesądając w
głębokości ukłonów,
zdejmując czapkę i zamiatając nią
nieledwie podłogę czy murawę;
niektóre wszakże okazje wymagały
zaledwie uchylenia czapki.
Zdjęcie czapki było bowiem oznaka
specjalnego uszanowania;
pierwszy
zdejmował czapkę
osobnik młodszy,
niższy socjalne
lub w jakiś sposób zobowiązany.
Równi sobie zdejmowali czapkę
jednocześnie.
Unoszono także czapki
i podnoszono się,
czytając list
od osoby akcentowano także
czasami samo*

⁵³ Bogucka, *Staropolskie ...*, p. 85.

as if speaking
with that person.

*wymówienie imienia
godnego czci.”*⁵⁴

Bows, hand-kissing, head-squeezing. What else was there?

They kissed not only the hands,
but also the feet.
The kissing of the feet of parents
was an obligation of children,
irregardless of their age,
on such occasions
as leaving home
or returning to it,
these blessings
were given
on all important events,
for example,
concluding bands of marriage,
entering a cloister,
going on a pilgrimage
or on a long trip, etc.
In the XVII century, with the
growing dependence
of the Szlachta
on the Magnates,
the practice became common
of falling to the feet
of a powerful protector[Magnate]
when asking for favors
or in thanking for a recognized
benefit.
Before everything however
[one] knelt before one's partners.
'Onto one knee for the son,
the daughter on two,
before their mother they bow –
wrote in the XVII century Kochowski.
Falling to the feet
became ever more
a way to show unity with a powerful
protector, asking for support
and favors.

*“Całowano nie tylko ręce,
ale także nogi.
Ucałowanie nóg rodzicom
było obowiązkiem dzieci,
bez względu na ich wiek,
przy takich okazjach
jak odjazd z domu
czy powrót do niego,
błogosławieństwo
z powodu podjęcia
ważnego postanowienia,
np.
zawarcia związku małżeńskiego,
wstąpienia do klasztoru,
udania się na pielgrzymkę
czy w daleka podróż itd.
W XVII wieku, gdy
wzrosło znacznie uzależnienie
szlachty
od magnatów,
praktyka powszechna stało się
padania do nóg
możnym protektorom
przy okazji zanoszenia próśb
lub dziękowania za wyświadczone
dobrodziejstwo.
Przede wszystkim jednak
kłoniano przed rodzicami.
'Na jedno kolano syn,
córka na obie,
'Kłania się matce swojej – '
pisał w XVII wieku Kochowski.
Padanie do nóg
było także coraz częściej
sposobem zjednania możnego
protektora, wyproszenia poparcia
i łask.”*⁵⁵

Many visitors to the Commonwealth remarked upon the Polish style of bowing—
they were quite amazed. Let us see just how much so by quoting some.

From the year 1779, the Englishman W. Coxe wrote:

*“Poles seem a lively people, and use much action in their ordinary conversation.
Their common mode of saluting is to incline the head, and strike the breast with one*

⁵⁴ Bogucka, *Staropolskie ...*, p. 85.

⁵⁵ Bogucka, *Staropolskie ...*, p. 87.

*hand, while they stretch the other towards the ground:but when a common person meets a superior, he bows his head almost to the earth, waving at the same time his hand, with which he touches the leg, near the heel, of the person to whom he pays his obeisance.”*⁵⁶

At just about the same time J. Bernoulli wrote about the Kaszubian People of Northern Poland that:

The people are very like the peasants of Poland: [they] bow deeply, kiss and grasp [the other person] by his knees, etc., however they are insincere and tend to revolt, . . .⁵⁷

Here the implicit contrast is with Polish peasants of Central Poland who were less insincere toward their Lords.

J. J. Kausch’s trip to Poland in 1793 reveals more about the Bow as well as differences between Germans and Poles:

We did not see at all in Poland the use of stupid, pedantic compliments as is done in Germany; if a Pole has no talent for social conversation he will limit himself [or herself] to a silent bow rather than force conversational banter. I speak here about that part of the Szlachta [Gentry], which maintains the old customs of their forefathers. I think that more should be said about their bowing. Men and women express their pleasantness or pleasure in the same way: both Bow [lean] the entire [upper] body forward, but their hands are hugging the other person’s knees or even lower if they want to show [a greater] reverence.

If a man or a woman is earnestly asking for something they always will [wrap] one or two hands around the knees of the person.

Kausch speculated that this custom was adopted by the Poles from the Orient where it was a symbol of servility or inferior status. And yet it seems to have been transformed in Poland to something different:

No other civilized Country can perform as low a Bow as the Poles do: even [in this action] they display a unimitative, “Grandness.”⁵⁸

Of course Kausch is commenting on the Bow in his time, the end of the 18th century, but was he familiar with the bowing of the Spanish and Hapsburg Courts? The Spaniards were famous (or infamous) for their strict and rigid Rituals, in particular the “Spanish Reverence.” This was a deep, profound Bow while at the same time kneeling down upon one knee. This was contrasted with the “French Reverence” which did not require kneeling.

From the mid-nineteenth century another traveler writing about what he saw around the city of Lwów wrote:

“Here we again saw the genuine old Polish bow, which we had never seen since leaving Poland. The Polish peasant never bends forwards when saluting another, as we do, but sideways, in the most extraordinary manner. When they do the thing

⁵⁶ William Coxe, *Travels in Poland, Russia, Sweden and Denmark*, (London:1802), Book 2, Vol. I, p. 147.

⁵⁷ Originally from J. Bernoulli, *Reisen durch Brandenburg, Pommern, Preussen, Courland, Russland und Polen in den Jahren 1777 und 1778*, (Leipzig, 1779-1780). Here from *Polska Stanisławowska W Oczach Cudzoziemców*, (Warszawa:1963), Vol.I, p. 463. Henceforth, to be referred as *PSOC*.

⁵⁸ Originally from J.J. Kausch, *Nachrichten uber Polen*, (Graz:1793). Here *PSOC*, Vol. II, p. 294.

quickly, it is only a jerk of the left shoulder. Generally, however, the Poles bow so low that they almost lose their balance, bending over sideways, and kissing the hem of the garment of the saluted person, sideways. Even the very dogs do not approach their masters straight forwards, but creep sideways toward them. The usual Polish salutation which accompanies the bow, is: 'Padam do nog,' [I throw myself at your feet], or else more strongly, 'Padam pod nogi,' [I throw myself under your feet]. These phrases are continually used in common conversation; for servility is as inherent a part of the Polish, as obedience is of the German character. Even the young Polish elegants at the balls of Warsaw, Lemberg, and Wilna, talk of throwing themselves 'at the feet' and 'under the feet' of their partners. The Polish beggars also sometimes place their caps on the ground, and bow down low over them, in saluting a superior."⁵⁹

Even outside of Poland there are instances of this "Polish Bowing." Here is an example from Russia dated 1733. The authoress is comparing the different ways in which Ambassadors greeted her:

*"But none of these have so much surprised me as the Polish minister did. When he made his first visit, he ran up to me, and, as I thought he was going to kiss me, was considering if he would not put out my teeth, he ran with such violence; but he stopped short, and stooped in such a way that I clapped both my hands to my petticoats, and really both he and I were out of countenance; and as Mr. R – betrayed me, it has caused much mirth."*⁶⁰

So we see that these expressions become part of the romantic dialogue of Polish men. This bow was and can be an indication of servility or of genuine respect. But it was and is used in a "playful" way, a gay way—it elevates all those present by establishing a certain Good Form of Proper Behavior, that is, the Polish version of Good Manners.

This Polish Bowing and Hand-Kissing are intimately related. Even in the writing of personal letters they appear. Here are some examples: "*Caluję Mamie nogi . . .*", Mommy I kiss your feet, "*Babuni nogi caluję . . .*", The Grandmothers feet, I kiss, "*Wujostwo calują I kłaniają się . . .*" The Uncles I kiss and bow to.⁶¹ And one more, "*Tysiąc razy caluję Twoje ręce . . .*",⁶² A thousand times I kiss Your hands, "*Pada Ci do nóg . . .*", I fall[Bowing] to your foot. What lovely sentiments! One cannot understand Poland or the Polonez without it. Persons who are inadequate in the one are inadequate in the other, that is, poor bowing leads to poor dancing of the Polonez—it is so much a question of attitude, which is revealed in the carriage of the body and the behavior toward one's partner.

So to really understand this we introduce at this point descriptions, both written by Englishmen, which are nearer our time, the time of Democracy—of mass society, of mass murder, of mass vulgarity and the drive toward modernization and "Progress." one from 1923 and the other from 1934:

"On occasion he can click his heels, bow from the waist, and kiss a lady's hand in a way – well, in a way that only a Pole can, just because he is still simple as well as courtly. Ceremony is as natural to him as brusqueness is to some others. Boys of the tenements or peasant girls in the fields will doff their curtsies and say 'Prosha Pana' with a grace that any finishing school might envy.

⁵⁹ J. Kohl, *Austria*, (London:1843), p. 449.

⁶⁰ W. Vigor, *Letters From Russia*, (New York: 1970), p.85.

⁶¹ These are from, K. Szajnoch, *Korespondencja Karola Szajnochy*, (Wrocław: 1959), p.4.

⁶² The next two citations are from, *Świadek Epoki*, (Warszawa: 1995), Vol. I, III, p. 228.

As for 'prosha pana' (in Polish spelled *proszę pana*) – we use to declare that it was the national slogan of Poland. It means "if you please," or, more literally, "please, sir" or "please, madame," as the case may be; but it is more than a mere perfunctory phrase, for it sums up the whole matter of Polish ceremony. It is on the tongue of the Pole, master and servant, morning, noon, and night. No man asks you in Poland to come or to go, to sit or to stand, eat or drink, without saying 'prosha pana.' If you thank your friend for this or that he answers 'prosha.' If you get bumped in the street car—or if you bump—bumper and bumped exclaim together "prosha." Poles have laughingly told me that the first word a Polish infant learns is, not 'mamma' or 'papa' but 'prosha pana.' . . .

Now, I am sorry to say, some of Poland's traditional 'prosha' is disappearing.. But the stranger, new come into the country, hardly knows what to make of even what is still left of it. If it puzzles him, it also charms him, and he thinks with regret of it vanishing. Nevertheless it will disappear, inevitably, to a certain extent. The Poles themselves have decreed it, and the times have decreed it. It interferes with business, they tell you . . .

The Poles joke about these things and laugh at their new Americanisms, but they mean them just the same...I wonder sometimes if this new way will invade even their homes? Will a Polish housewife continue to say:

*Proszę, Pani
Moja Pani prosi pani,
Żeby Pani,
Proszę Pani pożyczyla
Pani rondla.*

When she addresses to her neighbour the simple request 'Please lend me your frying-pan?'

The 'Polish kiss' and the kissing of the hand are other formalities as strange at first to the foreigner as 'prosha pana.' The 'Polish kiss' with which friends are greeted as they enter or leave the home, or even on the street—men by men as well as women by women—is often not a kiss at all, but a sort of double embrace, exactly like that seen in the Catholic ritual when priest and deacon salute each other during high Mass. It is reserved more or less for those in the family circle or for the most intimate friends. The hand-kiss likewise has its reservations. A gentleman usually salutes only the hand of a matron or of the lady to whom he is engaged to be married, except in the case of intimate friendships or family relationships. Children kiss the hands of the elders—and this they do with the quaintest and most charming gracefulness.

Once you know the Poles it is impossible to think of their ceremonial manners as perfunctory or a thing apart. To look at it so, to look at it as mere punctiliousness, is a mistake, as the foreigner quickly learns when he becomes acquainted with the people. The first thing that he does learn is that these courtly old-time ways of theirs, which at first glance, seen in the offing, may have appeared stiff, never for a moment put him ill at ease...

At no point does Polish formality give greater charm than in the presence of the old. Grown sons and daughters greet their elders with a deference that never changes from the years of childhood, and still has all the love of their hearts in it. The elder lady of the house is always escorted to the table with a little touch of stateliness, reminiscent of the courtly 'Polonaise.' It is sometimes difficult to describe. It escapes words. One feels that it is almost discourteous to comment on it

*or point it out, so lovely and intimate a thing it is – something to be simply enjoyed in the observing as in the doing.”*⁶³

And a decade later:

“True ceremonial when it is not affected never becomes boring. It is a natural expression of a point of view, and in Poland this ceaseless bowing and murmuring of toasts, this continual drinking of little gulps of vodka, these expressions of goodwill, are delightful just because they are native and just because they are in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred perfectly sincere . . . A companion of mine remarked upon his first arrival in Warsaw that the manners were Ruritanian. This is a trifle unjust; the Ruritanian manners are the manners of a comic opera—the manners of Warsaw are old, dignified, and thoroughly natural...my thoughts were interrupted by a sharp click behind me—the unmistakable click of masculine heels meeting in the formal military manner so beloved of Central and Eastern Europe...and while at the beginning of the evening they kissed their partners’ hands only at the end of each dance, they will now frequently kiss them during the dance, and may even stop to do so . . .

*The habit which men have in this country [England] of gathering together in knots as frequently as possible during a dance is not encouraged in Poland, nor indeed does anyone want to do it. You can only understand such parties if you realize that each masculine member of the parties is expected to pay a purely formal court to various ladies also in the party...It all comes so naturally and easily in Poland. You will find to your surprise that such an evening of good manners and amusing music does not leave you exhausted and nervously shattered, . . . ”*⁶⁴

It was and is a sign of disrespectfulness for the man not to remove the glove from his hand before kissing a woman’s gloved or ungloved hand.

The mentioning of the heel-clicking comes later in time, generally, from the turn of the 19th century, then all throughout the 19th and basically existed up to WWII in certain countries—Poland included.

Another observer from this period wrote:

“The corresponding Polish social circles have a more sincere note, an even deeper grace. It is hard to state the details which go to make up an atmosphere and impression. The way the thing is done probably signifies more than the thing itself. Its elements are courtesy, dignity, physical grace, consideration, and basic forms. These latter are easily stated.

*For instance. Even old friends greet each other respectfully. Men take off their hats to men as well as to women, and always remove them in stores and shops as well as in offices; the hands of women are kissed in a most reverential and sincere manner; you always rise to speak to people who are standing; ‘please’ is ever on the lips, and ‘thank-you’ generally replaces ‘no’. Age and seniority are important considerations, and an older person, a woman, a guest, or one of higher position in life is always given the place on the right, walking, sitting, or standing. These seem like little things, but how a little oil does improve the running of the machinery! Such customs smooth social contacts and give life an air of grace, dignity, and kindness.”*⁶⁵

⁶³ Charles Phillips, *The New Poland*, (London: 1923), pp. 116-118.

⁶⁴ M. McLaren, *A Wayfarer in Poland*, (London: 1934), pp. 9,34,164-165.

⁶⁵ Paul Super, *Elements Of Polish Culture As Seen By A Resident Foreigner*, (Torun: 1934), p. 48.

Further proofs of this mode of behavior are contained in the following citations which described modern Poles in England during WWII:

*“The solemnity of manner and exaggerated politeness of the Poles astonished and amused the British.. The Poles were always saluting, bowing and shaking hands. ‘It is quite impossible to get one of them to precede you through a door,’ commented one British airman. But Polish stiffness and ‘strutting’ could be irritating, and was sometimes taken as arrogance or self-importance. And the Poles were quick to take offence at an over-casual response. Two entirely different concepts of good behavior confronted each other in the messes. One Pole was appalled at the manners of British officers, who lounged in armchairs with their feet on the table.”*⁶⁶

*“One, commenting on their extreme politeness and gallantry, told of the airman who offered his seat on a London bus to the conductress.”*⁶⁷

*“‘They were always giving you salutes even if it was their despatcher handing you a cup of coffee,’ recalls an RAF officer. ‘The heel-clicking that went on was terrific,’ . . . [sic] and they had a funny way of bowing stiffly, from the waist up, like tin soldiers.’ ”*⁶⁸

Under the cataclysm of WWII, forced boundary changes, Communist Rule in Poland as well as the Capitalistic Reorganization of Poland during the latter 20th the Polish Bow and Hand-kissing⁶⁹ has undergone a very heavy assault indeed. This assault strikes at the very heart of Polish Culture (and that of Central Europe) to some degree. This is what makes Polish Culture unique—not what they did but how they did it.

The lack of Grzeczność in other Western countries was always noticed by Poles and attributed to their lack of human feelings or to their centralized political systems which crushed natural feelings.

So we see that Polish Good Manners was and is not a casual way of behavior. In all societies Good Manners or Polite Behaviour exist for the protection and elevation of Society.

RYCERKOŚĆ

This is closely allied with Grecznosc. Its forms of manifestation are the same as Grzeczność. The term is derived from the Western European experience of Medieval Knighthood. It means: “knightliness,” “chivalry,” “honor,” “gallantry,” “courtesy.”

The French Count Segur’s descriptions of his travels in Poland in the last decades of the 18th century tells us something about this virtue among the Gentry:

“However, . . . , at great distances, rise castles inhabited by a polite, warlike, proud, free and chivalrous nobility.

There the feudal ages revive; there resound the cries of honor and of liberty; there the traveller is received with the generous hospitality of ancient times, finds assembled in vast halls gallant knights and accomplished ladies, whose lofty souls and

⁶⁶ Adam Zamoyski, *The Forgotten Few*, (New York: 1995), p. 167. Of course for our point of view, from 1999, we need this degree of politeness.

⁶⁷ Zamoyski, *The Forgotten ...* , p.109.

⁶⁸ Zamoyski, *The Forgotten ...* , p.59.

⁶⁹ The importance of the hand-kiss to Polish Culture may be further illustrated in the closings used in letter writing of Poles, past and present. Here are two typical closings: “*Rączki całuje serdecznie*”—Your hands I kiss sincerely. “*Rodzicom ucałowania rączek*”—Your parent’s hands I kiss [to show Respect for Parents or Elders]. Even in the prison camps of WW II the elegant manners of the French, Poles and Austrians were noticed. See T. Dębski, *A Battlefield of Ideas*, (Boulder: 2001), p.17.

*romantic characters mingle something heroic with their soft allurements. On seeing and hearing them, one would say that they were going to preside over a tournament, sustain a siege, to animate their husbands or lovers, to guide them to battle, to adorn them with brilliant scarfs, and to crown them after victory, by the song of the bards and the music of the harp, or perchance by the soft accents of the troubadours.”*⁷⁰

After describing the Social life Warszawa the Count compared it to the Social life of the country:

“ . . . but in the provinces the habits are still Sarmatian; in a word, there is an inconceivable mixture of the things of ancient and of modern times, of the monarchical and of republican spirit, of feudal pride and of equality, of poverty and of riches, of wise speeches made in the diets, and of sabres drawn to close the discussion, of ardent patriotism, and of but too frequent appeals to foreign influence made by the spirit of faction.

*Such was Poland, and such were the reflections that occupied my mind, . . .”*⁷¹

We add to the comments of Count Segur these of another Frenchman, Prince De Ligne, who became a citizen of Poland at the end of the 18th century. He wrote:

“Who does not love Poland, the Poles, and, above all, the Polish women, for the intelligence and courage of the men, the beauty and grace of the women, who have, even the least amiable, a laissez-aller, an eloquence, a piquancy, a charm superior to the women of all other countries? Who would not prefer a life in Warsaw, where the choicest French tone reigns, mingled with an Eastern allurements, the charm of Europe and if Asia both, the urbanity of the most civilized of lands joined to the natural hospitality of a nation of noble yet pleasant faces, gentle, yet simple manners, manners that are polite, or frankly sincere and courteous in the capital, but jovially kind-hearted in the country? A nation ready of comprehension, easy and gay in conversation, of good education; possessing the gift of languages and of all the talents, even those for bodily exercise, especially on horses; fine voices, eloquence, splendour of appearance; a taste for the fine arts, luxury, gallantry, fetes, social exhibitions, national dances; a little barbaric in costume and singular in customs perhaps, but easy to live with, full of kindness, good feeling, and gratitude?

*As for mine to Poland, it is unlimited.”*⁷²

The military tradition has a long history in Poland out of necessity and preference. It became both a National Honor and essential to survival for the Szlachta to maintain their own defense. In the areas of Western Poland which were undermined by Germanic penetration and tightly closed farming spaces, there was less fighting so that the Szlachta in those regions became soft and merely paid lip service to the military life and virtues. Whereas, in the East and South, that is the Steppes, Bialyruссия, Russia, and Turkish areas, the military life lasted much longer.⁷³ As a symbol of this, the wearing of the saber was *de rigueur* and a privilege, protected by law, for the Szlachta.

The attendant attitudes (Rycerskość) are happily still in existence. Perhaps it was from the need of the military life's dependence of one soldier upon another, along with the Slavonic lifestyle of mutual cooperation that led to what is considered to be the fundamental value of the Szlachta Community.

⁷⁰ Count Segur, *Memoirs And Recollections Of Count Segur*, (New York: 1970), p. 122-123.

⁷¹ Count Segur, *Memoirs . . .*, p. 124.

⁷² Prince De Ligne, *The Prince De Ligne. His Memoirs, Letters, And Miscellaneous Papers*, (Boston: 1902), p.308-309.

⁷³ Wanda Mlicka, *Karmazyni i Chudopacholki*, (Warszawa: 1968), Vol. I, p. 145. How unfortunate that he did not give specific information about the Dances.

ROWNOŚĆ

“Identity,” “equality,” “evenness,”—as with some other noble-warrior societies, all the members of that community were equal to one another. The assumption in the American Constitution that men are equal in their moral sense was a very old idea in Poland with the qualification that this was limited to the Szlachta class.⁷⁴ It was a case of, “one for all and one for all.” Nowhere is this more aptly demonstrated than in the relationship of the Szlachta to their king. They elected him as a representative as one of their own. This showed that they were all equal.

Another symbol is the difference in punishment for a peasant and the Szlachta. Often the peasant would be beaten. This indicates the superior-inferior relation between the noble and the peasant. When a Szlachta had legal cause to “beat” another Szlachta, the man’s servant would take his place, being “beaten” only ceremoniously, that is without pain. This was done without the use of harsh or vulgar words with the servant (representing the master) being addressed in formal polite terms, thus stressing the equality among the Szlachta community.

Not only did the Szlachta claim that they had illustrious Roman forefathers, but they also tried to fashion political Poland after the conception of an ancient Republican Rome, with the Virtues of equality and liberty:

*“Henceforth, Poland became a republic in fact. . . for the elective kings of the new era found their royal prerogatives so limited by the nobility that they regarded themselves merely as the ‘first Dignities of the republic,’ rather than hereditary monarchs and looked upon their king as a chosen representative with strictly limited authority.”*⁷⁵

With the Convocation Sejm (Diet) at Warszawa on January 6, 1573, the Szlachta assured their political influence on the Republic.

*“The vote of a noble of lowest rank was equal to that of a senator, and all nobles present at an election. . . had a right to cast a ballot. Henceforth, this method of election, which gave the Szlachta a predominant influence at all elections, became the customary procedure of the land.”*⁷⁶

Thus we have a democratic Republic with all political and social meetings of the Szlachta conducted on this basis of equality or Rowność, but also in accordance with Grzeczność. It was not the democracy of the lowest order of behavior, but of a higher democracy.

Drawing upon the model of the family as a picture for society, the Szlachta members saw themselves as brothers: thus they addressed one another as “brat” or “brother.” Besides showing not only human connectedness, they also wanted to show respect. For this they used the term “pan”, which means at least “sir,” but more than just that. Together, we have “Panem Bratem” or roughly, “My Sir-Brother.” Another is, “Mości Bracie” or “Honored Brothers.”

⁷⁴ Rather, it is more proper to say that the Szlachta did recognize the fact that all men are equal in their potential talents. However, their drive to protect their status along with the technology of the times, which necessitated that up to 80-90% of the population work the land, made it impossible for peasants to be free to move into the Szlachta class. When it did become possible, the Szlachta community was too egotistical to share. Their mistake—and Poland’s loss.

⁷⁵ R. Dybowski and Oscar Halecki, eds., *The Cambridge History of Poland*, (Cambridge: 1950), p. 369.

⁷⁶ Dybowski and Halecki, *The Cambridge History of Poland*, p. 371.

Writing in 1793 F.Schulz stated that:

The expression “pan” is added to the family name and to one’s official position, office or rank it has the same significance as the French term, “Seigneur.” They refer to the King as “Pan King”, even when writing to him. They also use it as for “Pan Bishop”, “Pan Wojewoda.” When they speak with a “Kasztelan” [Castle Governor], they would not use the title, “Pan Kasztelan” but only : “Pan Trocki”, “Pan Krakowski” which are the names of the castle of which the person was the Governor. If a person had an official position then the term “pan” would not be used with the name but would be attached to the position, as in, “Pan Stolnik”: likewise the feminine form is used as in “Pani Stolnikowa.” For a Prince [Książę] or Princess, these were referred to as: “Książę Stolnik.”

The French, up to the Revolution, used the term, “Seigneur” only for their Lords. In Poland it is different. Anyone who has a high-pair-of-boots is called “Pan”; everyone gets a special title or honorific, “Pan.”

In Poland they often call each other “Laskawcami” [Magnanimous] or “Dobrodziejami” [Benefactor]. These customs originated with the upper class but now even among the lowest classes these same customs exist. Between two beggars, speaking among themselves, every third word is, “Dobredzieju.” The common people when speaking to the Gentry use terms such as: “Wielmożny” [Noble], “Jasnie Wielmożny” [Resplendent Noble], “Eksceleńco” [Excellency], etc.

The peasant not only says, “upadam do nog” [I fall at your feet.], but actually does it: he not only says, “sciskam stopy” [I kiss your feet.] but actually does so.⁷⁷

The idea being that if everyone has a title then we are all equal. There also is a certain Artistic Pleasure in doing this.

WOLNOŚĆ

“Liberty,” “freedom,” “independence.” This value, often later contrary to *Rowność*, is usually considered to be the second highest value of the *Szlachta*. A member could theoretically do and think anything he liked, and they often did.⁷⁸ Politically the entire set of laws which described this liberty—that is, the privileges of the *Szlachta* came to be summarized under the term “*Złota Wolność*,” or “Golden Freedom,” or “Golden Liberty.” This conception in the political sphere became elevated to such an extreme that a single person could completely stop parliaments (*Sejm*) and therefore the governance of the Country, one after the other. This right was called the “*liberum veto*.”⁷⁹ Of course, peer group pressure acted against such a vote, but as foreign encroachments and huge sums of money poured into Poland some individuals broke up the discussions of the Parliament. Often, the man doing this was protected by a small army in order to protect himself against the wrath of his peer group.

This *Wolność* was further increased by the historical situation, which made, in effect, each man a king—however small his parcel of land was. Thus, the *Szlachta* were accustomed to rule without formal restraint over their peasant workers. The *Szlachta* were at liberty to

⁷⁷ Originally from F.Schulz observations of 1793. Here from *PSOC*, (Warszawa: 1963), Vol. I, p. 463

⁷⁸ Jean Bodin classified the Poles, together with the British and the Scandinavians, as “. . . ‘northerners’ who are instinctive haters of tyranny.” From Davis, *God’s Playground*, p. 364.

⁷⁹ “The principle of unanimous adoption of all decisions and acts of *Sejm*, with each deputy having the right to protest and to prevent the adoption of any bill in the *Sejm*.” Arnold and Zychowski, p. 60. The first such incident was to have occurred in 1652 by Ladislas Sicinski, an adherent-client of the politically powerful Prince Radziwiłł.

dispense justice as they saw fit. A side effect of this was an immense Egoism, which developed among the less-restrained members of the Szlachta.

Often in order to settle disputes that no one could resolve, private wars or raids took place between the Szlachta. These raiding parties were called, "zajazdem." The Magnates would call upon members of the lower Szlachta to join them in these private feuds. Although it may have started as an affair of honor, it was not conducted that way. They were nothing but an excuse for stealing. This again was an example of the corruption of the idea of Wolność.

An example of Rowność is the manner of toasting one's health. Since all were equal they would all drink from the same tankard or cup. At parties it was mandatory for the host to drink to each individual, stressing their commonality and Community.

TOWARZYKOŚĆ

"Sociability," "geniality." This was more than a social grace. The Szlachta lived in and for his community—not by himself. Szlachta were constantly on the move from one Szlachta's home to another—just visiting, bringing news, gossiping. This ability to be a good companion was highly prized. Each person was expected to be a good guest-companion and host. This was based upon the old Slavic notion that to have a guest in the house is an honor. Everything that would make a guest welcome was given to him. The more that a host could provide for his guest, the greater was the Magnanimity of the host and, therefore, the greater was his Status. This openhearted hosting is called, "Goscinność." This Goscinność often expressed itself with people giving huge banquets which are known as "Biesiada," where the host would show off with all of his worldly goods: silverware, servants, beer, wine, and foods. The guests would try to outdo each other in revelry, eating and drinking.

But what and how did the old Poles eat and drink? One mark of Magnates is their girth. They ate heartily and drank heavily. Even from the time of Leszek Biały (13th century), the medieval Poles did not drink water, but rather beer or mead. By the 16th century foreign wines were imported into Poland.

The Magnates in the Kraków region drank Hungarian wines: in Prussia, Kujawy and Lithuania, French and Baltic wines. In Poznań, Hungarian and French, in the Steppes, Honey, Italian and Rhemish wines.⁸⁰ Vodka comes from a later tradition. As for food, whatever swam, flew, or ran was eaten. The Magnates had plenty to eat, but the Drobna (poorer) Szlachta did not, as contemporary paintings show. It is always a well-fed Magnate surrounded by his skinny fellow Szlachta Retainers.

They were as one family
all the Szlachta brothers
talkative, witty, jovial.

*"Była to jak jedna rodzina,
wszyscy Szlachta bracia,
rozmowni, dowcipni, jowialni."*⁸¹

One of the chief virtues of Towarzykość were conversational skills executed with flair in a bombastic style often speaking in "Sarmatian dialect," that is mixing Polish and Latin. Not given, either by education or inclination to thinking about subtle philosophical problems, but rather life itself, points were made with anecdotes and stories.

WESOŁOŚĆ

⁸⁰ Mlicka, *Karmazyni ...*, p. 123.

⁸¹ Władysław Łoziński, *Salon I Kobieta* (Lwów: 1921), p. 30.

“Gaiety,” “joy,” “mirth,” “cheerfulness,” “glee,” “hilarity.” The Szlachta character formed during the Polish Baroque period (17th-18th centuries), and their psychology may be described as Baroque. Szlachta were expected to be expansive, open, mirthful persons, and not shy, retiring people. They were bigger than life.

Cheeriness, and sincerity
opened heartedness are
the noble flowers
among society.

*“Wesołość i swoboda
serdeczna są
szlachetnym kwiatem
stosunków towarzyskich.”*⁸²

The Szlachta, who did not immigrate to the towns, especially prized this quality of straightforward sincerity and honesty. There one became more circumspect, diplomatic, indirect, insincere.

This expansive egoism has its cruder side expressed in showing a lack of self-control, often accompanied by boasting, swearing, bullying, arguing, and fighting. Among the lesser Szlachta there was not elegance, only coarseness.

While this list of virtues is specific, there is another way to approach the grounds of the Szlachta lifestyle. We now present a grouping of opinions, definitions, and statements concerning the nature of Life and Society. The Szlachta as a group would be in agreement with most of these statements. If you, the reader, agree with most of these statements also, then you have the, “Szlachta Essence of Beliefs.”

1. People are not born equal in abilities nor have the same emotional intensities or interests.
2. They believe in the ancient moral traditions of humanity; they are dubious of wholesale changes.
3. Society is a spiritual reality possessing an eternal life but delicate constitution. It cannot be scrapped and recast as though it is a piece of matter. They believe in old and tried as against the new and untried.
4. A divine intent rules society as well as conscience which makes an eternal chain of Right and Duty which links the great and obscure, the living and the dead. Political problems, at bottom, are religious and moral problems. They do not trust the unaided human reason. Politics is the Art of apprehending and applying Justice, which is above nature.
5. They have affection for the proliferating variety and mystery of traditional life as distinguished from narrowing uniformity and equalitarianism of most radical political schemes.
6. Civilized society requires orders and classes. Only moral equality exists. All attempts of leveling can only be accomplished by force and violence. If people destroy natural distinctions a dictatorship will emerge.
7. They believe that property and freedom are inseparably connected. Economic equality is not economic progress. If property is not held in private possession, then liberty is erased.
8. Man must control his will and appetite because he is more governed by emotion than reason. Tradition and sound prejudice provide checks upon man's anarchic impulse.
9. Change is not the same as reform. Healthy changes in society are slow changes.
10. The cure of democracy is not more but better democracy.

Contrariwise the following statements are not compatible with most Szlachta beliefs.

⁸² Łoziński, *Życie ...*, p. 38.

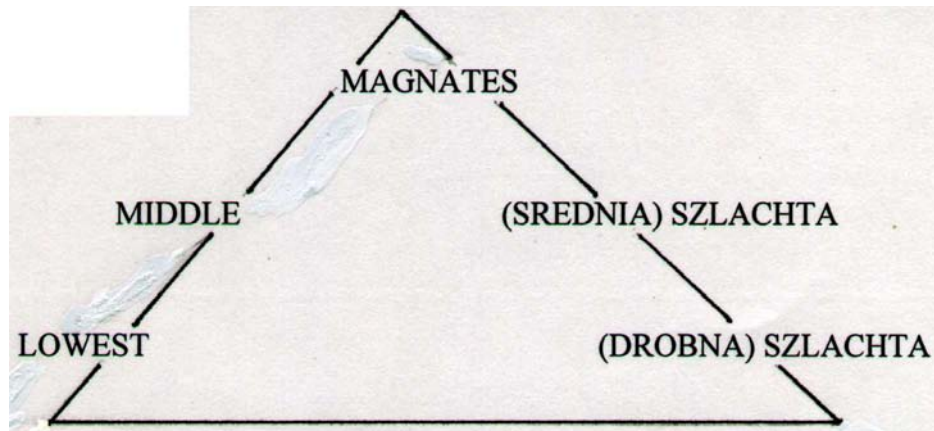
1. The idea that man can become perfect and that society can be made to progress without limit. Man does not have a proclivity toward violence or Sin.
2. Contempt of Tradition. Finite human reason, impulse and materialistic determination is preferred to the Wisdom of the Ancestors.
3. Political Leveling. The dislike of old parliamentary arrangements. Eager for centralization and consolidation.
4. Economic Leveling. The belief that collectivism is better than individual freedom. They are anti-private property.
5. The cure of democracy is more democracy.
6. Man has no Natural Rights. Everything is determined by a highly centralized State.

This should give the reader a good feeling about the life-feelings of the Szlachta. Few people ever have consciously chosen their Beliefs. Life is felt, it is lived-not thought, except in the dry minds of the old or those who are unconnected to the Earth, “tinker-thinkers.” Keep in mind that the above statements are only valid for most people for most of the time.

ii The Szlachta Values In Reality

The above list of values and virtues, as Ideals, were held by the majority of the Szlachta throughout the 17th and 18th centuries, and by substantial numbers during the 19th century and by some, even in the 20th century.

The reality of these Ideals never held absolute sway. The primary difficulty was in the Szlachta community itself whose members formed sub-interest groupings. Historians usually divide the Szlachta into three groups: “*the great nobles or higher gentry; the lords of manors; and the petty country gentlemen who often tilled their tiny holdings with their own hands, and were distinguished from the peasantry only by their titular and not by their material status.*”⁸³ These three may be classified as forming a pyramid with the most numerous at the bottom.



The first group was known as the Magnates. They became the controlling power during the 17th century, and remained so to the turn of the 19th century. Their wealth was enormous and thus, they could more easily live up to the virtues of *Goscinność* by giving grand and expensive parties, etc., in exchange for a greater voice in political power. They were for the most part “*agricultural capitalists.*” They thought of land as an investment. In order to increase their wealth, they did what they could to increase their land holdings and productivity. During the 17th century, which witnessed the rise of the new Magnates, this meant expansion into the East and an increase thereby in serfdom. The East and the Steppes were opened to the Magnates as a result of the Union of Lublin in 1569 between Poland and Lithuania.⁸⁴

Lithuania is an interesting case. The so-called “*Polish Expansion,*” is peculiar since it was peaceful and second-hand.⁸⁵ It was the Lithuanian upper class which conquered the various Rus’ tribes and expanded to the then Tartar controlled Steppes. Even by 1350 the Bialyrus tongue had penetrated into the “*Lithuanian*” state apparatus whilst the culture was an amalgam of Rus’ and Lithuanian elements. With the political union of Poland and

⁸³ Dybocki and Halecki, *History ...*, p. 439.

⁸⁴ It is very difficult for us to comprehend that the Polish Commonwealth grew peacefully and not by conquering, as did the early United States. An English diplomat to 16th century documented his travels in a work entitled, *A Relation of the State of Polonia*, published in 1598. He described the area of Wolyńia as “. . . people were warlike because of Tartar raids but considerably primitive compared to Poles.” Henryk Zims, *Polska W Oczach Anglików, XIV-XVIw* (Warszawa: 1974), p. 221.

⁸⁵ As was the expansion of Rome into Greece. One recent study has presented an alternative interpretation of Polish-Lithuanian relations. According to this study difficulties in this relationship were due to the way in which Lithuanians understood and used the Polish language. Jurate Kiaupiene, “*The Grand Duchy and the Grand Dukes of Lithuania in the Sixteenth Century: Reflections on the Lithuanian Political Nation and the Union of Lublin*”, *The Polish-Lithuanian Monarchy in European Context, c. 1500-1795*, (Belfast: 2001).

Lithuanian, considerable numbers of Polish speakers (Mazowsze dialect) settled in Lithuania. By 1650 Polish was used as the informed language of the administration in Bialyryus. This was made official in 1696.

But this is not really so because this 200-year process resulted in a variant language called the “językiem Wileńskim,” which was a common Polish-Bialyryus tongue.⁸⁶

Vast estates, called latifundia, brought incomes great enough for the Magnates to equip their own armies and to conduct, with success, their own private diplomatic relations with foreign powers at the expense of the rest of their Szlachta brotherhood and the Crown.⁸⁷

As the Magnates grew in importance they took more imposing titles for themselves. However, because of Rowność (all members of the Szlachta being equal), the entire membership of the Szlachta community assimilated the titles to themselves.

For example, in the 15th century, the term “*Wielmożność*” (Your Greatness or Highness) was only used to show honor to King. By the 17th century it passed through the Magnates and on to the ordinary Szlachta—it became an ordinary term. The same is true for the term “*Wasza Miłość Pan*”, (Your Graciful Sir) which was a royal title. In time it changed to “*Waszmość Pan*” or “*Wacpan*” and in a partially dialectal form, “*Aspan*,” “*Asan*,” “*Acan*” where the shorter forms indicate both their adaptation by the lower orders of society and the leveling process due to Rowność.

This happened to a number of other terms as well. “*Miłościwy Pan*” (Gracious or Merciful Sir) became by degrees, “*moscipana*,” “*mosciompana*,” “*mospana*,” “*mosana*,” “*mocana*” for men and “*mosciapania*,” for women. “*Waszej Miłości*” (Your Grace or Love) became “*waszmość*,” “*waszec*,” “*wasze*,” and “*wasc*,” “*Jego Miłości*” (His Grace) became “*jegomość*” for men and “*jejmością*” for women. “*Waszmościa dobrodziejem*”⁸⁸ (Your Good Sir or Benefactor) became “*waćpanowie dobrodzieje*,” “*waspanowie dobrodzieje*,” “*mospanowie dobrodzieje*,” “*mocanowie dobrodzieje*” for the men. “*Dobrodziejka*” (Benefactress) became “*dobrodzika*” and “*moscia pani dobroziejka*” (Your Ladyship Benefactress) for women. These terms do not sound clumsy in Polish.

On and on it went. This language-changing was both reflective of Equalitarianism and Status seeking within and without the caste and class structure. It represents that constantly shifting personal power relationships within a society. However as with all this “bad” or objective reality of Social-Political Life people have and do create a “good” side to this status-seeking—they make it “Artful”—they invent “Good Manners”—they invented an “Aesthetics of Behavior.” One has only to use these terms to experience the pleasure, which they can bring. Remember never assume that contemporary Manners or the ways of our time are better than those of other Societies or Times.

The only proof or way to experience this pleasure is in the practice of these Manners.

Despite the mechanism of the process, the idea that the person is ultimately Noble, asserted itself in the heavy usage of imposing titles for occupational positions or just for conversational purposes, that is, for the Beauty of Form. It wasn't until the eclipse of Szlachta Poland that the remaining members of the Szlachta Community were registered with the occupying powers, as members of a titled aristocracy in the Western European fashion. Thus, beginning in the 19th century, we hear of Baron, Count or Prince so-and-so, all of which are foreign impositions.⁸⁹

⁸⁶ J. Jakubowski, *Studia nad stosunkami narodowosciowymi na Litwie przed unia lubelska*, (Warszawa: 1912).

⁸⁷ At times the Crown acted with the “Magnates,” e.g., as a result of an adventure of the Mniszech family and others. The Russians elected Ladislas, the son of the Polish King, in 1610 . . . Czar of all the Rus' lands. This would have been an excellent chance for the Slavic people to share Central Europe, but the narrow-mindedness of all prevented this.

⁸⁸ In the past the terms “*dobrodziej*” and “*przyjaciół*” corresponded to levels of clientage. The “*dobrodziej*” is a patron who gives benefits: the “*przyjaciół*” the person who receives the benefits.

⁸⁹ This Rowność among the Poles is just a specific instance of the general pattern of Rowność of the Slavonic peoples. The Steppe Cossacks of the 17th and 18th centuries are another good example of this, complete with the same class differences. One factor in maintaining the Historically retrogressive notion of “Equality” was the heavy influx of Poles into the Steppes

The poorest members of the Szlachta caste were just as poor as the poorest peasants and lived as humbly as they, except that they also had their Honor, Blood, and Sword. These poor have been described:

For many Gentlemen are so poor
that they drink [only] water,
and follow the plough bare-footed,
yet they do not lose their Right
to be Gentlemen,
nor their voices in
general assemblies, [Government]
as in choosing the King
and the like.
These Gentlemen [acting as] servants
wait with their hats on,
and sit at their masters table,
both at home and abroad
wherever their masters are invited.
For they consider it a disgrace
to have slaves wait on them,
yet some will apparel their slaves
as Gentlemen to serve
them at Court, or to the Cities,
and when they return they then
take this apparel from them.

*“For many Gentlemen are so poore
as they drinck water,
and follow the plough bare-footed,
yet loose they not their right
to be gentlemen,
nor their voices in
generall assemblies,
as in choyce of the King
and like occasions.
These gentlemen seruants
waite with their hatts on,
and sett at their masters table,
both at home and abroad
where their masters are invited:
For they account it a disgrace
to haue slaues wait on them,
yet some will apparel their slaues
as Gentlemen to attend on
them to the Court, or to Cittyes,
and when they retorne
take this apparel from them.”*⁹⁰

At this time there were no slaves in Poland. “Slaves” in the preceding quotation refers to serfs.

They [the poor Polish Gentlemen Szlachta] worked the soil in the same manner as the peasants, but when it came time for the Sejm meetings, they went and gorged themselves with food and drink, making sure that none—even the most powerful Magnate—would offer them an insult. Many members of this class became assimilated to the peasant class during the 19th century. This occurred chiefly in the more isolated regions of partitioned Poland—in Ruthenia, for example, in Podolia, Wolynia, and the Steppes. It is for this reason that some scholars’ claim that the peasant walking dance (Chodzony) was brought to the peasants by the Szlachta caste, with all of its nobility but which lost some of its dance intensity. This lower Szlachta caste numbered 200,000 in Lithuania alone but the Magnates controlled Lithuania.⁹¹

As much as the lower Szlachta castes might pretend that they were masters of the Polish Commonwealth, they were not—the Magnates were. As might be expected, the Srednia and Drobna Szlachta stressed their equality with the Magnates. They, more often than the Magnates, would say *“Miłość Braterska!”* (Beloved Fraternity!), or *“Kochajmy się!”* (We all love all!), as a toast.

It was the Srednia (middle caste) Szlachta (also known as Szlachta folwarczna), which did the actual confronting of the Magnates at the political gatherings of the Sejms. The

numbering 50% of the Steppes by the 16th century. So heavy was this outflow from Poland that large areas of central Poland, for example, Mazowsze, were empty! But these Poles emigrated as individuals and did not take with them any organized Polish life—they did not build any Polish colonies deep in the Steppes, with the exception of small garrison towns. There wasn’t a campaign for example of heavy church building. Religion of the West would be spread by the upper class, and not by the peasants. Michał Bobrzyński, *Dzieje Polski w zarysie*, (Warszawa: 1977), p. 311. Thus, these Poles assimilated to the various peoples of the Steppes.

⁹⁰ Moryson, *Shakespeare’s Europe*, ... , p. 90.

⁹¹ Zajaczkowski, *Głównie ...*, p. 45. According to a recent work this represented 20% of the ethnically Polish population. A Kappeler, *The Russian Empire: A Multiethnic History*, (Harlow: 2001), p. 216.

usual political alliances followed, with the Magnates either trying to isolate the leaders of the Srednia Szlachta from its own caste, or by opposing the Drobna (lower) Szlachta to the Srednia group. The techniques of the Magnates involved over exaggerated flattery, money, honors, and positions. The Drobna Szlachta often went to the Magnates with hat in hand.

Good examples of this are the paintings by Norblin done about 1790. The one shown here is entitled, *The Magnate and His Clients*.

It shows a well fed Magnate surrounded by his low, bowing clients. The clients are poor Szlachta: undernourished, dirty, unshaven, and asking for favors from the Magnate who is just the opposite of them.



The division of the Szlachta into three parts also affected their character and behavior. The Magnates had more foreign contacts and adopted features of foreign systems that would increase their power. They spent vast sums of money on foreign luxury goods and clothes. Often this was a feature (the clothes) which distinguished the traditional Magnates from the “European Magnates,” but more of this later.

In order to understand more fully the Szlachta lifestyle and power of the Magnates, we shall present some examples of Szlachta life below. While only the Magnates may have had the money for these displays, most of the Szlachta would have done likewise if they could.

One of the best features of the Szlachta life was the funeral procession called, “Kruszenie kopii,” to symbolize the augustness of Death, and do honor not only to the dead man, but indirectly to the value of Rycerskość.

Behind the coffin paced the dead man’s favorite charger covered with a long cape, which trailed behind the horse. Also fixed to the horse were a number of lighted candles and the deceased’s sword, shield, and armor. Into the church rode a knight in full war array (to the coffin), and broke his lance (in a mock charge upon the coffin) on the foot of the coffin and from this charge the knight fell upon the floor (of the church) with as much noise and clatter of arms as possible. Often in the ensuing

panic of the horse and people, there would be damage done to the spectators. All of this is a wonderful symbol of the gravity of the situation.⁹²

Recalling their affinity for ancient Rome, the Szlachta had a ceremony called "Sobowtóry." This was in fact a copy of the old Roman practice of a type of "substitution," involved at the funeral. Behind the coffin a man followed who was made up to resemble the deceased. He was a live counterfeit-called buy the ancient Romans, "archimimus."

An obvious way in which Magnates showed their station and importance was by ostentatious display.

In 1646 one Szlachta named Latałski was buried. His funeral was attended by 1,700 guests on 1,300 horses. Leading the processional were 150 men dressed in black, riding on horses draped from head to foot in black.

Jozef Potocki had a four-day funeral upon his death in 1751. One Matuszewicz, a famous middle class Szlachta, buried his father with 324 Latin and 150 Uniate priests.⁹³

In short the Nobles life-style was permeated with a spirit of excess. They preferred ostentation to substance and good form to good deeds. These characteristics increased as the Poland-Lithuania State declined and disappeared.

The Szlachta caste, for many people, represents "Historical Poland," or the "Wielki Tradycja," ("The Great Tradition"). Some even think of the 1,000 year span of Polish Christian History as being solely the history of this Szlachta caste. They have given this caste attributes which it either did not have, or simply invented or imagined them to have. These attributes were supposed to be possessed by all the Szlachta irrespective of the actual historic time period.⁹⁴

One of these errors is the attribution of the elegance, finesse, delicacy, and decadence of the French Aristocracy to the Szlachta. A large number did have these qualities but the overwhelming mass of the Szlachta community during the 17th and 18th centuries exhibited that behavior which would express the ideas and privileges of their community.

They were respectful and courteous but in their own blustering, bragging, grandiose style. Everything was done for effect. They knew of finesse when it came to a point of Honor or precedence. One often gets the mistaken impression that these men would not use coarse language or would not expectorate. But such is definitely not the case. They did what all men of their epoch did. Although they were respectful to their brothers (most of the time), they were coarse and rude to others.

Sir George Carew, England's Ambassador to Poland at the beginning of the 17th century, described the Szlachta with their virtues and vices as:

The Gentry are full
of ceremony,
civil and courteous
when meeting,
bountiful at table,
costly in dress,
great gourmands and drinkers,
not sleepy nor heavy

*"The gentry full
of ceremonies,
civill and curteous
in enterteinment,
bountifull at table,
costly in dyett,
great gourmandes and quaffers,
not sleepy nor heavy*

⁹² Łoziński, *Życie* , p. 193. The institution of legal vendettas existed in Poland-Lithuania. This increased lawlessness throughout out the land.

⁹³ Łoziński, *Życie* ... , p. 94.

⁹⁴ Clerical Christians have reinforced the idea that Poland's history only began with the Christianization of Poland, which only gives Poland a thousand-year History. But this is false, as the peoples of Poland existed for centuries before this.

in their drunkenness
 as the Dutch,
 but furious and quarrelsome,
 highminded and proud but in a
 jolly and not surly
 as the Germans.
 Public in their dealings,
 so liberal,
 that they are rather prodigal
 And hating avarice,
 They dislike the trades
 and the trouble of [making business]
 making profits,
 easily [claiming] to live bravely
 (which they much affect)
 and therefore bad paymasters,
 [with a] high self-opinion
 of themselves...

*in their dronckennesse,
 as the Dutche,
 but furious and quarrelsome,
 hyghemynded, and proude but in a
 iollity and not surly
 as the Germans.
 Apert in their dealings,
 so liberall,
 that they are rather prodigall
 and hating avarice,
 they distaste the artes
 and trouble of
 gayning,
 greats schifters to lyve bravely
 (whiche they much affecte)
 and therefore badd payemeisters,
 highly conceipted
 of themselves . . . ”⁹⁵*

As an example of the bad side of the Szlachta life-style we include the observations of the traveler Ulrich Werdum who was in Poland in the years 1670-1672:

“The Poles are not lacking in politeness and intelligence; but they are light-hearted and fickle. When they have an interest in something and are on the weaker side, they act very humbly and peacefully, but when they meet a weaker party and master the situation, they immediately become proud, conceited and cruel, they either serve servilely or rule proudly, a character described by Livy. In everyday life and in social conversation they use more compliments and flatteries than any other people...Drinking is widespread here in the upper and lower strata, with both men and women, as nowhere in the world. They especially like ‘vodka’ which they call in Polish ‘goralka’, and in the Ruthenian ‘horylka’, and in their Latin ‘crematum.’ With the consuming of a large quantity of liquor, fights are frequently provoked, whereby the saber of necessity goes into action. They use it to cut each other’s chest and faces, which dueling they consider a defense of their honor, and those who are marked with scars on their faces are considered outstanding heroes, . . . ”⁹⁶

The English writer, Danial Defoe while acknowledging the virtues of the Nobility, certainly recognized their vices. Here is what he wrote of them:

“In Poland this vanity of birth is carry’d up to such a monstrous extravagance that the name of gentleman and the title of a Starost, a Palatine, or a Castollan gives the man a superiority over all the vassels or common people, infinitely greater than that of King or Emperor, reigning over them with more absolute Power, and making them more miserable than the subjects either of the Grand Seignior or the Cham of Tartary, insomuch that they trample on the poorer people as dogs and frequently murder them:: and when they do are accountable to nobody...

For take the nobility and the gentry of POLAND . . . as they appear in history; in the first place, they are the most haughty, imperious, insulting people in

⁹⁵ Count Renaud Przewdziecki, *Diplomatic Ventures And Adventures*, (London: 1953), p. 52.

⁹⁶ Volodymyr Sichynsky, *Ukraine In Foreign Comments*, (New York: 1953), p. 133.

*the world. A very valuable historian of our times says they are proud, insolent, obstinate, passionate, furious. These are indeed the born gentlemen . . . ”*⁹⁷

Comparisons of the national, class, and caste vices and virtues among the various peoples of Europe have been made for centuries. These were true observations made before the rise of modern sensibilities made it an offense to speak the truth. A burgomaster made one such comparison in 1747. He was condemning luxury, especially that of the colonists in America at that time. Comparing Americans with others he wrote:

*“All other nations have each their favorite luxury; as the Italian his pompous palace, the Frenchman his fine suit, the Pole his splendid equipage, the German his capacious cellar, the Spaniard his bead roll of titles, . . . ”*⁹⁸

By “splendid equipage” the author is referring directly to the accouterments, dressings, decorations, etc., for horses and indirectly to the Polish Nobility's love of horses and the equestrian life and everything that goes with it. This is a reflection of the importance of the horse to Polish rural and military life and to the life of the Eastern European landowning class.

Contrast the above with the eyewitness account of the same time (1750) by a different observer:

*“Of all the countries where I have ever been I think that I prefer the Warsaw mode of living. One meets quantities of brilliant people with whom it is a pleasure to converse and there is a great number of houses belonging to the nobility which are always open to you. I could have mentioned five or six where the style of living is better and more agreeable than anywhere else in Europe. The women are beautiful and have a most charming manners; their carriage is noble and they are the most accomplished persons that I have ever met anywhere.”*⁹⁹

It is better to think of the mass of the Szlachta in the 18th century as “diamonds in the rough.” This “temperament” manifested itself both in the dances done and the manner of doing the dances. The assimilated Szlachta and Drobna Szlachta would dance peasant dances with noble pretensions-plenty of verve and fire. The upper orders dance in a more restrained way, but still with power. Temperament was preferred to absolute grace. The Szlachta did not want foreign ways to make them effeminate as represented by the French.

But what was the relationship between the Szlachta and the mass of the population-the peasants? The peasants were serfs who were defacto slaves, long before the first Negro was brought to the Americas.

We shall simply repeat Frederick the Great of Prussia's condemnation of Polish Society keeping in mind that he had to justify to Western Europe his participation in the partitioning of Poland. Of Poland, he wrote:

“That kingdom is caught in eternal anarchy. Conflicting interests separate all the magnate families. They put their own advantage above the public good and unite among themselves only to consider cruel and atrocious means of oppressing their serfs, whom they treat like cattle. The Poles are vain and haughty when favoured by fortune, abject in defeat, capable of the greatest baseness when money is to be gained . . . but after getting it, they throw it out of the window. Frivolous, they have neither

⁹⁷ Davies, *God's Playground*, p. 236.

⁹⁸ Cleveland Amory, *Who Killed Society?*, (New York: 1960), p. 31.

⁹⁹ Count Renaud Przewdziecki, *Diplomatic Ventures ...*, p. 189-199.

*judgement nor firm opinion. . . In this kingdom, reason has become the vassal of women, they intrigue and decide about everything, while their men worship the bottle.”*¹⁰⁰

And he said more:

*“Poland is free and the Poles are slaves; the constitution is republican but there is a King at the top; the land is infinitely large and has almost no inhabitants; the Poles love war and have conducted famous wars for centuries and nevertheless they have no fortresses and instead of a regular army only the **levy en masse** of courageous but undisciplined men.... The Poles are brave and valiant but also – with a very few exceptions – unstable and frivolous. Only the women show an astonishing strenght of character and are many times the true men.”*¹⁰¹

In reality Frederick the Great’s life and character left much to be desired.as is evidenced in a letter which he wrote in 1741:

*“If we can gain something by being honest, we will be it, and if we have to deceive, we will be cheats.”*¹⁰²

This was at the time when he was stealing Austrian Silesia (formerly Polish Silesia).

He was considered by some and himself to be an Enlightened Absolute Ruler who was unalterably opposed to the Aristocratic Republicanism of Poland. This was also manifested by what the anti-Polish Germans called, “polnische Wirtschaft.” Loosely, this can mean, “ Polish mismanagement.” This term originally described the wretched condition of the peasants as contrasted with that of great Magnates of Poland. Latter it became a derisive term of economics. It is the same phenomenon or attitude which exploitative, capitalistic circles today (1998) apply to indigenou s non-capitalist economies: it believes that maximizing Profit and State Power is Morally Better than not to do so.

When Poland did set its course on the road to reform by rectifying this mismanagement and modernizing its Social Relations Poland was completely destroyed by the partitioning Powers.¹⁰³

Thus, we end this short introduction to the Szlachta social and political community, whose members, one way or the other, influenced Polish life and history from the 16th century to our own. Now we must study only one more aspect of the Szlachta life, which has direct bearing on the character of the Polish Walking Dance—their clothes.

¹⁰⁰ Michael Burleigh, *Germany Turns Eastwards*, (New York: 1988), p. 4.

¹⁰¹ Harry Rosenthal, *German And Pole*, (Gainesville: 1976), p. 8. This book is a good introduction to the history of German stereotypes of Poles and Poland: who wrote what, who said what and why. It also deals with the political usage’s of this propangada.

¹⁰² H. M. Scott, *The Birth Of A Great Power System 1740-1815*, (London: 2006), p. 51.

¹⁰³ The major partitions of Poland occurred in 1772, 1793, 1795, 1807, 1809, 1815, 1846, 1918, 1939, and 1945.

SZLACHTA DRESS

Confining ourselves to the period from the 17th to the 18th centuries, we shall try to answer the following questions:

- 1) What was worn when doing these dances?
- 2) Did all Szlachta members wear the same clothes?
- 3) How were women dressed?

We shall use a chronological arrangement of drawings and remarks to illustrate the main features of the wearing apparel of the Szlachta.

The Eastern influences upon East Central Europe cannot be discounted, mostly from the Southern corner of Europe, in which the Tartars, Turks, and Persians ruled. Combined with the styles of these warring tribes and the Hungarians, was the need for heavy clothes which led to the creation and wide usage of the long or great overcoat—usually fur-trimmed. The practical function is for both an outdoors, as well as a winter garment, to be worn inside in those days of elementary heating stoves.¹⁰⁴

During the first half of the 16th century, the clothing styles of Western Europe predominated in Poland. This is the time of late Renaissance with heavy Italian influence in all fields. These differences at this time are natural differences based upon the self-interest of the classes of people involved.

But during this time a distinctive overcloak comes into increased usage by the Szlachta during the reign of Zygmunt I (1506-1548). There began a settling out of three groupings of fashion as indicated here:

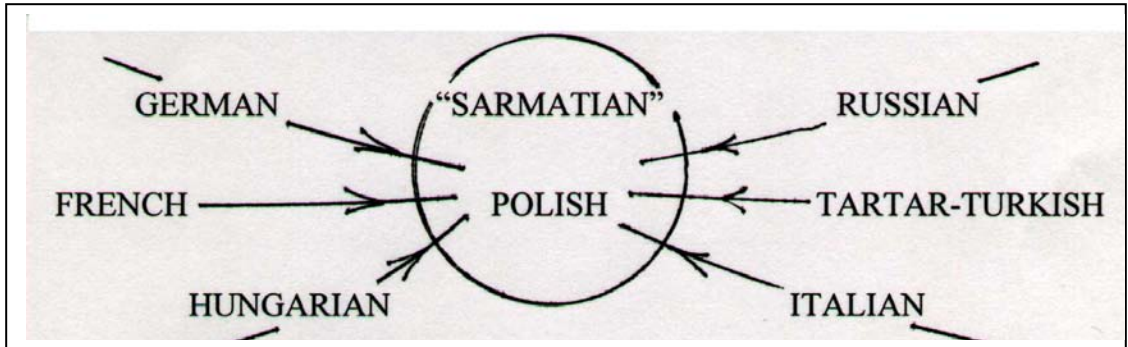
Szlachta	Zygmunt I's Court	Townspeople, Craftsmen, Merchants
"Sarmatian" styles	Italian styles	French and German styles

¹⁰⁴ How interesting it is that in days when people were so backward materially that they should have such rich cultures.

The King's court was cosmopolitan in nature and was influenced by Sarmatian-Polish-Lithuania, Spanish, German, and Hungarian "Huszar" styles. This is an indication of the Polish Court's Western European connections and preferences. We can foresee that there will be conflicts between the Court and the mass of the Szlachta.¹⁰⁵

However, by 1550, the Szlachta of Poland and Hungary have a distinctive fashion which was denoted as "Sarmatian," this term which was previously discussed above appears for the first time in written form in 1521 in a publication entitled, *Descriptio Sarmatarum Asianae et Europianae et eorum quae in eis continent*.¹⁰⁶

The place called "Sarmatia" was imagined to be in eastern Poland or located in even Moscow or Moldavia or Wallachia (present day Rumania).¹⁰⁷ Generally speaking, the formative influences upon Poland during the 16th century were as are shown below:



Here are three examples of dress from the end of the 16th century.



¹⁰⁵ On one occasion a conscious attempt was made by the Court to wear the Kontusz in a political battle. When Zygmunt I attended the Parliament (Sejm) at the town of Piotrkow on November 11, 1562: "... great was their surprise when the king appeared at the beginning of the Sejm's deliberations, not in the rich Italian garb of which he had always been fond, but dressed in a kontusz—the long coat traditionally worn by the Polish gentry. And, as the deputies quickly discovered, this was not some theatrical trick: to the contrary, the king had become the nation's most prominent member of the Execution campaign" H. Dembkowski, *The Union of Lublin*, (New York: 1982), p. 69.

¹⁰⁶ Gutkowski-Rychlewska, *Historia Ubiorów* (Warszawa: 1968), p. 380. Unless otherwise stated, all Polish fashion reproductions are from this work. Scholars recognize it as comprehensive and definitive.

¹⁰⁷ As previously stated, we now know the extent of the travels of the Sarmatian peoples: from the Eastern Steppes to the Elbe River. Of course, the Szlachta of the 16th century were without the benefit of 20th century knowledge.

To these examples we include several more 16th century drawings. The long hanging sleeves of the women's garment shown here were a Western European style of the time. The drawing on the left is a Polish Noblewoman: the three on the right from Gdansk.



All are from the second half of the 16th century.

This European style of long hanging sleeves with a full-length heavy dress does occur later in the 18th century (and perhaps in the early 19th century) among some Polish women as will be illustrated later in this book. This may account for the lingering impression that this somehow came to represent a “Polish-style” in more modern times.

It is to be pointed out that although the Szlachta wore these same clothes when on military duty, foot soldiers and officers of the King's Army wore military uniforms copied from European fashions. Thus, at any upper class gathering (up until modern times), there were different types of fashions present giving interest to an occasion.

The drawings below show the *Delia* (the overcoat), developing long, hanging sleeves, which are decorative. Boots were worn.¹⁰⁸ The drawing from 1654 is taken from a painting of Hetman (Marshal) Stefan Czarniecki, who was active in the wars of the 17th century.

¹⁰⁸ We have a remark about these boots from the biography of I. Paderewski. “It was all about my cousin Florian and his beautiful green boots. It is a tradition among the Polish people to wear with their Polish costumes very gay boots of different colors, yellow, green, red, etc.” I. J. Paderewski, *The Paderewski Memoirs*, (New York: 1938), p.6. Note that the boots were of different colors.



By the early 17th century Western Europe thought of this great overcoat as representative of East Central Europe, via Polish examples. When traveling abroad on diplomatic missions, Polish emissaries made a special effort to appear in their Polish Dress.

During the summer of 1636 the English Ambassador to the Court of Ferdinand II of the Holy Roman Empire had occasion to see the Polish Dress. Here is his account:

On the fifteenth day the Polish Ambassador visited His Excellency with thirty followers who were all clothed in Satin dublets of several colors and with red cloth hose, with long Polish red coats, most of woven silk, without sleeve-bands or hats, but [instead] red caps on their heads with a feather, such as the Turk's wear, in every one of them, their hair all cut off their heads, but [for] one long lock on the crown, and all [wearing] short yellow boots, no spurs but [with] iron heels, and the Ambassador in the same fashion, and twelve footmen clothed in the same style [but] using less rich material, carrying large pole-axes in their hands and sabers at their sides.

*“The fixeteenth day the Poland Ambaffadour vifited his Excellency having thirty followers being all clothed in feverall coloured Sattin dublets and red cloth hofe with long Poland red coates, moft of woven filke, without fleeves bands or hats, but redde capes on their heads with a feather like unto a Turkey's in every one of them, their haire all cut off their heads, but one long locke left on their crowne, and all yellow fhort bootes, no fpurres but iron heeles, and the Ambaffadour in the same fafhion, and twelve footemen clothed in the same kinde in a meaner habit, having great Pole-axes in their hands and fables by their fides.”*¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁹ W. Crowne, *Travels Of Thomas Lord Howard*, (New York: 1971), p. 44. A letter written by a English Nobleman described the visit of the Polish Ambassador to the Court of Queen Elizabeth I in the year 1597. “There arrived three days since in the city an ambassador out of Poland, a gentleman of excellent fashion, wit, discourse, language, and person . . . He was brought in attired in a long robe of black velet, well jeweled and bordered, and came to kiss her majesty's hands where

In 1645 a Polish embassy member went to the French Court to ask for the hand of Marie Louisa for the Polish King. How did they appear to the French? We read below:

“Chlapowski, captain of the guards of the Palatine of Posen, was dressed in a tight fitting cloak of yellow satin and a long scarlet trimmed with sable, his cap was of gold cloth, with feathers on the top, fastened with silver, and on the other, a sword. They were both set with precious stones.”

*“All have their heads shaved in the Polish fashion, that is, with only a tuft of hair at the top. They had long moustaches.”*¹¹⁰



This Polish manner of shaving the head seems to be a general style among the Eastern European nobility—especially common among Poles and Rutheno-Ukrainians. It was called, “Czupryna.”

Even two centuries later (and more) we note that this was still the style among some:

*“The men of all ranks generally wear whiskers and shave their heads, leaving only a circle of hair upon the crown.”*¹¹¹

Another type of hair fashion is called by Kitowicz, “Cebulane Głowy.” One can easily imagine an old Mongolian-Manchu influence.



she stood under the state, . . .” This from, *Elizabeth I*, (Chicago: 2000), p. 344. This may have been just a long overcoat and not recognized as anything specifically, “Polish.”

¹¹⁰ W. Norefill, *Poland* (New York: 1962), 134. Maria Louisa was very active in Polish politics and she tried to establish a strong centralized state often the pattern of France. Her French influence was great in the court because she lasted a long time as a consequence of having been a Polish Queen two times. After the death of Władysław IV, she married the next king, Jan Casimir.

¹¹¹ William Coxe, *Travels in Poland, Russia, Sweden and Denmark* (London: 1802), 171. Gutkowski-Rychlewska state that this hairstyle existed earlier (1544) in Poland, Lithuania, and Moscow. *Historia Ubiorów*, p. 397. According to one account the Pope of Rome mandated this shaved-hair style as a condition of Kazimierz I becoming King of Poland. He had been a monk and had this hairstyle. This fashion was general throughout the East in the 17th century. A. T. Palmer, *Authentic Memoirs of John Sobieski*, (London: 1815), p. 302.

Often the Żupan was of brocade material, interlaced with silver or gold thread. Metal accessories made of gold and jewels (if one could afford it), were used on buttons, belts, swords, and pins. Usually costly bird feathers were used in the hats.

Following is a good example of what came to be called by foreigners the “Polish Mode” and by Poles as the “Staropolska” style. It was the Court dress of Bogulsaw Sluski.



By 1650 boots had come to replace shoes for men. As befits a man in colorful clothes, his boots were also colored. When a man couldn't afford anything else, he would wear black boots.

Often their [color] matched that of the Żupan. . .

*“Często dobierano je do koloru żupana. . .”*¹¹²

Gold leather was especially highly prized by Szlachta; red leather boots

“Safian żółty był ceniony szczególnie przez klientele szlachecka; safianowe obuwiu czerwone

¹¹² Jędrzej Kitowicz, *Opis Obyczajów za Panowania Augusta III.* (Wrocław: 1951).

are at times found
in their memoirs
of inventories
of townspeople.

*jest czasem
wspominane
w inwentarzach
mieszczańskich.”*¹¹³

Not only were different colored boots worn, but they were also engraved with patterns. There were also cloth boots with interwoven patterns of cloth and leather. This leather came from the Turks. We shall see that as time goes on, non-Szlachta townspeople copied Szlachta fashions, which led to conflicts.

The Żupan, which is the long garment worn under the Delia, was made either in plain or printed material, for example flowers. It was often brocade. Most of this material came from Gdansk, which was a leading center in the 17th century. To take a trip to Gdansk just to purchase this material was a yearly pilgrimage. Old paintings show the streets of Gdansk overflowing with Szlachta.

Polish women's fashions did not develop as far as the men's did toward a specific "Polish" direction. They followed the European trends. During the 16th to 18th centuries, this was a heavy, full, long, and bell-shaped dress. There were some local "Polish" elements among Szlachta women during the 17th century. These consisted of minor elements only of for instance, heavily embroidered and colorful handkerchiefs, ribbons, and trimmings.

As French fashions began to reign supreme in Europe, so they did also in the Polish Court and among Szlachta women. From 1650 on, it is the French mode for women. Needless to say, women did not wear boots, but rather low, elegant shoes.

Jul Just, the Danish envoy to the Court of St. Petersburg, traveled through southern Poland in 1711 and noted in his diary that in the city of Lwów, "*the men don Polish attire, while the women French*"¹¹⁴

Shown below is an example at an attempt to present something that was to represent "Polishness," or the "Polish mode," for women abroad. This was worn by the wife of a Polish diplomat in some Western European country in 1678.



¹¹³ Gutkowski-Rychlewska, *Historia Ubiorów*, p. 517.

¹¹⁴ Volodymyr Sichynsky, *Ukraine In Foreign Comments*, (New York: 1953), p. 133.

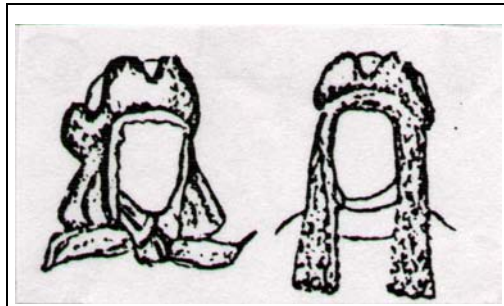
Notice that her servant-boy is dressed in the “Polish mode” for men. We can see that her skirt reaches to the floor, while she wears a long, jacket-type garment over this, which extends to her needs. The sleeves are short, but are normally cut. Everything is trimmed with fur, lace, and bows. She wears a crown. Notice there is also a train.¹¹⁵

Since this was used in order to make a strong “Polish” impression upon foreign observers it just may be that this is a deliberate exaggeration: or perhaps an invention, since we do not have other pieces like this. The least we can say is that this was not a general women’s style.

Somewhat later in time another drawing (artist unknown) shows a Polish Woman dressed in a new style—note that there are no hanging sleeves. The title of this drawing is, “A distinguished Lady.” Note that there is nothing “Polish” about her dress.



During this time, women had fur “Venetian Crown” hats, which they placed either on a handkerchief, or their hair, as seen here.¹¹⁶



¹¹⁵ This may be somewhat over-stated because the general outline or cut of the woman’s clothes are much the same as the French fashion of the time. See the dress of the Maruise de Caylus in the collection of Trouvain, 1694.

¹¹⁶ The Polish Army Song And Dance Company has a dance suite wherein the women wear this type of head covering.

At the beginning of the 18th Century two Electors of Saxony were elected to the Polish throne. There is an interesting story of these Saxon Kings of Poland. These Kings of Poland, August I (1697-1733) and Augustus II (1733-1763) also held the title of Elector of Saxony, which was their home territory and political base. Their wives therefore had the corresponding title Electoress of Saxony and Queen of Poland. The wife of August I was a severe and rigid opponent of the Catholic religion. Because of this she refused to go to Poland and never did.

However the wife of August II, Maria Josepha, decide that “Poland was worth a Mass” and converted to Catholicism and spent some time in Poland. The following painting of her shows her in a Kontusz-like garment.



Do you see the sleeves? Is this evidence of her adopting the garment as a symbol of her status of a Queen of Poland?

With the coming of Poland's Saxon Kings,¹¹⁷ foreign fashions increased.¹¹⁸ During this time, the fashion was called the "German fashion." Actually, it was a mixture of French and German styles. However, during this time, the Polish mode developed its most characteristic feature. The Delia developed long sleeves which were split open so that the arms fit through. This variant of the great overcoat is called a Kontusz. The Kontusz then became wrapped around with a large cloth belt, under which the sword hung.

In the city museum of Warszawa there are two figurines of this last phase of the Szlachta fashion from the year 1740. They are the same as these shown below.



This Kontusz and Zupan combination in flashing bright colors fit the traditional zest for the life of the Szlachta, which will also be expressed in their Walking-Dance variant. A rough division among the Szlachta community is indicated by the fashion worn. The lower, middle, and conservative Magnates dressed in the Polish mode, while the rest of the Magnate and Court dressed in the foreign mode. This mixture is evident in prints and paintings of the time.

One item, which increased in decorative importance, was the belt, which was worn over the Zupan or Kontusz. Originally imported from Turkish Persia in the 17th century, it became so sought after that a factory was built in Poland to meet the demand. This belt was usually made of shiny brocade, with stylized patterns, and is known as "Stuckie Pasy," and itself became a Samaritanian symbol.

From a statistical survey made from materials of the period 1700-1769 of the inventories of townspeople in Poland, it was found that foreign styles equal in frequency to that of Polish styles.¹¹⁹ However, many persons in this survey had both, which implies that they wore both types on separate occasions. Thus there is another side to this mode.

¹¹⁷ "The years of their rule were the darkest period in the entire history of Poland. Augustus I was interested only in his own affairs and those of Saxony . . . in order to attain his own advantages in the Northern War, he consented to the partition of Poland.", Arnold and Zychowski, *Outline...*, p. 67.

¹¹⁸ When the very rich and talented magnate, Jan Branicki was appointed Field Hetman in 1735 he changed his dress from foreign to Polish: to the Kontusz. But his wife did not change her mode of dress. E. Kowecka, *Dwór Najrzadniejszego W Polsce Magnata*, (Warszawa: 1991), p. 223.

¹¹⁹ Irene Turnau, *Odzież Mieszanstwo w XVIII Wieku* (Warszawa: 1967), p. 133.

From the 16th century the percent of Szlachta moving into cities increased. There was a constant conflict between the town-living Szlachta, and the burghers, where close living exaggerated conflicts. As the burghers were often richer than the Szlachta, they mistakenly tried to extract political and social advantages from the Szlachta who, suffering from too narrow a perspective, tried to protect only their own privileges.

Examples of the conflict are the sumptuary laws, which the Szlachta of the capitol repeatedly passed against the burghers.¹²⁰ These were laws to prevent the wearing of Kontusz and the bearing of swords by the burghers. Often, instead of a sword, Szlachta would carry a cane as a symbol of authority and as a practical weapon.

The Kontusz was thought of as “Polish,” and was to be worn on traditional Polish occasions—perhaps a Biesada, which would be a grand and probably loud, raucous affair where, to dress in a foreign mode, was interpreted as being slightly effeminate, if not degenerate or in other words, insincere and associated with “Salon” type affairs. This distinction becomes more fully developed with the reign of Stanisław Augustus (1764-1793).

Stanisław Augustus was the royal patron on the Enlightenment in Poland. He and his coterie of friends were instrumental in trying to reform Poland, so that it could beat off its enemies. They saw themselves as progressive, and assumed that all the Szlachta were old-fashioned and turned to France for its culture and fashions. They viewed the wearing of foreign fashions as a progressive symbol.

Stanisław August’s mother was very protective of her son and thereby had a strong influence on his character.

*“She was determined that Stanislaw should be a good Pole and a good Catholic, and made him wear Sarmatian costume.”*¹²¹

“Sarmatian costume” is the Kontusz. However, as an adult, Stanisław August preferred the Foreign mode.

Below is an example of this fashion type. The dance movement associated with clothes of this type is Minuet, which was very popular in Europe and Poland at this time.



There is more than a touch of elegance and lightness here.

¹²⁰ As occurred in Japan and other countries. In Warszawa from 1699-1777.

¹²¹ R. Butterwick, *Poland's Last King And English Culture*, (Oxford: 1998), p. 79.

Another one of Piotr Noblin's drawings shown below, illustrates the clash between "Polishness" and foreign forms during the latter 18th century. Notice the large bulk and power of the "Polish mode," while the foreign dress is tepid and devious.



A small number of the Szlachta during the 18th century have a more "Rococo" soul than Polish heart. Not until the French debacle and partitions of Poland do they have more respect for Polishness.

. . . already with the first
years of the reign
[of Augustus III]
at Court Balls one could
only see two [persons]
in Kontusz,
Czaplic and Malachowski . . .

*“ . . . już zaraz w pierwszych
latach panowania

na balach dworskich można
było widywać tylko dwa
kontusze,
Czaplica i Malachowskiego . . . ”*¹²²

This is significant for the antipathy with which the Polish mode or “Staropolska” fashion was regarded in high Court circles.

¹²² Zygmunt Kaczkowski, *Kobieta w Polsce* (Petersburg: 1895), p. 333.



The drawings of Chodowiecki above show the proper dress and character of the Kontusz in the 18th century: in particular, of the time of the French Enlightenment as manifested in Poland. Notice that the women are dressed in elegant, full ball gowns, and not in any sort of attire which would correspond to a “Polish dress.” It is important to see that the free hanging sleeves are left free, and not pinned to the back.

The freely hanging sleeves, only with a low Staropolska bow, done to greet a Lady or in some figure of Polonez, slide down along the arm.

*“Swobodnie odrzucone wyloty kontusza jedynie przy niskim staropolskim ukłonie złożonym dla powitania damy czy też przy figurach tanecznych poloneza mogły zsuwać się z ramion.”*¹²³

The importance of this passage and others is that this is a definite aesthetic requirement—it is a Sarmatian or Staropolska delicacy or elegance.

There was a long Żupan and Kontusz, which reached to the floor emphasizing the dignity of the weaver. There is a famous portrait of Augustus III in such a one of gold and red color. At the time of Augustus III, the height of one's heels was also a symbol of wealth and power or, at the very least, of extravagance. The heels were high and made of gold. There was a saying, “Znać pana po cholewach!” or, “You can tell a gentleman by his heels!”

An English traveller's memoir from this period confirms the attractiveness of the Polish Style:

*“The dresses of the Poles are rather singular; and, were it not for our partiality to short dresses, we must acknowledge that of the Poles to be both majestic and picturesque. Our Charles II thought of introducing the Polish dresses into his Court; and, after his restoration, wore them for two years.”*¹²⁴

¹²³ Gutkowski-Rychlewska, *Historia Ubiorów*, p. 661.

¹²⁴ Margravine Of Anspach, *Memoirs*, (London: 1826), p. 148. Are there any portraits of Charles II wearing Kontusz?

Although women generally dressed after the European mode, there was a women's type of "Kontusz" which developed in the latter 18th century. It is usually called a "kontusik." A cape, also of split sleeves, was worn over a fully skirt as a winter covering, as shown below.¹²⁵ It is nothing more than a fur-trimmed cape with slit sleeves. Its time period is from 1750 to 1800.¹²⁶



A lighter version worn as part of the bodice is depicted on the two figures below.

It is easy to see that the hanging sleeves are not like the men's Kontusz. The man's hang from the shoulder, while the women's hang from her upper arm, or elbow. A man could throw his sleeves over his back: a woman could not.

Notice again that the women are wearing low heeled dress shoes and not boots. In 1700 women seemed to favor red stockings and light colored silk, brocade, or velvet shoes. By 1780 it's pale pink, green, or white stocking, and lower heeled shoes.

¹²⁵ As the reader can see this cape is definitively a hindrance for doing fast dances such as the Mazur. So we conclude that women did not do the Mazur in this type of "Kontusik."

¹²⁶ This type of shoulder-wrap with split sleeves was in general use at the Court of St. Petersburg up to 1914 as the official woman's dress.



The following illustration is a good example of the Warszawa women's fashion of 1790. This is already a prototype, "Empire gown."



There does exist in the romantic literature of the next century pictures made to accompany certain books and articles about Polish dance by *spectators*, that is not ethnographic researchers, which show women dancing in long boots, square hat and exaggerated, Kontusz jacket, more like a man's than a woman's. There is no evidence for this. This is a stage development, or rather invention, which takes place in the next century.¹²⁷

Maria Leszczyńska, daughter of the Polish King Stanisław Leszczyński, married King Louis the 15th, of France. She introduced a fur-trimmed long dress to the French court which

¹²⁷ Consult the present author's work on the Mazur Dance.

was called by the French, “Polonaise.” It did not have split sleeves.¹²⁸ There are reproductions of this “Polonaise” fashion.

The fashion of dress known in France, as the *robe a la polonaise* or “Polish Dress” or Style, show here, was called *robe a la polonaise* because of the three lengths of material, forming the overskirt, was called that as a recognition of the three partitions of Poland, in which Austria participated. To the enemies of Maria Antoinette, who they considered to be an enemy of France, this was symbolic of her evil influence in France.

To Maria Antoinette the *robe a la polonaise* had nothing to do with politics but was another of her revolts against French Royal Court customs.¹²⁹



In the wake of the first partition of Poland, which occurred in 1772, patriotic feelings became rampant among the Szlachta of Poland. This manifested itself in programs of political and social reform. Culturally, there was a wholesale return to the Kontusz and Żupan. This caused a shock to the followers of foreign fashions or, as would be expressed in our times, as “the running dogs of foreign imperialists.” In 1788, Jan Potocki, a young aristocrat, who had a totally French education and was the author of numerous works in French, created a sensation among the upper society of Warszawa by changing ostentatiously from his French frock into a Kontusz. Numerous incidents of this type took place during this time.¹³⁰

¹²⁸ Banach, *Słownik...*, p. 217.

¹²⁹ See Caroline Webers's, *Queen of Fashion*, (New York: Holt, 2006), for a fuller description of this period of French Court History.

¹³⁰ Echoes of the symbolic significance of the Kontusz and foreign dress occurred continually in Polish History. The 19th century Polish Opera, *Straszny Dwór*, has this as one of its themes. Some further examples of this will suffice to illustrate this. “*The Polish aristocracy, highly cosmopolitan in any case, had few doubts. They felt themselves to be Polish subjects of foreign monarchs after the partitions. This was best expressed when Prince Adam Kazimierz Czartoryski presented his son to the Habsburg Emperor dressed in an Austrian court suit. At first it was thought that ‘the small prince should be dressed in Polish dress, but then it was decided this would be too odd.’*” Olga Narkiewicz, *The Green Flag*, (London: 1976), p.11. Another example occurred as a prelude to the Polish Insurrection against Russia in 1861. This revolt was led by disaffected urban radicals. Our interest is in the symbolical political use made of the Kontusz. “*In Warsaw Gorchakov was nervous lest Easter bring with it a revival of disorders. Hooliganism and serenading of unpopular figures with raucous music had made their appearance. To the black of mourning was now added colour. The idea had gained currency that the frock-coat should be abandoned and that Poles should wear their national dress. Square hats and long boots and all the paraphernalia of traditional clothing appeared, often with ludicrous results.*” R.F. Leslie, *Reform And Insurrection In Russian Poland, 1856-1865*, (London: 1963), p.105.

Just as there were men patriots, so there were women patriots, one of the most famous being Izabella Czartoryska, who came to be called “Matka Ojczyzny,” (“Mother of the Country.”) One eyewitness wrote:

In that bob-tailed,
same old
Kontusiu,
the ‘Spartan Mother,’
[she] Princess
Czartoryska
displayed her national feeling
to the Counts Stanisław
Tarnowski, Ludwik
Debicki and Pani Duchinska

“*W kusym,
wiecznie tym samym
kontusku
‘Matki Spartanki,’
pokazywali księżne
Czartoryska
ka narodowi
Stanisław hr.
Tarnowski, Ludwid hr.
Debicki i pani Duchinska.*”¹³¹

Under this patriotic spirit some of the Magnates as well as the governmental administrations of the major divisions of Poland formed their own local armies using the Kontusz and Żupan as uniforms, pictured below:



¹³¹ Stanisław Wasylewski, *Twarz i Kobieta* (Poznań: 1920), p. 5. The Czartoryski family was prominent in Poland during this period. When Pani Izabella married in 1761 into the Czartoryska family, she had a procession of 400 horses and 12 gold inlaid carriages. This will give some idea of the power of the leading families. In Western Europe the Poles, Russians, and Ukrainians were often confused as being one and the same people and living in the same place so that the Ukrainian dance “Kozak” also became a Polish symbol, “. . . w Berlin przed Niemcami tancy kozaka . . . dla propangandy.” (. . . in Berlin before the Germans she danced the Kozak . . . for propaganda.) *Ibid.*, p. 22. But then many Poles also thought of the Ukrainian-Borderland as properly Polish. Her estate at Puławy was the capital of patriotic Poland, so much so that when all of Poland disappeared in the partitions a saying arose, “*Strąciliśmy Rzeczpospolitą zostały mam Puławy.*” (We lost the Commonwealth but Puławy remains.)

The first set of uniforms were decreed in 1776¹³² and appeared at the Parliament (Sejm) of 1778.

The nobility selected the colors for these regional uniforms. Only noblemen who own land were allowed to wear the uniform. Governmental officials could also wear uniforms only if their estates were in the same county represented by the uniform.

*“It was hoped that the new law would reduce the extravagance in dress, stop the flow of money abroad, and support Polish industry as these uniforms could be only made from domestic cloth. The law also spurred local patriotism, stressing that the Commonwealth was formed from different regions.”*¹³³

In 1780 there were some changes, one of which, was the forbidding of the wearing of epaulets-a practice which indicated both foreign influence as well as class stratification within the Noble Class. Under the influence of foreign uniforms, worn by the King and his Court, the Kontusz developed a high collar.

¹³² “Mundury wojewódzkie zostały ustanowione w 1776 r.” Gutkowski-Rychlewska, p. 663.

¹³³ T. Jeziorowski, *Mundury Wojewódzkie Rzeczypospolitej Obojga Narodów*, (Warszawa: 1992), p. 38.

Below is a chart of colors for the Kontusz as a uniform from the period 1778-1790.

1778-1790

ADMINISTRATIVE UNIT	ŻUPAN	KONTUSZ	COLLAR	HAT
WOLYŃSKI	white	dark green	black	white
ŁĘCZYCKI	white	cherry red	blue	white
KALISKIE	white	Ultramarine-blue	rose	white
RAWSKIE	white	red	black	white
KRAKOWSKI	white	navy blue	amaranth	white
POZNAŃ	white	light blue	rose	white
BRZESKI-KUJAWSKI	white	brick, orange, red	blue	white
WILEŃ	amaranth	navy blue	amaranth	amaranth
SIERADZKI	white	light blue	black	white
BRZESKU	white	ultramarine	rose	white
CZERNICKOWSKI	white	bordeaux-red	black	white
LUBELSKIE (1778)	white	poppy-red with green lapels		
KRAKOWSKI (1778)	white	amaranth with epaulettes silver and gold		

The sword was often attached to a white cloth band, which passed over the right shoulder.



As for the famous “Polish Hats.”

All the hats were
in the shape of
konfederat,
[the high square cap]
all had yellow boots.

“Wszystkie czapki
kształtu
konfederatki,

wszyscy w żółtych butach.”¹³⁴

Some of the counties had more than one uniform. We now include a series of drawings of these county and sub-county Patriotic Kontusz Uniforms since their existence is not generally known to many people. Some of the drawings also contain the county Heraldic Sign-Coat of Arms.¹³⁵

As “the” political symbol, the Kontusz reached its greatest heights during the Four-Year Sejm of 1788-1792, both as a historic-Polish symbol of the political right and left.¹³⁶ This was the period of the 3rd major partition of Poland which resulted in Poland’s disappearance from the map of Europe.

The aforementioned Count Segur was an eye-witness to the dress and tumultuous meetings of the Sejm of 1789:

*“The Poles scarcely appeared to be the same people: their occupations, customs and language, everything had undergone a change; those ardent warriors had laid aside their modern garb, which brought to mind their humiliation, and resumed their caps, their feathers, their long robes, their feathers, their long robes, their military mustachios and brilliant swords. The ladies, giving excitement to their courage, had assisted in cutting the flowing hair of their husbands and children, had embroidered their scarfs and splendid sashes.”*¹³⁷

*“I was particularly struck with the appearance which this Polish assembly presented to me: the almost Asiatic costume of the members composing it, their proud looks, the vivacity of their action, the noise of their sabres dragging upon the ground, and bringing too strongly in remembrance those stormy times, when swords were so often drawn to interrupt the deliberations: every thing was calculated to impress me with the idea that, going back to remote ages, I was in the midst of those ancient Poles, who had so a often conquered the Turks, the Muscovites, and the Princes of Germania.”*¹³⁸

¹³⁴ Klemens Bakowski, *Ubiór Polski* (Kraków: 1912), p. 4. The above color chart for 1780 is also from Bakowski, that of 1778 from Gutkowski.

¹³⁵ The original drawings were done by I.Matuszczaka in 1943 and are contained in Jeziorowski.

¹³⁶ All during the 19th and 20th centuries the Kontusz was worn on official occasions in the province of Galicia, then part of the Austrian Empire, when its symbolic importance was needed. One example was on the Austrian Emperor’s visit to Galicia in 1880. In this case the representatives of the local Polish Parliament wore the Kontusz.

¹³⁷ Count Segur, *Memoirs ...*, p. 447.

¹³⁸ Count Segur, *Memoirs ...*, p. 455.

This Sejm and its aftermath caused a great deal of soul-searching among Poles as to their uniqueness. The Staropolska ways and Kontusz were always remarked on. Here we now present some typical remarks about this from a memoir of the times. This paragraph is representative of the “National” school of thought concerning the Kontusz’ relationship to Polish Republican sentiment:

Jacob Sobieski in Polish Dress
and on horseback
[officially] visited Paris . . .
In armor, at Chocimem,
in a blue Kontusz he fought
at Vienna.
Działyński in Polish Dress
[went as a representative]
to Elizabeth, Queen of the English.
In Polish Dress Jerzy Ossoliński
made a splendid trip to Rome;
in Kontusz Karol Radziwiłł;
virtuous, but [was] deceived,
stood at the head
of the Confederation of Radom.
In Kontusz Krasiński,
the Podkomorzy of Przasnyski,
resolved the Barska Confederation,
in Kontusz defended Religion
and the Fatherland did Pułaski,
in Kontusz cried out virtuous Reytan,
as he lay at the entrance
to the Sejm of the year 1773:
‘Kill me, but do not kill
the Fatherland’;
in Kontusz cried out Korsak
at the Sejm of the year 1788:
‘Treasury and Army’
but the foreignly-dressed Poninski
killed him and quartered him;
the foreigned-dressed
defeated the rebellion,
foreignly-dressed Miaczynski and
Podhorski brought to
the Grodziński Sejm
the partition [of Poland] and
foreigned-dressed King
Stanisław August, [having been] given
by them the pen,
ratified it.

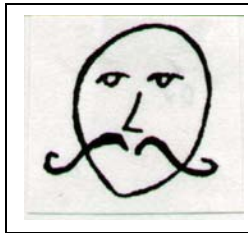
*“Jakub Sobieski w polskiej sukni
i na koniu oddawał
wizyty po Paryżu . . .
W zbroi pod Chocimem,
a w niebieskim kontuszu walczył
pod Wiedniem.
Działyński w polskiej sukni
posłował
do Elżbiety, królowej angielskiej.
W polskiej sukni Ossoliński Jerzy
czynił wjazd wspaniały do Rzymu;
w kontusz Karol Radziwiłł
cnotliwy, lecz zwiedziony,
stanął na czele
konfederacji radomskiej.
W kontusz Krasiński,
podkomorzy przasnyski,
podniósł konfederację barską,
w kontusz bronił jej, religii
i ojczyzny Pułaski,
w kontuszu wołał cnotliwy Reytan,
położywszy [się] na progu izby
sejmowej w roku 1773:
‘Zabijcie mnie, a nie zabijajcie
ojczyzny’;
w kontuszu wołał Korsak
na sejmie 1788:
‘Skarb i wojsko’
a frakowy Poninski
zabijał ja i ciartował;
frakowi możnowładcy
podnieśli bunt w Targowicy,
frakowi Miaczynski i
Podhorski wzniesli na
grodzieńskim sejmie
projekt podziału i
frakowy król
Stanisław August podanym
sobie przez nich ołówkiem
podpisał.”*¹³⁹

This makes it pretty clear!

¹³⁹ K. Kozmian, *Pamiętniki*, Vol. I, (Warszawa: 1972), pp.176, 177.

During this period of unrest Prince Suderman, a descendant of the former Swedish King's of Poland, thought that he might become the next King of Poland. Symbolic of this desire the Prince had Kontuszes made for himself and his coterie and even sent his representative to Poland completely dressed in the old-Polish manner to plead the Prince's case.¹⁴⁰ Both the patriotic Magnates and the coterie of Magnates with Russian support used it as a symbol of the old Wolność value. The rising bourgeois identified the Kontusz not as a symbol of oppression, but rather with the progressive forces of the country.¹⁴¹

During this Four-Year Sejm, one of the features associated with this "Polish fashion" or "Staropolska" mode, came into special prominence—the moustache. The Polish style was a long, thick moustache, curled up at the ends. The curved ends are the result of the twisting, which is a natural activity of men with such moustaches. This natural movement was often commented upon by observers as part of the Polish Walking Dance.



From this period we have a poem by Kniazmin about the moustache as a political symbol:

Ode to Moustache

Whoever is ashamed of
his Mother, Father, Brothers
at his country let him
sneer, whereas I
with the fatherland
content,
still yet remain a Pole,
twisting my moustache.

*Oda do wąsów*¹⁴²

*“Kogo wstyd
matki, ojców, braci
Niech się z narodu swego
natrząsa, Ja
zaś z ojczystej
kontent postaci,
żem jeszcze Polak,
pokręcę wąsa.”*

The Oriental influences on this Polish fashion have already been noticed as occurring during the 15th, 16th, and mid-17th centuries. At the close of the 18th century, there was an Orientalization of fashions, which spread throughout Europe. This is not to be confused with the Staropolska fashion.¹⁴³

As the armies of Napoleon passed through White-Russian Borderlands on the way to Moscow in 1812 many Westerners took praiseworthy note of the dress of the local inhabitants:

¹⁴⁰ Originally from the dairy of L. Engestrom. Here from *PSOC*, Vol. II, p. 175.

¹⁴¹ The revolutionary elements of Warszawa rose up in April 1794 led by the cobbler, Jan Kiliński, who dressed in Kontusz and carried a sword.

¹⁴² Banach, *Słownik* ..., p. 281. During the Uprising of January 1863 against the Imperialistic Russian occupation, the Russian authorities in the region of Krasnoslawski, ordered all men (Szlachta) to shave, because the "Staropolska" moustaches were considered a patriotic-leftist symbol. Original information in Walery Porzyborowski, *Ostatnie chwile powstania styczniowego*, Vol. I, (Poznań: 1887), p. 8.

¹⁴³ Jan Reizchman, *Orient W Kulturze Polskiego Oświecenia* (Wrocław: 1964), p. 100.

*“There are many nobles here, both Lithuanian and Polish. They are a remarkably fine made class of men, and their dress is extremely graceful. They wear a long silken or cloth tunic, with loose sleeves—a broad silken sash is knotted round the waist, the head is closely shaven, and on it a Hessian cap is worn. It is said that Charles II attempted to introduce this dress into England.”*¹⁴⁴

As early as the 17th century in the court pageants of France, three appeared stage versions of what they thought Poles looked like. They relied upon their imaginations; therefore, their inventions had no contact with Polish reality. The same thing occurred with their representations of the American Indian.

In Poland itself, the stage plays and dramas simply used real Żupans and Kontusz for their characters. In the 17th century, Christ was represented in Żupan¹⁴⁵ without the modifications, which took place in the 19th century.

As we can see, the Kontusz goes hand and glove with the Sarmatian or Staropolska manner—that is, loud, bright, contrasting colors, with sparkling jewels and swaying feathers. All done to show off the person—his Grandeur or Dignity, his Pomposity or Assuredness, his Bravado or Elegancy. The same is true for the women. To them, all respect is given, which they demanded, and is Women’s due.

Having nothing to hide and being proud, if not vain, these noble people carried their status and ideals on their Kontusz. They were meant to be seen. Thus, as much light as the technology could provide, was available in the dancing rooms. The floors, generally made of wood, were buffed to a high gloss polish so that everything glittered and reflected from the splendor of the Szlachta soul, polished boots on polished floors with bright lights of the chandeliers reflected in the Kontusz and the sparkling radiance of noble hearts and eyes.

Summarizing, we may answer the questions at the opening of this section as follows:

- 1,2) The dress worn by the Szlachta depend upon their relative position within the Szlachta Community. The wealthier more often wore foreign styles. For the short time of Polish resistance to the Partitions, the Kontusz became the fashion also of the Magnates. It must be kept in mind, however, that conservative Magnates were Kontusz wearers. At any given ball it was very rare when all people were dressed in “foreign styles,” while officers in the traditional Polish Army were dressed differently from the King’s Crown Army who were dressed in the contemporary military Western fashion of the period. Also mixing with the Poles were other Central Europeans and Turks, etc. in their own fashion.
- 3) As pointed out, women wore mostly full gown-like garments in keeping with the Western European trends. They did have fur-trimmed capes and hats. They did on occasion wear the “kontuski” with semi-hanging sleeves. There is no evidence that Szlachta women wore boots of any sort during the period 1600-1800. People often attribute peasant styles of the 19th century to the upper class of the same time or earlier, in our case to the 18th century Szlachta. Because there is no strong evidence that there was a women’s Kontusz which was frequently used, we conclude that the Kontusik and the women’s, “diplomatic Polish” fashion shown above (1640) are only isolated incidences, and thus do not indicate a generally acceptable way of dressing among Polish women.

¹⁴⁴ R. Johnston, *Travels Through Part Of The Russian Empire and the Country of Poland*, (New York: 1970), p. 345. This is a reprint of the original: London, 1815.

¹⁴⁵ Barbara Krol-Kaczorowska, *Teatr Dawnej Polski*, (Warszawa: 1971), p. 180.

Despite this, however, there are some people who maintain that the Drobno Szlachta women dressed in a “Polish” way, as pictured below. The one on the right is supposed to be the rural fashion of the lower Szlachta. However, as stated above, there is no real evidence for such in the 17th and 18th centuries. From our research we suggest that this is a stage-style which may have specifically arisen for the Mazur from the opera Polish “Halka.”¹⁴⁶ This is still seen on some of today’s stages and thus perpetuates a false image—or does it?



Most recently (2003) the present author learned of the following piece of evidence for the existence for a “female Kontusz”, which is called a Kontusznik. The reproduction below was originally taken in 1899. It is of three generations of the Filipowski family of Kraków. We see the grandfather (who participated in the Uprising of 1863), his son, and his granddaughter. The granddaughter is dressed in her Kontusznik! Does this imply that this style did exist previously? Was it a general style or did it come into existence only as a Patriotic symbol for girls and women in this time period in Austrian-Poland?

¹⁴⁶ The Polish State Folk Dance Group, “Mazowsze,” as it gets better, uses the authentic style, that is without loose sleeves and boots, version of the woman’s dress.



This failure on the Polish Uprisings was deeply felt by large numbers of people. An example of which follows below:

*“My grandmother, . . . as a young woman she did not have the cosmopolitan background or outlook of the Radziwills. She was an ardent Polish patriot, brought up in the first years of Poland’s loss of independence, surrounded by aunts dressed in black, thus stressing their national mourning.”*¹⁴⁷

Note that the grandmother was surrounded by more than one woman dressed in black. Also at the end of the fighting the general population of Warszawa wore black.

This mourning dress was also worn outside of Poland proper. From a child’s recollections of this time:

*“Dresden was always full of foreigners, especially Poles, who were attracted to it by former ties. Many of the great ladies were very beautiful, and they all wore their country’s mourning—a black dress with a wide white band at the edge of the skirt.”*¹⁴⁸

¹⁴⁷ Michael Radziwiłł, *One of the Radziwills*, (New York: 1971), p.72.

¹⁴⁸ Lady Paget Walburga, *Scenes and Memories*, (New York: 1912), p. 12.

The shape of the garment was Victorian in style, usually in black, with some symbols of “Polishness”, such as the square cap.¹⁴⁹

This period of National Mourning was called by the Poles as “Żałobie Narodowa.” In Krakow it occurred twice: 1848-1852 and 1861-1863. During these times the Carneval celebrations, by the Poles, were very much reduced. This was accompanied by increased ill-feeling between the Poles and the occupying Austrian-Germans. Normally there would be some socializing between these peoples—but not a lot.

Echoes of this Mourning Dress occurred in the next century as the following citation shall make clear. It happened with the Soviet invasion of the Polish East.

*“The intimation of impropriety can be found also in descriptions of Jewish women’s behavior at the time of the Red Army invasion. It is neither detailed nor explicit but implies that the standarts of honor and chastity—important elements of female patriotism—of Polish women were not upheld by female Jews. Jewish women wearing bright clothes, we were told, greeted the soldiers of the Red Army on the streets with flowers and cheers—acts of welcome and submission. In contrast, Polish females put on mourning clothes, in the tradition of their foremothers. . . . We all dressed as modestly as possible, wearing black scarves on our heads. Hermina Halicka reports that ‘a great number of Jews and Ukrainians threw bouquets of flowers at their feet.’ Some reportedly kissed the soldiers.”*¹⁵⁰

Below are examples of the actual “National Mourning Dress.” These drawings from the time were done by J. Kossak in 1861. The title is *Patriotyczne stroje damskie*, in English: Patriotic Dress for Ladies.¹⁵¹

¹⁴⁹ There is a photograph of Józef Piłsudski’s parents dressed in this National mourning. In particular his mother is wearing a black hoop-dress and black Polish square-cap. The dress has “wyłoty,” or the hanging sleeves! This is rare. However, no one dressed in black mourning ever danced. This mourning dress was also worn by Confederate Women in the USA.

¹⁵⁰ K. Jolluck, “Gender And Antisemitism In Wartime Soviet Exile,” *Antisemitism And Its Opponents In Modern Poland*, (Ithaca: 2005), p.222.

¹⁵¹ S. Kieniewicz, *Powstanie Styczniowe*, (Warszawa: 1987), p. 13.



All during the latter 19th and early 20th centuries among some of the Nobility the Kontusz was worn as conscious symbols of Polishness or as a reminder of their Noble status or Tradition.

At the Pan-Slavic Congress held in Prague in 1848 the Polish-political significance of the Kontusz was evident:

In the evenings we
took together walks,
or went to evenings
at public places.
There would be [present]
Austrian Generals
and they were with us
the best company.
At these outings we were
in [our] National Dress [Kontusz].
More than once Palacky and Rieger
were envious of us,
that we have National Dress.
They tried [to invent],
but were unable come to
a National Dress, for Czechs,
an invented Dress,
which would be indicative of
their particular Nation.

*“Wieczorem odbywaliśmy
wspólne spacery,
lub bywały wieczory
w zakładach publicznych.
Na nich bywali
jeneralowie austriaccy
i byli z nami w
najlepszej komitywie.
Na tych schadzkach bywaliśmy
w strojach narodowych.
Nieraz Palacky i Rieger
zazdrościli nam,
ze mamy strój narodowy.
Sami wyszukiwali,
a nie mogąc dojść
do stroju, specjalnie czeskiego,
wymyślali stroje,
ktoreby odznaczały
ich odrębność narodowa.*

Bringing their words to mind,
as I see our[present] indifference
to [our] National Dress,
gives me a sad feeling
[and] doubts
about our future.

*Przypominając sobie ich słowa,
a widząc nasza obojętność
dla stroju narodowego,
smutne mnie przejmują uczucie
zwątpienia
o naszej przyszłości.”*¹⁵²

Other such events occurred whenever the Austrian Emperor, Francis Joseph I, took his political trips around the Empire there would be special fetes¹⁵³ held in his honor. On his trip to Lwów, the center of Austrian-Poland in 1885 he was honored by the Poles dressed as characters from the Historical Novels of Sienkiewicz—many, therefore, were dressed in Kontusz. They danced, besides the Polonez, a Krakowiak with verses sung in French.¹⁵⁴

We show below a portion of a painting¹⁵⁵ which was done in honor of his 1880 trip to Lwów. All the Noble Poles are in Kontusz!



Here are two descriptions of the character of pre-1918 life in Lwów in which the symbolic value of the Kontusz was still recognized:

¹⁵² Leon Xiaze Sapieha, *Wspomnienia*, (Kraków: 1915), p. 229.

¹⁵³ The term “fete” comes from the French term “fete galante” which describes a social gathering of a special sort in the early 18th century. It is interesting in itself. Let us see what it was in France. “*The fete galante was a form of elite behavior, enacted and perpetuated for specific reasons. Beyond the activity of men and women entertaining themselves in pursuit of love and music, fetes signified social identity. The fete galante was perfect for the conspicuous display of two fundamentally aristocratic conditions: leisure and exclusivity...a certain charing gaiety was the only acceptable public persona for those for those who participated in fetes.*” J. A. Plax, *Watteau and the Cultural Politics of Eighteenth-Century France*, (Cambridge: 2000), p. 111. The class of persons who attended these fetes were losers in the struggle for political power in France. However in Poland, this class were winners in the power struggle.

¹⁵⁴ Marian Bogdanowicz, *Wspomnienia*, Vol. I, (Kraków: 1959), p. 209. Francis Joseph greatly appreciated the Mazur and admired it. This will be covered in greater detail in the Mazur book.

¹⁵⁵ Painting done by H. Rodakowski. This was a visit of inspection and took place from September 1-19, 1880.

*“Everyone greets everyone: manners are very open and easy. In Lwów only ceremony and pedantry irritate. There is no hatred for solemnity. The town’s President and the three vice-presidents often don national dress, the kontusz, a cloak with wide flowing sleeves, fastened tightly round the waist with a belt, into which fits the hilt of a curved saber. One of the vice-presidents is traditionally a Jew, and no one takes offence at seeing him wear the dress of the Polish nobility, or smiles at seeing him on parade with his saber.”*¹⁵⁶

In October of 1918 both the National-Ukrainians and Poles of Galicia declared their independence from the Austria Empire. The Poles of Lwów expressed this with a large demonstration at which:

*“The town council in gala dress, kontusz and sabers, held a public sitting before a madly enthusiastic audience.”*¹⁵⁷

Weddings were celebrated by some with the wearing of the Kontusz by the men. One such wedding took place in Kraków in 1921. The Zamoyski’s married the Potocki’s. The father of the bride and others were in Kontusz and her parents left the altar under the crossed swords of the Kontusz-wearing men. There are photographs of the bride in contemporary wedding-gown and the father in Kontusz.¹⁵⁸

In Austrian-Poland this was not unusual. It became a fashion after the horrors of 1848 subsided.

In time the Polish Dress
became common
apparel for Weddings;
in 1861 at the Wedding of
Józefa Szujski and Miss
Joanna Jełowicka both were
not only dressed this way,
but also the grooms
and bridesmaids...

*“Z czasem polskie stroje stają się
zwykłym
ubiołem weselnym;
w r. 1861 na weselu
Józefa Szujskiego z panną
Joanną Jełowicką występują
w nich nie tylko państwo młodzi,
ale i drużbowie
i druhny...”*

This is unusual—the entire Wedding Suite dressed in Polish Kontusz—including the women, in their variation of a Kontusz, probably as show above. Of course this was the fashion of the Gentry Class.

At one of these weddings in 1862 one of the guests came dressed not in Kontusz but in formal wear. Even though he was a notable and popular this did not save him from criticism.

This did not save him from
the charge of a lack of patriotism
[which was shown by his]
wearing
foreign dress.

*To jednak nie uchroniło go
od zarzutu braku patriotyzmu
z powodu
cudzoziemskiego fraka.”*¹⁵⁹

¹⁵⁶ Rosa Bailly, *A City Fights For Freedom*, (London: 1956), p.41.

¹⁵⁷ Rosa Bailly, *A City...*, p.48.

¹⁵⁸ Marek Miller, *Arystokracja*, (Warszawa: 1992), pps. 33, 237. These weddings took place in 1913 and 1921.

¹⁵⁹ Maria Estreicherówna, *Życie Towarzyskie I...*, p. 78. This book is an excellent source for descriptions life in Kraków during this time.

With the fall of the communist government in Poland and a resurgent interest in the Noble's role in Polish History this custom may make a comeback—hopefully by all leading Cultural classes.

We end this section with an abstract of an illustration by the Polish artist Jan Czesław Moniuszko.¹⁶⁰ His “Polonez” is from a series of dance illustrations which were published in the literary magazine, *Biesiady Literacki*, in 1907. It is a posed picture which displays the gallantry of the old Staropolskie “Polonez.” The women's clothes are of the 18th century. This may have been the model for Zofia Stryjeński's “Polonez”, which is the cover for this book.



¹⁶⁰ He was the son of the Polish National composer Stanisław Moniuszko.

FOREIGN DANCE INFLUENCES OF THE 17TH CENTURY

The most important period for the Polish Walking Dance is the 17th and early 18th centuries. The cultural history of the period is dominated, as far as political Poland goes, by the Magnates and the King's Court. This upper crust of Polish society maintained a very open relationship with Western Europe, especially France, which was then the leading power in Europe.

We recall that our earlier discussion pointed out that in the 16th and 17th century, the term, "Polish Dance(s)," which appears in foreign music manuscripts, actually gave us no information about the actual dance (assuming that this "Polish Dance(s)" is the same as the Polish Walking Dance of the late 17th and 18th centuries), or even that it was danced to.

The 17th century description of dances done in Poland could very well be descriptions of foreign dances. In order to determine what the differences are, and indeed if there are any, we must turn to an examination of the foreign dances done in Poland during this formative period, upon what shall become a Polish Walking Dance.

Just as European composers wrote the music of many different countries, so did Polish composers. The dance forms Courant, Saraband, Guigue, Minuet, Alemand, Gavotte, and Chaconne, occur in music written in Poland during the 17th century.

Sources from
the beginning of the
18th century contain
an increasing number
of French names
(chiefly the Minuet).

"Źródła z
początku
XVIII wieku rozszerzają,
liczbę
nazwa tańców francuskich
(głównie menuet)." ¹⁶¹

Of the dances, which came to Poland via France, there are only three with which we shall concern ourselves: the Volta, Courant, and Minuet.

In 1573 Henry de Valois, brother to the French King, was elected King of Poland. He remained so less than a year. During his stay, the dance known as the Volta, and a walking-type dance, were done at his court. This walking dance was reported to have the following elements: a leading couple, numerous couples, bows, sliding steps, figures of separation, and an erect posture. ¹⁶²

¹⁶¹ Zofia Stęszewska, "Muzyka Taneczna Polska I Francji Jako Źródła Badań," *Muzyka*, 1971, No. 2., p. 51.

¹⁶² Irene Turska, *Krotkę Zarys Historii Tańca i Baletu* (Warszawa: 1962), p. 103. Often at which supposedly the Polish folk dance, the Krakówiak, was done. This is very much in dispute. See the present author's work of the Krakówiak. Of this Walking Dance Józef Reiss states: "Tymczasem Polonez jest tańcem pochodzenia ludowego a potem dopiero dwory magnatów." During that time [1573] the Polonez originated from the [Polish] peasants and only afterwards was done at Court. Reiss, *Najpiękniejsza ze ...*, p. 92.

This, as we shall see, also characterizes the primary features of the Polish Walking Dance. In the 16th century, foreign dances have some of these features or characters. The Pavane was danced proudly, showingly, and slowly for ceremonial dignity.

By 1650 in France the dance known as the Courant developed a special form.

*“The couples marched around the hall, linked or separate, with or without hands, in a fairly regular step pattern.”*¹⁶³

The foot movement consisted of bends, glides, and walking steps. This variation lasted from 1650 to 1700. It was the favorite dance of the King, Louis the 14th, of France.

*“But for decades (after 1700) it was considered by good masters the basis of dance art and was made the center of their teaching.”*¹⁶⁴

Whichever dance masters taught in Europe, they also taught in the Polish Court and to the Magnates. French influences began and was continuous during the reigns of the following kings:

Władysław IV (1632-1648)
 Jan Kazimerz (1648-1668)
 Michal Wisniowiecki (1669-1673)
 Jan III Sobieski (1674-1696)

Interestingly enough, it was the Queens of the Kings who were the avenues of influence for French Kings when the diplomatic policies of France sought the Poles for alliances. Władysław's second wife was Maria Louisa of the Gonzage, a French family. She later married the next king, Jan Kazimerz. She was responsible for bringing in all kinds of French “High Culture.”

*“. . . magnates and court quickly adopted French clothes, lifestyles, society, music, and dances, except there was a definite lack of French books up through Sobieski.”*¹⁶⁵

With Maria Louisa, the pursuit of French culture becomes conscious.

. . . into the richest
 Polish home came the
 French. . . ,
 and among things,
 dances and music.

*“. . . a do bogatszych
 domów polskich sprowadzi się
 Francuzów. . . ,
 ale m. innymi
 tańca i muzyki.”*¹⁶⁶

At this time, French style finishing schools were founded for the daughters of the Szlachta and the townspeople.

During this time, French political agents were very active in Poland, so much so that Jan Kazimierz promised Louis the 14th that he would recommend the French Prince Phillip of Neuberg to be his successor. This came to naught and Jan Kazimierz's heart was buried in France.

¹⁶³ Turska, *Krotke* . . . , p. 384.

¹⁶⁴ Stęszewska, “Muzyka Taneczna . . . ”, p. 43.

¹⁶⁵ Stęszewska, “Muzyka Taneczna . . . ”, p. 43.

¹⁶⁶ Stęszewska, “Muzyka Taneczna . . . ”, p. 44.

French influence increases with Sobieski and his wife, another French citizen, Maria Kazimierz de la Grange d'Arguien (Marysienka). Their life-long correspondence was written in French (of course Sobieski, as with all other Szlachta, wrote also in Polish and Latin).

. . . that, in Poland at
the end of the 17th century,
French dances were
popular, they were danced,
sung and done on
stage and even
entered the musical home life
of amateurs –
there is no doubt.

“ . . . ze w Polsce pod
koniec XVII w.
tańce francuskie były popularne,
były tańczone,
śpiewane, wykonywane na
czy weszły do
repertuaru muzykowania domowego,
amatorskiego –
nie mamy żadnej wątpliwości.” ¹⁶⁷

At the same time that foreign dances made inroads to Poland, their purely musical forms-for only the sake of listening, for instance-were also popular. This was music for small stringed instruments. This leads to stylized dance music, which was common throughout all of Europe.

From France the only two dances that may have influenced the Polish Walking Dance are the Courant and the Minuet. The Courant appears in Polish literature in 1652.

About the Courant and the Polish Walking Dance, Karol Hławicka states:

The Courant was in some
respects close
to the Polish Dance. . .

“Kurant pod pewnymi
względami zbliżony był
do tańca polskiego. . .” ¹⁶⁸

Maria Drabedka writes:

This dance [Courant]
in the 17th century
also came to Poland
leaving its
imprint on the steps
of our Polonez.

“Taniec ten (Kurant)
w XVII wieku
dotarł również do Polski
i pozostawił swój
trwały ślad w krokach
naszego poloneza.” ¹⁶⁹

The Courant was used to open a Ball or formal occasion. It was a walk done by couples. The bearing of the dancers was one of poise and distinction. The footwork of the Courant consisted of walking steps and a bending step with the free foot sliding forward. Bows to one's partner were also done. After 1700, the Courant fell into disuse. “*But for decades it was considered by good masters the basis of dance art, and was made the center of their teaching.*” ¹⁷⁰

With all the difficulties
inherent in depending
upon supposition alone
[one can venture to say]
that in the time
of the 17th century,

“Trudno wiec
oprzeć się
przypuszczeniu,

ze w tym właśnie okresie,
w XVII wieku,

¹⁶⁷ Stęszewska, “Muzyka Taneczna ...”, p. 45.

¹⁶⁸ Karol Hławicka, “Ze Studiów Nad Historia Poloneza,” *Muzyka* (1965, 2), p. 83. The relationship between French Dances and Steps and the Polish Dance shall be discussed again in this work.

¹⁶⁹ Maria Drabedka, *Tańce Historyczne*, Vol. I, (Warszawa: 1966), p. 57.

¹⁷⁰ Sachs, *Worlds ...*, p. 364.

under the influence of the
Courant,
crystallized the basic
form of our
National Dance.

*pod wpływem
kuranta
wykształciła się znana
dziś postać naszego
tańca narodowego.*"¹⁷¹

And what of the Minuet? In France, the Minuet lasts from about 1663 to 1800. In England, it was done more or less throughout the 19th century. From 1891-1900 there was a general Minuet done for its grace, gentility, and art. By 1800 it has lost its finesse, and is a dance done by many couples. Still, however, there is the association with gracefulness and in the popular mind over refinement, for example, Bows.

*"What a significance even the bow had with which the dancers introduce the ceremonial rite of the minuet! Dufort devoted two whole chapters to it, Taubert sixty pages, and Chavanne almost his whole book."*¹⁷²

This is not just a dance, but an art. In the Polish city of Lwów the orchestra leader, Kirnberger, who played at various Magnate functions (1744-1757), played a minuet for every three Polish Walking Dances. This attests to its popularity.

Besides elegance and bows, the Minuet, as with the Courant, was done with a bending, then a straightening step. Thus, both these Pan-European dances have some elements of the Polish Walking Dance. This does not imply that they were the origin of the Polish Dance, but rather that a parallelism occurred. The elegant European Court dances were variations or modifications of the peasant dances. The same seems to be the Polish case. The upper classes of different countries made modifications the end result of which were, more or less, dances of the same type or feeling.

There was another dance, the Drabant, which appears in Poland in the early 17th century. This was a medieval men's marching dance, done by the bodyguards of some important personages. Interestingly enough, the most primitive form of the Polish Walking Dance was considered by Karol Czerniawski to have been a warrior's march. This opinion, without the backing of proof, and Czerniawski's other speculations about the origin of Polish Dances, is also repeated in English sources¹⁷³ There was also singing done by the marchers. The singing could conceivably connect it to the peasant's form of the Walking Dance. It is mentioned that the Drabant introduced the Walking Dance.

However similar these foreign dances may be to the Polish form, we shall see that the Poles stamp their own character onto their own form in such a way so that everyone identifies it as a Polish Dance. One must remember that foreign influence and culture were confined to a minority of the upper classes of both court and town.

¹⁷¹ Drabecka, *Tance Historyczne*, p. 69.

¹⁷² Sachs, *Worlds ...*, p. 398.

¹⁷³ "... a folk dance or warrior's triumphal march," William Benton "Polonaise" *Encyclopedia Britannica* (1964), Vol. 18, p. 206.

i A Native Origin And 17th Century Descriptions

Anton Moeller was an artist who did most of his work (1578-1611) in Gdansk: Poland's main seaport. The beginning of the 17th century was a time of peace and prosperity for the Polish Commonwealth. There was a Polish presence in Gdansk. The wealthier Nobles did travel to Gdansk. Moeller's drawing below¹⁷⁴ is believed by some to be an early version of the Polonez. It could be either the beginning Bowing sequence of the Taniec Polski or a Bowing sequence at some other point in the dance or it could be some other dance.

The dress of the man resembles that of a Polish Noble. He seems to be in motion, as well as turning to the Young Lady and gestures with his Right arm and hand, bowing his upper-body to her. She does her demure bowing, eyes downcast. Note also that the man has hat in his left hand and is wearing his sword.



Though the actual Dance depicted is doubtful, the good (Polish?) manners are not.

If, in fact, the Walking Dance was derived from a Polish peasant dance, this would most likely have occurred in the 17th century. Prior to this time, and later on into the 17th century, peasant dances were done by the upper Szlachta. These, the peasant dances, were driven out by foreign dances and do not return until the 18th century. (During this time, 1610-1640, the Polish dance music is written into musical collections of Europe.)

¹⁷⁴ Moeller's drawing is from his original work, *Danziger Frauentrachtenbuch aus dem Jahre 1601*. Our copy here is from A. Bertling collection of 1886 printed in Danzig.

Right at the beginning of the 17th century the political struggle for the Baltic Region and the collapse of Moscow-Rus, known as the “Time of Troubles,” led to turmoil in Eastern Europe. In these struggles Poland played a leading role. The throne of the Tsar being vacant led to one candidate being sponsored by “Poland.” This candidate known to History as the “False Dimitry” was married to a young, gay Polish girl, Maria, of the Noble Mniszech family. This marriage involved a good deal of diplomatic interchanges between Moscow and Poland. The marriage celebration in Kraków in 1605 illustrates the differences in mentality between the West (Poland) and the East (Moscow-Rus).

*“The music began again, while liveried attendants cleared away the banquet tables. Then King Sigismund led Marina in the **polonaise, which was already gaining fame in Europe for “its gravity, its sweetness, and its respectfulness,”** as the French historian Laboureur put it. Other couples followed, but Vlasyev refused point-blank to take part in the ball. This time he was left in peace. He played his part to perfection, according to Muscovite custom, and if the Poles had found his actions odd, and even laughable, . . . ”*¹⁷⁵

The above citation is from a secondary source and is an invention of its author. If it were true, then it would be the earliest specific mention of the dance.

Below are some actual eye-witness accounts of this event. They convey the atmosphere and events which took place at Kraków written in contemporary English language of the day—1605:

*“Here feasting the time, and his owne desires with banquets, embracements, dances, and other amorous delights, at last, the long wished for day appeared, . . . ”*¹⁷⁶

*“There was very excellent music which was of Poland, among the followers of the said Ladie, and this was the best pastime we had, but it was a very short joy and jublie.”*¹⁷⁷

Then shortly thereafter, as Tsar and Tsarina, the celebration continued in Moscow:

*“In the meane while, the young Emprresse passed the time merrily amongst her damoselles, in measures, daunces [dances], and masking, intending to have come the Sondag following, in a gallant mummerie to find out the Emperour, when he should be at a banquet, with the Great Lords and to present them yet further, with some new recreations, but all this was interrupted: . . . ”*¹⁷⁸

All this celebrating was cut short by a most bloody revolt caused by certain Boyars (the new Tsar was popular with the populace of Moscow). This led to the murder of the new Tsar, Poles and many foreigners. These murderings were, *“done to no other end, but the more to set the rakehell vulgar [the common people of Moscow], against the poore Polonians.”*¹⁷⁹

¹⁷⁵ Philip Barbour, *Dimitry*, (London: 1967), p. 181. The emphasis is our own.

¹⁷⁶ S. Howe, ed., “Newes Of The Present Miseries Of Russia,” (1614), in *The False Dimitri*, (London: 1916), p. 78.

¹⁷⁷ S. Howe, ed., “A Bloudie Tragedie,” (1605), in *The False Dimitri*, (London: 1916), p. 40

¹⁷⁸ Howe, “A Bloudie . . . ”, p. 42.

¹⁷⁹ Howe, “A Bloudie . . . ”, p.43.

In their justification for the murders these Boyars cited that the new Tsar, his wife and their Polish supporters and companions were “un-Russian” in their ways, in their behavior. Their behaviour was Western, was European, was Polish, was Democratic, etc. The clothes of the Poles were insulting, they claimed, to the Russians. This was so because the woman’s styles followed the contours of the body whereas the Russian mode of dress did not. The Polish woman’s dress was too sexy for Moscow. Of course many Poles wore Kontusz—which was not so different from Russian dress.

This violence between Moscow and Poland lasted for a decade until the first Romanov was crowned Tsar. (This counter-revolution continued the system of rigid Oriental despotism of Moscow until 1917.)

Most probably all during the celebrations the *Taniec Polski* was done—but there is no direct proof of this.

But let us leave behind this bloody episode of History.

It [the walking dance] arose
with the support
of Drobnó Szlachta,
whose customs
and life were
not very different
from the peasants. . .

*“Stało się to wiec
za pośrednictwem
owej drobnej szlachty zaściankowej,
która obyczajem
i strojem
niewiele różniła się
od ludu wiejskiego. . . ”*

The local Drobnó-Szlachta
introduced the Polonez
to Magnate’s courts
and to that of the King.

*“Z zaścianków drobnoszlacheckich
wkroczył polonez
na dwory magnatów
i na dwór królewski.”*¹⁸⁰

Here [in the courts] formed
a new type of Polonez,
namely, “Dwórski.”
It was danced with unusual
dignity.

*“Tutaj wytworzył się
nowy typ poloneza,
mianowicie ‘Dwórski’
Tańczono go z niezwykłą
powagą.”*¹⁸¹

The above opinion claims that it was the lower Szlachta, which introduced the Walking Dance to the upper Szlachta in whose hands the dance-form assumed a different character. As plausible as this seems, it is only the recent work of Karol Hławicka on the “cieszyńskich polonezów” which gives validity to this peasant origin theory. In his analysis of the music from 1640 contained in the Spisz codex we read:

*“. . . a closer analysis of the rhythm of dances in triple time reveals that we have thus here not with mazurkas, but with polonaises. . . ”*¹⁸²

From the dairy of a ordinary Polish Noble we know that the dance was still called the “*Taniec Wielki*” in the 1660’s. However he did not leave a detailed description of it.¹⁸³

¹⁸⁰ Karol Hławicka, *Tańce Polski*, 27. Spisk was part of Poland proper from 1412 to 1772.

¹⁸¹ Józef Reiss, *Najpiękniejsza ze wszystkich jest muzyka polska* (Kraków: 1958), p. 92.

¹⁸² Hławicka, *Tańce Polski*, p. 27.

In 1687 Le Sieur d'Hauteville described it as:

... danced modestly
and slowly. “. . . *tańczony skromnie
i powoli.*”¹⁸⁴

The first description of the Walking Dance as an upper Szlachta dance occurred in 1668 when the papal nunice, Marescotti, resided in Poland. He described it as:

... not a dance,
but a ceremonial walk. “. . . *nie taniec,
lecz uroczysty pochód.*”¹⁸⁵

Marescotti also recorded the wedding breakfast of the recently elected King of Poland-Lithuania, Micheal Wisniowiecki to Archduchess Eleanora, in 1670, for posterity. Besides the usual excesses of food when the eating was done, “. . . *the King at the head of six Senators, and the Queen at the head of her ladies, launched into a Polonaise, making two complete circuits of the room.*”¹⁸⁶

The significance of the statements concerns their character: more grave than gay, a walk of importance. Certainly there isn't any singing in this variant of the dance, otherwise it would have been mentioned. “Ceremonial walking” was a common sign of good behavior throughout Wesrern Europe in the 17th century. Gentlemen would lead Ladies around in promenading through rooms of homes, galleries, etc. The man guided the Lady with their joined hands and with ordinary walking steps done in a graceful manner.

There is an additional interesting point. Many of the early descriptions of the dance are by foreigners. This is a natural cultural phenomenon because they (foreign observers) pick out what is most different from their own experience, whereas natives think nothing unusual about what is already accepted. This being the case, we can probably place the appearance of the Walking Dance in the upper Szlachta caste during the first quarter of the 17th century.

¹⁸³ Jan Pasek, *The Memoirs of Jan Chryzostm z Goslawic Pasek*, trans. M Swiecicka, (Warszawa: 1978), p. 405.

¹⁸⁴ Pasek, *The Memoirs* . . . D'Hauteville, whose real name was Gasper Tende, was a titled commoner.

¹⁸⁵ Reiss, *Najpiękniejsza* . . . , p. 92.

¹⁸⁶ Davies, *God's Playground*, p.471.

THE POLISH WALKING DANCE OF THE 18TH CENTURY

We shall now present the source material which will indicate the development of the different variations of the walking dance and their character. In keeping with the stated aim of the present work as a source book of Polish Dance, we shall now present all of the available statements about the Polish Walking Dance from *contemporary* Polish and foreign sources of the time. Keeping interpretation to a minimum we shall let the statements speak for themselves, and supply only background historical and societal information.

Much of the material is redundant, but the repetition of some facets of the Dance will serve to make an indelible impression about the matter and “prove” or establish certain “facts” for sure.

The date when the dance concerned was done will appear at the left of the statement. For some statements there are no exact dates. In these cases the author has historically placed them according to his judgment.

Because there are considerable gaps in the following chronology, we must view the date in a statistical way. One mention of a dance, say in the year 1763, usually is interpreted as representing many more occasions during the year 1763, that the dance was done.

*i At The Beginning Of The 18th Century*¹⁸⁷

Thus far our musical story has taken us from 1550 up to the end of the 17th century. The first example of the so-called “Polish Dance” to appear in Poland came from Northern

¹⁸⁷ In 1697 the first Saxon King was elected King of Poland. These years are generally considered to be the beginning of Poland's worsening political situation on the international scene being squeezed between German and Tsarist expansionism. Recovery from the wars of the previous century was hardly begun. The Jesuit school system expands in Poland proper, giving, generally, a very parochial idea of regional politics, as opposed to a national politics. In fairness it must be said that the idea of a Nation in the modern sense only begins with the French Revolution. The Saxon court was famous for its revels, its Biesadas of food and drink. It was, more or less, a German court. The reader must keep in mind that Saxony is East of the Elbe River and, therefore, not part of Germany proper, but rather the result of German expansionism and colonialism in former Slavic inhabited lands. The capital city, Dresden, was originally populated by the Slavic tribe called, “Drezdżany.” Thus, the lower classes of Saxony were heavily composed of Western Slavic or a people closely related to Poles.

Poland in the year 1583.¹⁸⁸ It conformed to the general European 2/4 tempo of its day. From this same northern area in 1702 a “Polish Dance” was written in 3/4 time. We are now on the threshold of the birth of the Polish Walking Dance, as we know it **today**. However, this particular piece is a listening piece, and not a dancing piece.

During the political struggles, war and confusion which took place in Poland and the northern Baltic region at the beginning of the 18th century, the once-Polish-King Stanisław Leszcynski danced the “Polska” (Polish Dance), English Contras and Minuets in Stockholm, Sweden on September 29, 1711.

Since the Saxon-Polish connection existed for more than half of the 18th century we include the map below. Note that these two states did not have a common border—either Austria or Prussia (at different times) came into permanent possession of the territory separating Saxony and Poland.



SAXONY-POLAND (1750)

The political union of Saxony and Poland aided in the spread of the Polish Dance into Western Europe—usually in a highly modified form. The Saxon Court often celebrated special events with the Polish Dance. One such instance was the marriage of the Prince Elector of Saxony in 1719.

¹⁸⁸ It was written by a 12-year-old and is entitled: “Eingutter polnischer dannz.” Source is Zofia Stęszewska.

According to the 19th century Polish writer, Juliusz Falkowski, the Saxon-Polish King danced **only** the Polish Dance, which was repeated many times during a single Ball.¹⁸⁹ Because there are many gaps in the recorded musical and dance works of this time, our story goes along somewhat sporadically. Our next year of definite information is 1717.

In this year a German dance teacher, Gottfried Taubert,¹⁹⁰ published a description of a dance done by Polish nobles in the city of Danzig-Gdansk on the Baltic.¹⁹¹ He called it “Pollonische Tantze,” or “Polish Dance.” As was the current practice for centuries, all cultured people of the past took dance lessons—the Poles were no exception. He wrote:

. . . to rip away,
and to turn three,
four times
pulling her in a circle,
not considering,
that she in her
circling is much wider,
as though a wild animal,
has to run around him.
And at the same
time it means to go
[dance] toward others.
Now I have really
accomplished something,
this one and that one
are perspiring like a bear,
and could
not move anywhere
any more.
O! Uncomparable
Conduite

“. . . *ihr alles vom Leibe abreissen,
und sich drey,
vier mehrmal
mit ihr im Kreyse drehen,
nicht bedenchend,
dass dasselbige
viel weitlaufigere tour,
als ein solches Unthier,
um ihn herum zu rennen hat.
Un gleichwohl
heist es her nachmals
gegen anders.
Itzt habe ich mich
rechtschaffen gurting gemacht,
did und die
schwitzt wie ein Bar,
und kunte
nicht mehr
fortkommen.
O! unvergleichliche
Conduite!*”¹⁹²

Commenting upon the description of Taubert, Maria Drabecka, a Polish researcher of historical dances, states:

Taubert describes
very clear that the
Poles lead
their partner by the
hand, moving around
in a circle.

“*Taubert mówi
dość jasno o tym
ze Polacy prowadzili
swe damy
za rękę, posuwając się
w koło.*”¹⁹³

Taubert's description, . . .

“*Relacje tauberta, . . .*

¹⁸⁹ Juliusz Falkowski, *Obrazy z życia kilku ostatnich pokoleń w Polsce*, (Poznań: 1892), Vol. II, p. 176. Falkowski does not cite any sources for his statements so his remarks are not too valuable, perhaps not even true.

¹⁹⁰ Gottfried Taubert, *Rechtschaffener Tanzmeister*, (Leipzig: 1717).

¹⁹¹ Somewhat later the future German philosopher, Arthur Schopenhauer, lived in this city at the end of the 18th century. His mother told him anecdotes about life in this city. She mentioned dance music for Sarabands, Polonaises, and Minuets. R. Safranski, *Schopenhauer And The Wild Years Of Philosophy*, (Cambridge: 1989), p.17.

¹⁹² Hławicka, *Ze Studiów* . . . , 38. All quotations of Taubert are taken from this article.

¹⁹³ Maria Drabecka, “Tańce Polskie w ‘Rechtschaffener Tanzmeister’ Tauberta,” *Muzyka* (1966), #3, 4, p. 83.

gives us a very clear
choreographic picture
of a dance type,
which may be called
the dance of the Szlachta
of Poland.

*dają nam dość jasny
obraz choreotechniczny
jednego rodzaju tańca,
który może należałoby
nazwać tańcem szlachty
Polskiej.”*¹⁹⁴

The basic features correspond to the description of 1668 and 1687 but with one important exception—the tempo. Taubert's pulling of the partner, the perspiring, all this is more in keeping with a fast dance. This, in conjunction with what is the first step description of the Polish Dance, which is a bending step, followed by two more steps. We read:

. . . and with the
half-Coupe
and two ordinary steps
and a demi-Coupe
and
two half Coupes
and a simple
step.

*“. . . als einmal mit
einem halbem Coupe
und zwey simplem Pas
und demi-Coupe
und
zwey halben Coupe's
und einem simplen
Pas gemachet.”*¹⁹⁵

The usual interpretation of the term “Coupe” as it was used in the past is as: “*a bending step followed by a straight step of a slide.*”¹⁹⁶ Furthermore:

. . . since by us
the customary Polish
Dances,
which are being danced
here, consist of a 3/4
beat, and are being danced
the Pas de Bouruee [sic] ,
being used.

*“. . . wie den bey uns
gebrauchlichen Polnischen
Tantzen
als welche allesant
aus Drey-Viertel-tact
bestehen durch und durch
mit Pas de Boruuee getantzet,
weden.”*¹⁹⁷

Thus the dance was in 3/4 time as is the Polish Walking Dance. However, this step movement Bourree may be as was described above or with a rise or a bending or a hop-jump on count three. Because the speed was not specifically mentioned, Taubert may have seen a prototype Mazur-form, which has been pointed out.

On the basis
of Taubert's descriptions
it is difficult
to decide whether it is
the Mazur
or Polonez step.

*“Na podstawie
relacji Tauberta
trudno wnosić
czy był to
krok mazurowy,
czy polonezowy.”*¹⁹⁸

¹⁹⁴ Drabecka, “Tańce Polskie...”, p. 82.

¹⁹⁵ Drabecka, “Tańce Polskie...”, p. 82.

¹⁹⁶ Sachs, *Worlds...*, p. 403. But there are descriptions of the Coupe as not having a “slide.”

¹⁹⁷ Drabecka, “Tańce Polskie ...”, p. 82.

¹⁹⁸ Drabecka, “Tańce Polskie ...”, p. 84.

This merely confirms that we have a collective couple dance traveling in circles with music in 3/4 time with a step taken for every count. In St. Petersburg, Russia:

1720

They danced
rightly speaking
after the Polish way,
because French dances
I rarely saw. . . and
what's more a Coupe
didn't dance once but
rather three times . . .

*“Tańcowali wyłącznie
prawie
po polsku,
bo francuskiego tańca
jakoś rzadko używali aby
więcej par razem
nie tańczyło jak
tylko po trzy”*¹⁹⁹

1722 From a foreigner's diary we have a description of Moscovite customs:

*“. . . the host, hostess, or one of the household opens the dancing after which one or two couples may dance the minuet, the 'anglaise,' or the 'polonaise.' ”*²⁰⁰

Interestingly enough, Russia practically made the Polish Walking Dance and the Mazur their own National Dances during the 18th and 19th centuries.

During this time also the Walking Dance is taken up by the Hungarian Szlachta to become the dance “Palotas.”

*“Presumably it was at this time that the Hungarian downstep, following the example of the Polish and French dances, developed into a round dance. By the 18th century, the Hungarian nobility had a dance for noblemen which they called the 'Palotas.' The Palotas was very gentle, dignified and solemn in measure, the second part only a little brisker.”*²⁰¹

1731

Paweł Sanguszko and wife
entered [into the]
polski taniec.

*“Paweł Sanguszko i żona
zagaili
polskim tańcem ochotę.”*²⁰²

We see above a dance identified as the Polish Dance (Polski Taniec). We see it was for couples. Comparing this with the previous citations we can probably conclude that this was the Walking Dance. Notice that the term “polskim tancem” occurs in the original. This is a grammatical variant of the term “polski taniec” or “taniec polski” in the nominative forms. We shall retain the latter in English because this term grows in importance and denotes a definite flavor of the dance.

The period from 1733 marks the beginning of a fatal dependence of Poland upon Russia in the interest of the Tsar's power. In Prussia, Frederick II sets into motion a policy of

¹⁹⁹ Dr. Kętrzyński, “Przewodnik naukowy i literacki,” Oscar Kolberg, Vol. 25, *Mazowsze II*, (Wrocław: 1967), p. 287.

²⁰⁰ Martha Blinoff, *Life and Thought in Old Russia* (Philadelphia: 1961, 54), The diary was originally written by F. V. Bergholz in 1722.

²⁰¹ Edith Elekes, *Hungarian Dances* (Budapest: 1936).

²⁰² *Kurier Polski*, 86 (Warszawa: 1731).

imperialism at Poland's expense. First to fall to Prussia was Poland's Baltic coast and Polish Śląsk (Silesia).

Already we see that the Saxon court (of Augustus III) this dance was thought of as a Polish symbol.

<p>. . . wanting to begin with the polski taniec their hearts and eyes were content. Beginning the taniec polski were Her Highness the Queen with the Honourable Gentleman Prince Minichem, French fieldmarshal. began to dance.</p>	<p>“ . . . zagajając ochotę polskim tańcem serca i oczy spektatorów narodu polskiego kontentowali. Jak zaś przestały tańce polskie, tak najjasn. królowa jmc z.j.w. jmc panem grafem Minichem feldmarszałkiem francuski zaczęła taniec.”²⁰³</p>
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As with the Polish mode of Kontusz and Żupan, this was thought of as a connection between their contemporary time (1735) and the past *centuries*. In keeping with this, other terms were used concerning customs, which reinforce the notion that these are old Szlachta customs. The term “Staroswiecki,” meaning “Old-world,” as for example in “Tance Staroswieckiemu Obyczajowi” (Customary Old-World Dance), is a quite deliberate use of the idea of identifying with some past time.

One must notice that it appears that the “eyes and hearts” of observers at the Court of Augustus III were contented to see “their” dance because they were Polish. Remember that the Saxon Court danced in the Western European mode, and their dances followed this fashion. However, as we shall see, there is considerable evidence that the “taniec polski” was popular with the Saxon Court, even though the Court did not dress in the Polish style.

19.1.1735
(GP 27)

<p>. . . at the day of the Coronation Anniversary. . . in the evening there was a ball. . . their Highness's [the King and Queen] with the Taniec Polski diverted themselves . . .</p>	<p>“ . . . w dzień aniversaryjny wieczorem zaczął się bal. . . Najjasn Królestwo imc tańcem polskim dywertujac się . . . ”</p>
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The Saxon Court gave a ball for the Empress Ann of Russia, who incidentally came from former Commonwealth territory.²⁰⁴

²⁰³ *Kurier Polski*, 86 (Warszawa: 1731). This, along with the “Gazeta Polska” were newspapers published in Warszawa. Henceforth separate footnotes references shall not be made for them. They will be identifiable in the text by KP and GP. We shall use also the Polish date usage of the first day, then month, then the year. In a recently published work all surviving newspaper notices dealing with music which appeared in Poland during the 18th century are contained in two volumes.

²⁰⁴ Why all these celebrations for Ann of Russia? Because she aided Augustus III, the Saxon King of Poland, to regain the throne against his rival, Stanisław Leszczyński. In short, Russia intervened in a civil war of the Commonwealth—an ominous pattern for the future. Both the Saxon Court and the claim of Ann Elizabeth and Catherine as Empresses of Russia,

9.II.1735
(GP 30)

On the birthday of
the Russian Empress
Ann, King August III
gave a Ball with
illuminations
and fireworks,
after supper [the]
'taniec polski'
was done with the King.

*"W dzień urodzin
imperatorowej rosyjskiej
król August III
wydal bal z
iluminacjami
i fajerwerkami;
po kolacji
'taniec polski'
z udziałem króla."*

Southeast of Warszawa lies the city Lwów—the home of many Polish libraries and institutions up until the end of World War II. In the 18th century it was a well traveled route through the Commonwealth.

3.III.1735
(GP 34)

Several days of parties
with dancing celebrating
the arrival in Lwów
of Prince Hess Homburg
who 'on Sunday' gave
a Masked Ball;
all entertain themselves
with French and
the 'tancem polskim.'

*"Kilkudniowe zabawy
a tańcami z okazji
pobytu we Lwówie
księcia Hessen Homburg
który 'w niedziele' wydal
bal maskowy;
zabawiano się
tańcami francuskimi i
'tancem polskim.' "*

Thanks be to the Russian Empress Ann, yet another magnificent supper was attended by the Saxon Court to honor the coronation. It was more than a grand feast.

18.V.1735
(GP 44)

. . . toasts done to
trumpets, horns and
various instruments
[of the] 'excellent band.'
Dancing began with
couple royal in the
'tancem polskim.'

*". . . toasty spełniano przy
aplauzie trąb, kotłów i
różnych instrumentów
'wysmienitej kapeli'
Tańce rozpocela
para królewska
'tancem polskim.' "*

During June of 1735 the aforementioned Prince Hess Homburg was busy dancing at one Ball or another in Lwów. One, on the first of June, was for the christening of his 10-year-

had at least two things in common—both ruled over people foreign to themselves, and both were of the same non-assimilated Germanic breed of colonialist, East of the Elbe river.

old Persian orphan girl. This gives us some idea of the wide cultural scope of the Commonwealth, which was cut short by the partitions.

In the hot month of July in Warszawa, a banquet was given by Aleksander Sulkowski for Henryk Bruhl, who handled finances for the Saxon Court. His function was to obtain as much money as possible from the Commonwealth for the Court. This celebration also included toasts to the blasts of trumpets as well as dancing.

13.VII.1735
(GP 52)

. . . the party lasted to
the morning with Polish
and French dances.

“. . . *zabawa trwała do
rana przy polskich
i francuskich tańcach.*”

Here the term “Polish Dances” is used. In all previously cases only the term “Polish Dance” was used. This may be an error, or it may imply that the “Polski Taniec” was repeated during the evening, or that there was a different Polish Dance, which was done. At the least we can suggest that the “Polski Taniec” was repeated, and was alternatively done with the French dance or dances.

The King and the more powerful personages of the Commonwealth often celebrated with not only orchestras and fireworks, but even heavier equipment. During August of 1735 a Court feast was given on the name-day of the King. The feast:

4.VIII.1735
(GP 55)

. . . began with the
King and Queen
[in the] ‘tancem polskim’
toasts were accompanied
by the band
[its] trumpets, winds
and cannon salvos.

“. . . *rozpoczętymi przez
króla i królowa
‘tancem polskim’
toastem towarzyszył
odgłos kapeli,
trąb, kotłów
i salw armatnich.*”

A pity that these weren’t used for military training. In the same month in the Polish capital city of Wilno one, Antony Lojko, gave a Ball at his palace:

28.VIII.1735
(GP 60)

. . . guests enjoyed
themselves
[with] Polish Dances
to the sounds [of a]
‘excellent’ band,. . .

“. . . *goście bawili
się
tańcami polskimi
przy dźwiękach
‘wybornej’ kapeli,. . .*”

Notice that it stated Polish Dances and not a single Polish Dance. More important though, is the inference that we may draw about the cultural life in the towns of the Commonwealth. Of course, the officers of the Commonwealth traveled throughout the Realm, for example, Michal Kazimierz of the Polish-Lithuanian family, the Radziwiłł’s, gave a supper in Warszawa in November of 1735. After supper there were again:

5.X.1735

. . . Polish Dances and
French to morning.

“. . . *tańce polskie i
francuskie do rana.*”

Not only does one see here that this “Polish Dance” was a natural companion to the Dances of the High Culture of 18th century France, but that dancing and parties lasted for many, many hours. In the 19th century in Poland the appearance of the dawning Sun shall be marked with a special dance. (Could this be rediscovery of Pagan Joy?)

The reader can see that all of our citations are from the year 1735. Polish newspapers did not appear regularly until 1729. The first mention of dancing occurred in 1730. However, in the pages of these newspapers, the term “Polish Dances” or “Polish Dance” is explicitly used only in the year 1735! How strange this seems. Especially since we have a complete historical musical record of compositions, throughout the 18th century. The “Polish Dance” did not die; on the contrary, it grew in popularity. And here we see the key to the puzzle. By the year 1735 this type of ceremonial Walking Dance done in the Commonwealth was recognized as being native to the Commonwealth in contradistinction to the European Dances of the time, namely, the dances of France.

Being thus recognized this Walking Dance was labeled as “Polish”—or of the Commonwealth. After this time, 1735, and up to partition times, the “Polish” is not needed. Then terms such as, “Ceremonial,” “Dance,” or “Old-Fashioned Dance,” are used.

Unfortunately, these newspaper citations tell us very little about the manner of dancing the “Taniec Polski.” We know that it was danced in couples with the first couple in the place of honor. In fact, any detailed descriptions, if they ever existed from this time, have been lost. What we do have are the notes, the musical scores of this Polish Walking Dance.

A contemporary analysis²⁰⁵ of these scores shows us that we are only at the threshold of the grand, of the pompous Polonez of the 19th and 20th centuries. Whilst some may be disappointed, others will see a natural process of evolution and development of this Dance. They shall perceive a growing, living thing.

What is surprising about the music of the 1730s is that it lacks development, that it lacks a strong melodic line, that it lacks definite sustained endings to phrases. This music of the 1730s is predominantly vocal in character, which means that it is to be sung and not danced to. There is not a markedly strong accented musical line in this music.

In short, it lacks all of the musical qualities of the 19th century Polonez with which most people are familiar! What we expected, or perhaps wanted, was what we now know “should” have existed in the past. We miss-read history. But we now know the real music of that time. It was not the music of the 19th century. The reader must also keep in mind the nature of early 18th century orchestras. They were not big, booming affairs, but music for small rooms. This music did not “carry.” A harpsichord has a rather trifling sound.

We can say about the “Taniec Polski” of this epoch that is rather “small,” rather self-effacing, modesty but full of Dignity. We also know that it is in 3/4 time and done in a walking manner. this summarizes the first stage of the development of the Polish Walking Dance.

²⁰⁵ This analysis was finished in 1976 and was done by Zofia Stęszewska.

ii The Second Stage (1730s-1760s)

From 1730 to 1760 is only thirty years. However, within this period the music of the Polish Walking Dance substantially developed so that by 1750 the music no longer had a vocal character, but an instrumental character, that is to say, something rather easy to dance to. Now let us turn to the historical records of the period beginning with the year 1736. At the opening of that year, Augustus III, the Saxon-Polish King, married. Naturally, this event was an occasion for many parties, for example, one such was held on 15.II.1736, at which the *Taniec Polski* was done.

On 8.VIII.1736 a wedding was celebrated between the leading families of two administrative areas in Poland. These were called “województwo,” meaning voivodeships, or provinces. These wojewodztwo families all occupied very high positions in the political-social hierarchy. Pan Humieniecki married into Pani Pocijowna’s family.

8.VIII.1736

. . . following the respectful resounding of the orchestra the dance started. The beginning couple was the Duke of Kraków and Her Honoress, the Bride, who was escorted by Their Lordships of Trocki, Podolski, Lubelski, Chełmiński and heads of the Voivodeships, of the Crown’s Treasury. . . , after which each of their Honored Lords with the Bride also danced.

“ . . . *wdzięcznie rezonacyi kapeli nastąpiły tańce; zacząwszy pierwszy księżę kasztelan krakowski z jmcia panna młoda którym asystowali ichmość Trocki Podolski, Lubelski, Chełmiński wojewodowie, podkanclerzy Koronny. . . , potem zaś każdemu z ichmościów jmsc panne młoda w taniec biorącemu insimul asystował.* ”

How long could a wedding last? In north-central Poland at the wedding of Adam Chodkiewicz and Rozalia Czapska (from the Baltic) which was held at the Branicki manor, we know that:

15.II.1738
(KP 59)

. . . the many guests were entertained at Białystok for 2 days of dances and other treats. . .

“ . . . *licznych gości przyjmował w Białymstoku przez 2 dni tańcami i innymi rozrywkami. . .* ”

In the rural areas of the Commonwealth three-day weddings were the rule in the 19th and 20th centuries. We wonder-who copied whom?

In 1739 one Johann Matteson, in the book (written in German), *Der Volkomme Kapellmister*, has an account of the music for his Polish Dance, but lacks a description of the

dance itself. The fullest description of this dance during the 18th century comes from German foreigners (as opposed to Germans living in Poland), as we shall see. These are usually descriptions of the dance as done by European nobles outside of Poland. By the 1740's there is direct evidence that the Saxony Court dances it in Saxony.

For the wedding of one Bosena and de Kalkenthal, celebrated at Dresden, we read:

20.II.1743

(KP 325)

. . . then a ball followed,
which the [King]
began
the Taniec Polski

“ . . . *nastąpił bal,
gdzie król jmc cum neosponsa
zaczął
taniec polski.*”

Masquerade Balls became increasingly popular in Warszawa. Those were held at “Reduts.” These masked balls allowed for a certain amount of social mixing among different classes. Swords were not used. Everyone had to be masked. Tickets were sold to the general public. These Reduts were occasions for dancing, plays, gambling and concerts. They were manifestations of town culture.

. . . the establishing
of many masked balls,
dance rooms,
which were organized by
townspeople whom also
organized concerts
in the same places.

“ . . . *zakładanie
licznych redut,
sal balowych,
których organizacja zajęli
się mieszczanie,
organizowanie koncertów
w mieście.*”²⁰⁶

The first Redut in Warszawa was founded at 105 Piekarski Street, under Augustus II. Even earlier, 1730, in Wilno, the Radziwiłłs mixed with commoners at Reduts, which lasted until eight in the morning.

By the time of Augustus III, all major Polish cities, namely: Poznań, Leszno, Lwów, and Wilno had urban forms of entertainment.

Although operas and ballets were performed during the 17th century, it was not until the second half of the next century that the towns themselves could support these forms. During this period only the Court and the Magnates could support these foreign art forms.

Augustus II opened the first opera house in Warszawa in 1728. At this time, the singing and dancing teachers were French, even at the rural estates of the Branicki's of Białystok, Radziwiłł of Nieśwież (in Lithuania), and the Ogiński's of Słonim. The performers were the trained sons of peasants. Not until three generations later do these students become soloists and directors. By this time also, a national theatre developed with the action of Polish themes sung and recited in the Polish language. During this period the *Kontusz* and *Taniec Polski* were done on stage as representative of Noble Poland, whereas the *Krakowiak* and *Mazur(ek)* were representative of peasant dances.

On August 12, 1745, Catherine the Great, the sexually immoral Germanic ruler of Slavic Russia, was married to Peter II. According to one account, the celebration was

²⁰⁶ Łukasz Gołębiowski, *Gry i zabawy różnych stanów*, (Warszawa: 1837), pp. 272-274.

climaxed with a Ball, which consisted solely of the Taniec Polski, which were done all evening.

*“At last the crown was taken off until all was ready for the ball; then it was put on again. At this ball only polonaises were danced and it lasted altogether not more than an hour.”*²⁰⁷

But there is some dispute about this since another source identifies this dance with the Quadrille.

*“The young couple, however, were not enjoying themselves. The endless quadrilles bored them. . . .”*²⁰⁸

However, from what Sachs states, “thus the quadrille of twelve couples in which Catherine II of Russia danced at St. Petersburg in 1741, appears to be closely related to ours.”²⁰⁹ Most probably, at least an opening Taniec Polski or Polonaise was done, which was then followed by Quadrilles.

In 1740 Father Stanisław Konarski opened the door to his school, the “Collegium.” This was a school for the sons of the Szlachta. It was founded to provide an education in good citizenship in order to reform the Polish political state. This school, located in Warszawa, provided many dance partners for the towns’ many social affairs. Dance lessons were part of the curriculum.

Marianna, daughter of Augustus III, danced in a special presentational march, as did the foreign guests who were present at court.

13.VI.1747

. . . very magnificently
was the taniec polski
staroświecki trumpeted.
Before His Majesty
[the King],
marches torch-bearers
of Polish Gentlemen
and Ministers, also
before him four Saxon
Marshals carrying
their Marshal’s batons.

After the King once
danced in this procession,
he then danced with this
wife, and then his
entire family.
Then the Elector,

*“. . . bardzo wspaniały
był taniec polski
staroświecki trąbiony.
Król jmc najpierwszy
tańcował cum neoponsa,
przed którym przodkowaly
pary panów polskich
i ministrów każdy z pochodnia
przed nim zaś czterech
marszałków saskich
z laskami.*

*Król jmc raz
przetańcowawszy,
potem królowa jmc
et per consequens
cala familia
z elektorowa jejmcią,*

²⁰⁷ *Memoirs Of Catherine The Great*, (New York: 1935), p. 70.

²⁰⁸ Zoe’s Oldenburg, *Catherine the Great* (New York: 1965). As the author points out, they were bored because of the partners that were chosen for them to dance with.

²⁰⁹ Sachs, *Worlds ...*, p. 426.

and Representatives
of France and Bavaria. . .

*tak jak tez poslowie
francuski I bawarski. . . ”*

Unfortunately, the above passage does not indicate if at this time in history (1747), the foreign representatives knew this dance before attending the Saxon Court at Warszawa. Most likely they learned it in the Polish capital just for this occasion. Notice the opening processional march, which could be related to the Drabant. Also the feature of making a round with one partner at a time.

Just two days later, another Ball was held with Oriental guests.

15.VI.1747
(KP 551)

. . . their Highnesses
from Spain, [and]
the Representatives
Families
from Turkey and Persia,
in [their respective]
countries fashion. . .
in the large hall...
the Taniec Polski began
[the Affair and lasted]
until supper,
after which again
the Polish and French dances
were done.

*“ . . . Najjaśn. państwo
w hiszpańskim,
Najjaśn.
familia
w Tureckim, perskim,
i innych
stojach
na wielkiej sali. . .
taniec polski zaczęła
do kolacji,
po której znowu
tańce polski i francuski
nastąpiły.”*

Although there is no grammatical ambiguity as to the second occurrence of the term “Polish Dances,” the context makes it more than likely that the Taniec Polski was repeated, implying that this dance was not simply an opening dance. This also, indirectly, implies that the Taniec Polski was repeated, and thus could not have been a dull dance: since a dull dance does not last long.

Eleven days later there was another party with many foreigners dressed in their distinctive fashions (and the Poles in theirs). Not until five in the morning did the dancing begin.

26.VI.1747
(KP 522)

. . . all at the castle
joined in the taniec
polski.

*“ . . . wszystkie na zamku
zaczęły się tańce
polskie.”*

That there was active discussion among Poles about what foreigners thought of this dance, we see reflected in the following citation. One Ignacy Krasicki, writing to a Pan Podstoli in 1750, stated:

. . . some criticize

“ . . . gania niektórzy

our taniec polski,
saying that,
this is not a dance,
but a walk to music.

*nasz taniec polski,
powiadają,
ze to nie taniec,
ale przechodka w takt.*" ²¹⁰

The German city of Leipzig (in Saxony) does have more than a causal connection to Polish Dance History. In 1755 the dance teacher, Christoph Gottlieb Hänsel, published at his own cost, a manual which has probably the fullest description of the Polonaise Step. (The step shall be fully described in the Workbook Section.) Here we only shall present his remarks about the character of the Dance.

The actual title of Hänsel's book is a very long one. The very second line states that he was a dancemaster at the University of Leipzig which is located in Saxony. Many Poles and their families visited the Saxon Court when the Elector of Saxony was also the King of Poland.²¹¹ This is probably where he may have observed the Polish form of the Polonez. Undoubtedly he also taught the dancing public as well. He devotes 15 pages of his manual to the Polonez. Here is his introductory title to the Dance.

About the Polish Dance,
of its steps, Figures and leading,
as well as the German
and Polish styles and Ceremony:
whether the hat is carried
or placed?
And about how it overall
must be.

*“Von dem Polnischen Tanz,
dessen Pas, Figur und Führung,
so wohl nach deutscher als
polnischer Art und Ceremoniel:
ob der Huth dabey aufzusetss
oder abzubehalten?
Und wie er überhaupt informiret
werden musse.”* ²¹²

We note immediately that Hänsel only uses the term the “Polish Dance” which is an old Polish term for the Dance. He does not use the term “Polonaise.”

Now for his first paragraph.

“Ein reiner Polnischer Tanz ist gewiss was vortreffliches, insonderheit wenn er mit einem regulären nach der Musick eingerichteten netten Pas, mittelmässiger Cadence und sanften Führung verrichtet wird. Gewiss ist es, was ich hier behaupte; allein, es ist im Gegentheile zu beklagen, das hierinnen der Gegensmack so verschieden ist. Man trift allhier und andern groffen Oertern iämmerliche Tänzer an, die doch alle glauben was rechts in dem Polnischen Pas gethan zu haben. Es sind mehrentheils Pfuscher. Doch ist es unsere Absicht nicht mit ihnen zu streiten.” ²¹³

“The true Polonaise is indeed something splendid, especially when the step is executed in a regular and precise manner to the music, at a moderate speed and with a gentle bearing. Indeed it is, as I have given it here, but it is to be lamented that taste differs

²¹⁰ Stęszewska, *Historii Poloneza*, p. 87

²¹¹ The Elector of Saxony, even as the King of Poland, only spent two years in Poland, in Warszawa, living as a political exile.

²¹² Hänsel, C. G., *Allerneueste Anweisung zur Aeusserlichen Moral*, (Leipzig: 1755), p.138. Our copy of this work in many places was illegible. Some letters and spellings are in doubt. Persons knowledgeable of the German language will recognize these. We have endeavored to present it to the reader as it appeared to this author. We have not corrected the original text.

²¹³ Hänsel, C. G., *Allerneueste Anweisung...*, pp. 138-139.

*so greatly: Here [in Leipzig] and in other great cities [places], one comes across ballroom dancers who all fancy that they know how to do the pas de polonaise correctly, but they are for the most part charlatans, and it is not our intention to enter into a quarrel with them.”*²¹⁴

Is he speaking about ballroom dancers or teachers of Ballroom Dances (who would be his competitors)? He mentions that there were no figures specific to the dance, as existed then for the Quadrille or the Minuet—but only the circling of couples, serpentine movements, separations, etc. He points out that Poles would not release their partners handhold whereas Germans would. This would allow for individual dancers to separate.

The reader will soon learn that the splendiddness of the Polonez is nothing other than the “Staropolska Style” of the Polonez. The last two sentences of the quotation above simply highlight the eternal desire of choreographers, dance teachers and some individuals of the dancing public to modify dances. Sometimes this is a positive development—but not here in Hänsel’s case. The issue of contention lies in the inverse relation between the individual manner of dancing, its attitude and collective figures used in the dance. This is true of contemporary social dancing as well.

The very next year, Charles Pauli, another dancemaster of Leipzig, described the Polonaise in 1756 as:

...a dance, serious, grave and masculine. It is danced by a large company at the same time, in couples, with the men leading their ladies. It consists in a march around the circle which the first couple begins and directs. Several “tours” can follow where (the man never leaving the side of his lady) each couple follows what is done by the one before.²¹⁵

The important choreographical point here is the following of the leader and the non-separation of the partners which does occur later on.

In 1762 there appeared in England a book written by a dancemaster who traveled throughout Europe, which records his observations. When in Poland he wrote:

*“The Polish nobility have a dance, to which the magnificence of their dress, and the elegance of the steps, the gracefulness of the attitudes, the fitness of the music, all contribute to produce a great effect. Were it performed here on the theatre, it would hardly fail of a general applause.”*²¹⁶

In contrast with Russia at this time Gallini noted that:

*“The Russians, afford nothing remarkable in their dances, which they now chiefly take from other countries.”*²¹⁷

²¹⁴ Donna Greenberg, “Workshop: An Introduction to the Eighteenth-Century Polonaise,” *Proceedings 25th Annual Conference*, (Philadelphia: 2004), pp. 45-46. This is a very informative article.

²¹⁵ This translation as well as some others contained herein are from the unpublished Ph. D. dissertation of Sarah Reichart, *The Influence Of Eighteenth Century Social Dance On The Viennese Classical Style*, (CCNY: 1984), p. 111.

²¹⁶ Giovanni-Andrea Gallini, *A Treatise On The Art of Dancing*, (London: 1762), p. 193. Reprinted by Broude Brothers, New York, 1967.

²¹⁷ Gallini, *A Treatise ...*, p. 194.

Often, at this time, the Taniec Polski is not a short Dance but is rather a long Dance. From the memoir of one Ochocki we read:

<p>... the Ball began ceremonially [as etiquette demanded] with the solemn Polski, which could last for two hours; after each drink it went on. I excused myself, since that much drinking I could not do.</p>	<p>“...zaczął się bal etykietalnie od uroczystego polskiego, który trwał może dwie godziny; po każdej odbitej kielich odchodził. Wypraszałem się, że tak wiele pić nie mogę.”²¹⁸</p>
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So enjoyable was the Taniec Polski that it lasted for two hours!—but one can get tired. This was in 1788. So its dance and drink, dance and drink. Naturally different from our time.

At the midpoint in the 18th century, the musical form of this dance begins to develop greater musical definition, so that its form is more distinctive than it was. Along with the classical forms of European music, there begins a new fashion of “music for listening,” which did not exist in the 17th century.

<p>The second half of the 18th century there arose [the musical genres] “sad” and “melancholic” [taniec polski] in the place of strong and distinguished ones. . .</p> <p>. . . it is not possible to point out characteristics which allow one in all cases to distinguish [between] dancing and listening forms.</p>	<p>“W drugiej połowie XVIII w. polonezów smutnych i melancholijnych</p> <p>w miejsce zamaszystych i dostojnych. . .</p> <p>. . . niemożliwe jest wykazanie tych cech, które pozwoliłyby w każdym przypadku odróżnić polonez do tańca od do słuchania.”²¹⁹</p>
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The remarks made above concern the 18th century Taniec Polski-Form in general, and for the latter half of the century in particular. The problem is difficult, in the Polish case, because of the loss of musical manuscripts, etc., caused by the last war. Most musical scores are written for a single instrument. The same score played by an orchestra with minor changes can be put to another purpose. This compounds the lack of classification; however, there is much evidence that people danced to music which latter scholars classified as “listening music.”

²¹⁸ Jan Bystrom, *Dzieje Obyczajów w Dawnej Polsce Wiek, XVI-XVIII*, (Warszawa: 1994), p.204.

²¹⁹ Stęszewska, *Historii Poloneza ...*, p. 87.

Just how definite was the Polish Walking Dance music of 1750? The most recent analysis of Zofia Stęszewska on this question leads to several conclusions.

The music of this time is physically a longer piece of music. The music is written in three parts caused by the invention of the “Trio” part. This is an enlargement of 18th century music, and is instrument in character. If the letter “B” represents the trio, then we have music which has the outline ABA or ABC, which each letter represents a new melody. In the 1730s the musical form was merely AA or AB.

This form of three parts led to greater musical contrast and color of Melodies—there is greater expression. What the untrained human voice cannot do, the trained musician can do. The major and minor are used. The accompanying rhythm is clearly marked, and it has a pulsating quality—for example, PUM, pum, pum, PUM, pum, pum. This is what most people consider to be characteristic of the Polish Walking Dance of today, and of the 19th century. This kind of pulsating rhythm did not exist in the music of the 1730s hence its “small sounds.”

So at last we have the music for the Taniec Polski. However, we must remind the reader that during the period from 1735 up to and through the 1750s and 1760s, the term “Taniec Polski” is very seldom used. These are times of formal peace for the Commonwealth-political and national crises were yet to come. The Walking Dance of the Commonwealth during this period is called the “Old Dance,” or the “Ceremonial Dance,” or the “Usual Dance.” These names imply that the Dance had a firm place in the Commonwealth, and was native to it. There are several citations to the “Taniec Polski” in the newspapers of this time—but they all come from Drezno, the capital of the Saxon Court outside of Warszawa. There the national origin of the Dance was used because, even though popular, it was a foreign dance to the Germanic colonialists.

We stress again, that the reader must note above that the terms “Polonez” and “Polonaise” were *not* in general use at the time period which we are considering. The Poles and foreigners used their translation for the Polish term “Taniec Polski,” or “Polski Taniec.” This term came to have its own special denotation to the Poles.

So far this means a dance of great dignity and distinction done by couples circling the room. It is slow and in 3/4 time—a type of march. It is danced more than once. It would seem to be somewhat heavily stepped rather than elegant, as also corresponds the Polish fashion of Żupan and Kontusz, and to the Szlachta character of this time.

We can get an estimate of the tempo during the mid 18th century. In 1755, Hänsel stated that the tempo of the Minuet should be twice as fast as is this Taniec Polski.²²⁰ Since there are records that enable one to establish the 1750 Minuet as having 160 beats per minute, this places the Polish dance’s tempo at 80 beats per minute, or slightly greater than one step per second. The time is usually a little faster (88-90), with the characteristic rhythm of the fully developed Taniec Polski and Polonez form as with the accent usually on the “1”, the first count, of each measure.



²²⁰ Sachs, *Worlds ...*, 406.

Phrase endings, which can be exceedingly beautiful and delicate for women, are usually ended on the third part of the measure.

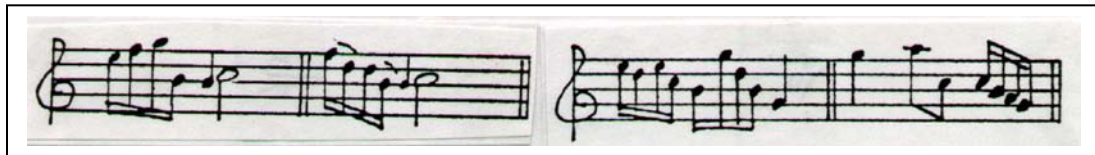


According to the musical analysis of Sarah Reichart:

*“The true polonaise has a characteristic full cadence, in which four sixteenth-notes, the last of which being the leading-tone, precede the last note (example a). The half-cadence with a quarter note is little loved by the Poles, their half-cadence is always similar to those in figure b.”*²²¹

(a)

(b)



“Cadence” is the rhythmic flow of the music or beat of the rhythmical motion or the last measure of music.

iii The Third Stage (1764-1799)

This third and last developmental stage of the Polish Walking Dance is directly due to the political upheavals of East Central Europe during the next 70 years of Poland’s history. The disintegration of the Commonwealth led to a general upsurge of Commonwealth Patriotism. One manifestation of this Patriotism is the further development of the Polish Walking Dance. It becomes a symbol of this Patriotism. Let us now turn to the history of this sad era.

Polish historians usually date the beginning of the Polish Enlightenment with the ascension of Stanisław Augustus Poniatowski to the Polish Throne in 1764.

Poniatowski’s elevation to the throne was due to the fact that he was a “favorite” of Catherine II, that is to say, he was one of her “lovers.” As degenerate as it was this is another example of the role of sex in History. Related to this was the life of the infamous 18th century lover, Casanova, who during this very time traveled through Poland and Russia. While at the town of Mitau in Poland in 1764 Casanova danced both Polonaises and Minuets. Outside of Poland proper the Minuet usually started Balls. Also at this time in St. Petersburg,

²²¹ Reichart, *The Influence ...*, p. 115.

Casanova mentioned that Quadrilles and Contradances were done—with no mention of the Mazur Dance, as yet. He wrote of the Polonaise:

*“A quarter of an hour after my arrival the Ball began with a polonaise. Since I was a foreigner, the Duchess thought it her part to grant me the honor of dancing with her. I did not know the dance; but it is so easy that everyone knows it without having had to learn it. It is simply a procession composed of a number of couples, the first of which has the privilege of directing the turns to right or left. Despite the uniformity of the steps and gestures, the dance helps the couples to display their grace. It is the most majestic and simplest of all dances in which all the persons present at a ball can show themselves.”*²²²

Casanova was a man of taste and a judge of beauty. His remarks point to the total unity of Majesty and Simplicity of the Dance. It was, and is not, just a simple walk.

A musical periodical of the time (1783) described the Polonaise as:

“Eine Polonaise von Grabowiecki. So wie eine sonderbare Mischung von Hochmuth, Hoffarth, und kriechenodem Wesen der hauptzug des polnischen Nationalcharacters ist,, (hart! Die Polen werden sich bedanken!) so ist auch in dem rythmischen gange der Polonaise eine ganz auffallende Mischung von Majestät und Kleinheit. Der lange Dreiviertheltact, die vielen syncopirten Noten, der oft freie und schnelle melodische Gang, die häufigen starken Accente, all’ das macht einem gar auffallenden Contrast mit dem schnell und oft abwechselnden Forte und Piano, und mit dem unvorbereiteten kurzen Schlussfällen auf den zweiten sogenannten schlechten Tacttheil des Tacts.

*Ihr Tanz ist eben so: er besteht aus lauter majestätischen Schritten, drei auf einem Tact; mit unter kommen dann kleine Krümmungen, wo der Mann einen Augenblick wie ein Slave kriecht. (Das Weib aber das überhaupt in Polen edlerer besserer Natur zu senn scheint, auch wirklich da regiert) das geht ihren stolzen Gang fort. Nun aber kömmt mit einemmale der Schluss eben so unvorbereitet wie in der Musik; mitten in einem Schritt hält der Tänzer ein, und macht einen Bückling bis an die Erde.”*²²³

A Polonaise by Grabowiecki. As is the music a peculiar mixture of Pride, Pomp, and fawning Behavior, which are leading features of the Polish National character, (for which the Pole is thankful!) so are the rhythmical passages of the Polonaise, which is an astonishing mixture of Majesty and Pettiness. The slow three-quarter measure, the many syncopated notes, which often are free and quick, the frequent sharp accents, all this makes a striking contrast with the alternating strong and quiet (sounds of the music), all ending suddenly upon the so-called weak part of the measure.

The Dance is just like this (the music): it consists of majestic steps, three to a measure; with small bendings, where the man looks like a fawning slave. (The Woman, however, in Poland, appears to have a noble, better nature even really governing there). They continue (in this manner) proudly walking or going past. Now comes the sudden ending just as the music does; The Dancer stops and makes a bow to the floor.

²²² G. Casanova, *History of My Life*, Vol. 10, (Baltimore: 1970), p. 86.

²²³ C. F. Kramer, *Magazin der Musik*, (Hamburg: 1783), p. 54.

The first paragraph of the above citation is about the character of the music apparently of a Polonaise written by one Grabowiecki. This article was written in the time of the partitions of Poland in which Prussia played a leading role. The enemies of Poland maintained a campaign of miss-information about this blaming the Poles themselves for Poland's down fall. This is reflected in this description. The remark about the high status of women in Poland was not due to the weakness of men but was due the behavior of Polish men toward women. The author of these remarks seems to have forgotten that in his very own time the Empires of Russia and Austria were ruled by women!

Be that as it may certainly seems to be based on actual observations. The bendings over are actually Bows to the Lady, showing her Reverence, with the last Bow done to Honor the Lady. It was not directed to the floor.

The new King of Poland was beholden to Catherine II of Russia for his election. The King wanted to reform Poland politically. In order to do this he had to oppose the Magnates and unsuspecting Szlachta. Catherine II, although a "friend" of the King, supported the Magnates, so that Poland was no more. During this period anyone calling himself a patriot drew sustenance from Poland's Historic Past of which the Kontusz, Taniec Polski, and Szlachtahood became conscious symbols. Thus we read:

<p>... this dance won for itself during the Enlightenment a privileged place.</p>	<p>“... <i>taniec ten zdobywa sobie w dobie Oświecenia uprzywilejowane miejsce.</i>”²²⁴</p>
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The King, Stanisław August, although of weak character²²⁵ and a follower of European fashions was, however, noted for his dance poise:

<p>... he danced the Minuet and Taniec Polski very well. . .</p>	<p>“... <i>tańcował menueta i tańca polskiego bardzo pięknie..</i>”²²⁶</p>
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Not only did the King know the Minuet, but we may infer other dances, as well. There are many attestations to this:

1777 The Polish King did not have any special physical skills, and although he wasn't a bad horseman, he rarely went hunting. He still dances the Polonez, but only the Polonez—
from two years he does no other.²²⁷

Is this correct—that he did no other dances? From the very same time Bernoulli wrote:

²²⁴ Stęszewska, *Historii...*, p.87.

²²⁵ But the King was not in an easy position as some of his contemporaries noted. “*It is impossible to see the King of Poland, and not regret that he was a king where the monarchy rests on absurdity—an elected sovereign from a numerous and proud nobility, every individual of whom thinks he has a better right to sit on the throne than the one elected. From such a basis springs every thing which can make mankind unhappy; their lives are passed, their minds employed, only in caballing or regretting.*” Margravine Of Anspach, *Memoirs...*, p. 140.

²²⁶ Adam Moszczyński, *Pamiętnik do Historii Polskiej* (Poznań: 1868), p. 69.

²²⁷ Originally from N. W. Wraxall, *Memoires of the Courts of Berlin, Dresden, Warsaw and Vienna in the Years 1777-1779*, 2nd ed., (London: 1800). Here from *PSOC*, Vol.I, p. 529.

The King with his innate charm and grace danced several Polonezes. I think that he is one of the best dancers and although he has started to become heavy, he still yet looks very good when dancing. Soon after however [this couple] danced further away. When the King danced the other couples followed his example. For a long time the complete dignity and attraction of the Polish Dance held sway. Finally [the Polonez being over] an English Countrydance was done. There were supposed to be French Dances; there were no Minuets-[or rather] one was done by the young son of an Ambassador, . . . ,with a young girl of that company; all the onlookers much enjoyed it.²²⁸

King Stanisław Augustus besides being an art collector was fond of the Ballet and often attended performances. He also enjoyed the company of women, including that of the dancers, one of whom was known as Daria.

At a midnight gathering of 700 people on November 5, 1791 we have the following:

Daria and our King opened the Ball with a Polonez; our King dances with Majestic Dignity and Grace. It was interesting to see that handsome older man [the King] with the prettiest, younger woman.²²⁹

K. H. Heyking wrote in his memoirs about an unforgettable Ball given by the King under a tent in the Saxon Gardens of Warszawa. The Ball was given at night and was illuminated with colored lanterns. The dances, which were done, were the Polonez, English and Contradances.²³⁰

It is likely that the King knew the dances of his time but as he got older he only danced the Polonez. From what we know of the King he did not wear the Kontusz exclusively—just the opposite. So we may infer that he was dancing the Polonez while dressed in the current French-style of clothing. His natural grace and enlightened entertainment's may have refined the Polonez into becoming what I have chosen to call, the "Rococo-Polonaise." The pre-revolutionary Rococo atmosphere is described by the following quotation. It describes the King as well.

*"There was everywhere diffused a refined elegance, a delicate voluptuousness, what the epoch itself specified as 'the quintessence of the agreeable, the complexion of grace and charm, the adornments of pleasure and love.' "*²³¹

There are very few pieces of iconographic evidence, that is to say, drawings or pictures of Polonez dancing done from real life in the 18th century. But there is one—and it is a treasure-trove. It is most likely to have been done in the 1790's: its exact date is unknown.

There are two pieces of evidence: a pen-and-ink sketch drawing and the finished watercolor painting. The artist was Jean Pierre Norblin. He lived in Poland from 1774 to 1804. He had excellent drawing and painting skills as well as accurate powers of observation.

²²⁸ Originally from J. Bernoulli. Here from *PSOC*, Vol.II, p. 416.

²²⁹ Originally from E. Reche, *Mein Journal*, (Lipsk: [n.d.]). Here from *PSOC*, Vol. II, p. 255.

²³⁰ Originally from K.H.Heyking, *Aus Polens und Kurland letzten Tagen, Memoiren 1752-1796*, (Berlin: 1897). Here from *PSOC*, Vol. I, p. 62.

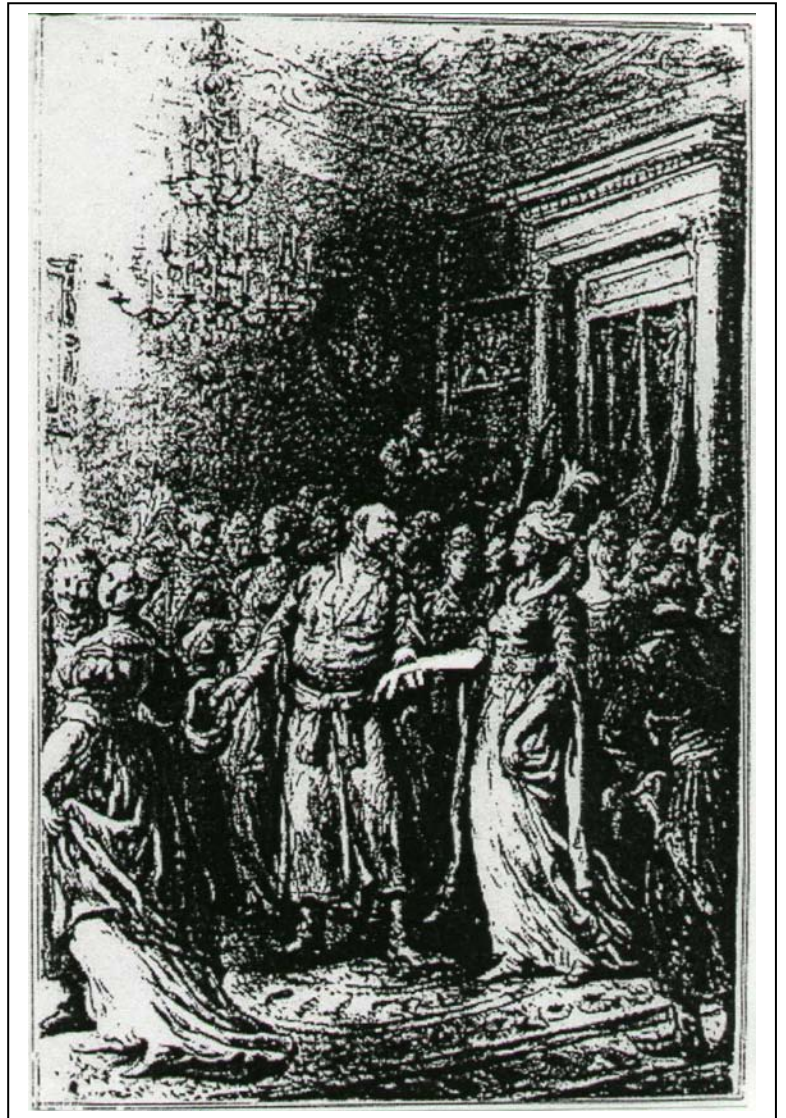
²³¹ Quotation originally by Edward and Jules de Goncourt. Contained in, *French Eighteenth-Century Painters*, (London: 1948), p. 55.

The Czartoryski Family of Poland, in particular Adam and Isabella sponsored him. He also taught drawing to the Czartoryski children. During his 30 year stay in Poland he lived at the main residences of the Czartoryski's. He attended many of the extraordinary political events and was present at the social events of everyday Polish Life. He was there during the partition times and the Uprising of Kościuszko. He drew an entire series of accurate depictions of people and their mode of dress. He included regional "folk costumes" the earliest of which dates to 1775. These drawings are now considered to be accurate iconographic and ethnographic material. The implication of all this is that all of his work was accurate one of which is of particular concern to us.

We present below his preparatory sketch and the finished watercolor entitled, *Polonez*.



THE SKETCH



THE WATERCOLOR

We see that the sketch and the watercolor are practically identical. We also see that this is a Polonez that also directly expresses the old Staropolska “Taniec Polski”—so this implies that the watercolor is an authentic record of the Dance. In both, the Man bends his body toward the Woman—the Woman is more erect and somewhat to the rear of the Man. There is one difference however. Note the amount of the turn of the Man’s head. In the sketch he is looking at the Woman: in the watercolor he seems to be looking further to the rear at someone else. But the main point is his body’s attitude, and thereby, his mental-spiritual attitude toward his partner. It is wonderful—it is the other side of the, “Polish Baroque.” This is a picture that encapsulates at least 200 years of the Staropolska attitude! It is absolutely splendid! Look at the Respect shown to the woman! Look how the man holds his hat! Look at the “openness” of the couple position—they are not close together.

Most astounding is that this single painting gives us a completely “new” handhold!²³² The man is leading the woman by holding her lower forearm, from below. This is wonderful. The woman’s forearm is placed into the man’s hand. This allows her wrist to relax so that her hand may curve downwards.

Isn’t the man on the “wrong” side of the woman? He is on her left but we know that he should be on her right side. It is possible that this is the “figure” whereby the woman changes her position by crossing-over in front of the man. They do look as though they are dancing forward. It could also simply have been a decision of the artist.

Note also that the woman’s garment is of a long heavy hanging material. So much so that she holds the dress off of the floor. This kind of garment doesn’t permit fast dancing. The floor itself is carpeted—so carpets can be danced upon.

Look at the woman’s dress—it is the long hanging sleeves again! Most probably this was a conscious revival of “Polishness” by this individual Woman. It is for this reason perhaps, that the artist singled her out. Maybe it was an invitation for other Polish women to emulate. A close examination of the cut of her outer garment shows that it is analogous to the man’s Kontusz—it is like a cloak with hanging sleeves which opens out at the waist. This is not the same as the earlier examples of the 16th century. Note that she is wearing a belt. This makes her garment feel “lighter” than the 16th century examples.

The story of this woman’s “Polish” style doesn’t end here. In 1817 in Paris a series of watercolors by Philibert-Louis Debicourt appeared. They were copies of Norblin. One in particular is of interest to us. It is entitled “Dama Polska” or Polish Lady, shown below.

²³² One wonders in amazement why one has never seen this done by the many stage groups with their “expert” choreographers.



It certainly looks as though Debicourt just copied the woman from Norblin's, *Polonez*. There are some differences. This garment is fur-trimmed and has what appear to be pockets. Could these two sole representations, one which is original, and the second a copy, of this type of dress be responsible for the persistence of this style by stage dance groups? It is an unknown just how general this style, among Polish women was, if ever.

We should be heartily thankful to Norblin for revealing so much to us.²³³

During the Polish Enlightenment there was an expansion of Western European education in Poland. This included dancing as well.

The children of Magnates
from their earliest
learned to dance,
not only National Dances,
but also the
Kozak, Minuet or Anglez.
From early times dancing
was a favorite
entertainment of
Polish Social life.
Card playing and gambling
only spread
during the Enlightenment.

*“Dzieci magnackie
od najmłodszych lat
uczyły się tańczyć
nie tylko tańce narodowe,
lecz także
kozaka, menueta czy angleza.
O ile taniec od dawna
należał do ulubionych
rozrywek
polskiego towarzystwa,
o tyle gry w karty
rozpowszechniły się
w czasach Oświecenia.”*²³⁴

²³³ For practical use of Norblin's evidence see the *Taniec Polski* section of the Workbook.

²³⁴ Turneau, p. 260.

As stated above, the Kozak from the Polish-Ukrainian steppes, was thought of by the Poles as a primitive Slavic dance, and by foreigners as a Polish dance. Card playing of course never replaced dancing: it was a status symbol for old people and followers of the French fashion of gambling heavy sums.

In the year of 1767 the Russian satraps of Poland arrested the Bishop of Kraków for political-religious reasons (Poland being about to be partitioned.). The Russian ambassador, Stackelberg, had him released. The Bishop gave an imposing entertainment for Stackelberg. During this entertainment the Bishop received many statements of political support—these were anti-Russian. Stackelberg then said to the bishop:

*“ My Lord, you play charmingly on the flute, and have a thousand accomplishments; I have no doubt but you dance a Polonoise [sic] uncommonly well.’ Giving a sign to the orchestra, the musicians played, and the bishop taking out one of the pages, led the dance. At the conclusion of the dance, Stackelberg took the bishop aside, and said, ‘You play well on the flute, and dance equally well a Polonoise [sic]; but you issue bad manifestos: . . . ”*²³⁵

The Bishop then fled. Stackelberg then politically embarrassed him the next day by publishing a statement that the Bishop was insane, played a flute, dance with boys and suddenly disappeared! An obvious attempt to defame the Bishop and his supporters. For our purposes it is sufficient to note that Churchmen could not dance with women but that boys could dance the role of woman.

Coxe writing about a day which he spent at the home of the Vice-Chancellor of Lithuania prior to the Sejm at Grodno (1779). At dinner:

“There were eighty nobles at table, all, a few excepted, in their national dress, and with their heads shaved in the Polish fashion. Before dinner they saluted the count with great respect, some kissing the hem of his garment, others stooping down and embracing his legs.

*“In the evening the count gave a ball, concluded by an elegant supper. The company amused themselves with Polish and English country dances. The Polish dances are simple, but not deficient in grace, accompanied by a most pleasing air: the company stand in pairs; the first man leads his partner round the room in a kind of step not much unlike that of a minuet, he then quits her hand, makes a small circle, joins hands again, and repeats the same movements until the conclusion. The second couple began as soon as the first had advanced a few steps, and was quickly followed by the remainder, so that all the parties glided after one another at the same time. The Poles are very fond of this dance: although it has little variety, they continued it for half an hour without intermission, and frequently renewed it during the course of the evening. The intervals were filled with English country dances, which they performed with equal expertness, and with no less delight.”*²³⁶

²³⁵ Coxe, Vol. V., p. 35.

²³⁶ Coxe, Vol.I., pp. 234, 235.

We note that the dance was simple, done by successive couples, often repeated, not a short dance, gracefully done, and whose step resembled the Pas de Bourree of the Minuet. Note the figure action of the man: releasing his hand-hold, then making a small circle in place, then rejoin hands.

Schulz also commented on education in Poland. Besides all the lessons in manners, language, music, drawing, etc., he specifically states that the Polonez step which was taught was, “*posuwisty*” in nature, or the, “sliding Polonez step.” This is around the 1790s.²³⁷

During the time of King Poniatowski’s reign, the number of dance teachers increased. D’Auvigne and one Skorczynski, taught at the Knight School.²³⁸ Other teachers were Le Doux and Kurtz. Private teachers to townburghers and magnates were Georges, Walinski, Rosenówna, Skoraszewska and Słończewski. In Warszawa itself some foreign teachers were Petinetti, Tomasini, Bizos, Tierry, Mortiz, Gebel.

From this assemblage of names one can see that Balls and parties in the towns and cosmopolitan Magnates’ residences consisted of a mixed program. During this period, the primary dances were the Taniec Polski and Minuet. Such a mixture was also true of the clothes that were worn.

Outside of Poland the Walking Dance was beginning to appear in Dance Manuals with increasing regularity. In 1758 a teacher of dance at the University of Altdorf published a dance manual of 56 pages. It is only a book of dance figures and not steps. The very last page contains a Polonoise. It is highly laudatory. Its complete description follows below:

New Figured Polonoise

This dance is one of the most beautiful, which a [social] company, can [ever] be danced.

“*New Figvirite Polonoise*

Diesen tanz halte vor einen der schonsten, welcher in compaignie kan getanzet werden.”²³⁹

The “social company” here means that of a High Society which appreciates Good Taste and Culture. It is not absolutely clear whether the author is referring to his choreography or the Dance itself, as being the most beautiful.

C. J. von Feldtenstein²⁴⁰ published such a manual in 1772, which contained summaries of certain “National” dances with Poland being represented by the “Mazur,” “Polish,” and “Kozak.” Unfortunately, these are not specific descriptions. The “Polish” dance is also called the “Polonoise.” It is said to be a majestic Polish Dance whose basic step is the Pas de Bourree Step, and which also used a type of a general spiraling figure which occurs, we shall see, in a number of later German Dance Manuals. And nothing more. This manual indicates that during the latter 18th century the Polish Walking Dance seems to have had a learning audience within the Germanies—in particular, in Saxony.

²³⁷ *PSOC*, Vol. II., p. 488.

²³⁸ Gołębowski, “*Gry...*”, pp. 327, 333.

²³⁹ A. W. Winterschmid, *Kurze und leichte Anweisung*, (Altdorf: 1758), p.56.

²⁴⁰ C. J. V. Feldtenstein, *Chorographie* (Braunschweig: 1772). Details about this description are contained in the Workbook Section.

Returning to Poland (of 1780) and the Blekitny Palace of Prince Czartoryski, a leading magnate-patriotic family, the dances which were done were:

Polski Taniec, Quadrille,
English, intermittently
were done in the room;
danced also was Minuet,
Allemande, Kozak. . .

*"Polski taniec, kadryle,
anglezy, wykonywane
były w sali;
tańcowano menuety,
almandy, kozaki. . . "* ²⁴¹

By at least 1783 at the Kadet's School (Knight School) in Warszawa, dance lessons were definitely given in the third year.²⁴² This is corroborated by a former student of the School:

After the evening meal,
all entered a large room ,
which was located
on the Palace's
ground floor.[This]
served both for the
taking of examinations
and dance lessons. . .

*"Po wieczery szli
wszyscy do sali ogromnej,
która w samym środku
pałacu była
na dole
i służyła do
egzaminów,
na lekcye tańców. . . "* ²⁴³

Sometimes the cadets gained entrance to the finest homes as merely entertainment for the rich:

One of the faults
of our education
was that [we] were
used by the
upper classes.
We played at comedies,
learned to dance.
We were taken to balls
at all the
best of houses.

*"Jedna z wad
wychowanie
naszego było, żeśmy
na zbyt wielkich panów
byli prowadzeni.
Grywaliśmy komedie,
umiejących tańcować,
wożono nas na bale
po wszystkich
najpierwszych domów. . . "* ²⁴⁴

This is not a criticism of dance lessons, but rather the using of cadets as entertainment when they should have been studying military matters.

What the dance lessons consisted of at this time exactly, we do not know. However, we can assume that they would be the dances which were currently popular, and which included at least the Taniec Polski.

²⁴¹ J. U. Niemcewicz, *Pamiętnik Czasów Moich*, Vol. I (Warszawa: 1957), p. 139.

²⁴² Mieczysława Miterzanka, *Działność Pedagogiczna Adam ks Czartoryskiego* (Warszawa: 1937), p. 33. The first newspaper ad for dancing lessons occurred in Warszawa in 1752 at the Jesuit's School.

²⁴³ Seweryn Bukar, *Pamiętniki*, (Warszawa: 1913).

²⁴⁴ J. U. Niemcewicz, *Pamiętniki...*, p. 57. As Niemcewicz was born in 1758 he probably attended the school around 1770-1775.

During this time Austria, Prussia and Russia competed for the allegiance of the Poles whilst they combined to work against Poland—this was the time when Poland was being partitioned. In the autumn of 1789 the King of Prussia visited the city of Wrocław. Besides politics there was dancing:

<p>The Poles [who] accompanying the Prince were invited to dine and be entertained in the garden of Prince Hohenlohe, where the King asked for the Polskie Tańce, because he liked it so.</p>	<p>“<i>Polacy towarzyszący księciu zapraszani bywali na obiady i fety w ogrodzie ks. Hohenlohe, gdzie król o polskie tańce prosił, bo miął je lubić.</i>”²⁴⁵</p>
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A large part of the land holdings of the Czartoryski-Lubomirski family was in Austrian Poland (after the 1st partition of Poland) so that the family members alternately lived in Vienna, Warszawa and on their chief estate, Łańcut. In its Ballroom:

*“The balls of the Princesse [sic] Lubomirska were delightful; they always began and ended with a polonaise, a kind of measured march, interrupted at intervals by a graceful balance or swinging movement. ‘When the elderly people wish to join in the dance they ask for a polonaise,’ says the Prince de Ligne. ‘and then the good people perform the figures, and move around with a contented smile on their faces, as they recollect the good old times, and the way they used to smile. The young people are entirely taken up with the present, of which they do not care to lose a moment.’ This dance displayed to advantage the elegance and grace of the figure. Helene excelled in it, and took a patriotic pride in carrying off the palm.”*²⁴⁶

While the upper Szlachta had their balls, etc., so did the lesser nobility and townfolk. Usually after any social gathering there would be dancing:

<p>At such improvised parties the most frequently done dance was the Taniec Polski.</p>	<p>“<i>Na tych improwizowanych zabawach najchętniej tańczono tańce polski.</i>”²⁴⁷</p>
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With the increase of town support for opera and stage dance, the Taniec Polski became a favorite composer’s melody. Composed music to this Walking Dance enters also into the church service:

<p>During the last quarter of the 18th century we see already, in church compositions,</p>	<p>“<i>W ostatniej ćwierci XVIII stulecia widzimy już w kompozycjach kościelnych</i></p>
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²⁴⁵ Helen Przędziecki, *Ostatnia Wojewodzina Wileńska*, (Lwów: 1892), p. 43. This authoress married into the Radziwiłł family and built the famous “Arkady” Park and Estate.

²⁴⁶ L.Perey, ed., *Memoirs of the Princess de Ligne, Vol. II*, (London: 1887), p. 112-113. Note that a sideward-type of balancing was done, probably facing each other.

²⁴⁷ Turneau, p. 282.

an obsession with the
Polonez.

*prawdziwa obsesja
poloneza.*" ²⁴⁸

In the earlier period of this time the most frequently done dance on the stage was the Taniec Polski:

It is characteristic
that in operas dealing
with town-life the
we do not find themes
of folk dance
but rather,
as with
the village opera,
the Polonez.

*"Charakterystyczne jest,
ze w muzyce oper
o tematyce mieszczańskiej
nie znajdujemy motywów
takich tańców ludowych
natomiast w nich,
podobnie jak
w operach wiejskich,
polonez."* ²⁴⁹

Of course, the village operas would be using the rural variation of the Walking Dance, and not the pompous Taniec Polski of the Szlachta.

The "first full Taniec Polski on the Stage"²⁵⁰ was in the opera by Maciej Kamiński entitled, *Nędzy uszczęśliwionej* (1778).

He is regarded as the founder of the National Opera. Folk melodies also appear in this opera. From this time on, the number of folk elements increases but always there is the Taniec Polski, and later the Mazur to represent the Historic Noble Poland. Other musical landmarks of the 18th century are Kamiński's *Zośka* (1779), Stefani's *Krakowiacy I Górale* (1794) and by the next century an entire folk-opera, *Wesele Krakowskie w Ojcowie* (1823).

It must be kept in mind that these dances and melodies were adopted to meet stage requirements. Just as there existed stage costumes so the dances and music became stylized, that is, it was generally speaking, not authentic. Although this is true generally, the Taniec Polski can easily be an exception. Remember, most people of this time were instructed in dancing and deportment, with the man having the natural expansiveness, which this dance requires. This, combined with "simplicity" of the dance movements, would give it a more authentic ring on the stage.

During this period (1775-1800), there was a great outburst in composed music based on the Polish Walking Dance Form. A stimulus for this was the occurrence of the Four-Year Sejm (1788-1792) which took place in Warszawa. This was one of Poland's moments of National Revolution and Revival. Many foreigners witnessed this political-cultural upheaval. There was also a great deal of entertainment done which often had a National coloring to it:

Hailes stated that this Polish Parliament was a Dancing Parliament. ²⁵¹

²⁴⁸ Tadeusz Strumiłło, *Źródła I Początki Romantyzmu W Muzyce* (Kraków: 1956), p. 73. Keep in mind that the author uses the 20th century musical term for the Taniec Polski.

²⁴⁹ Alina Novak-Romanowicz, "Muzyka Polskiego...", p. 31.

²⁵⁰ Helen Dorabalska, *Polonez przed Chopinem* (Warszawa: 1938).

²⁵¹ *PSOC*, Vol. II, p. 161.

The German traveller, J. Schulz, who also was in Poland at this time, did make observations of Polish Dances which he related to the Polish character. Of the Polonaise he wrote:

The Polonaise triumphly
shows the beauty of a Person,
who know how to move gracefully,
showing Nobility in their decorum,
with firm but supple
in their movements,
reflecting an inner radiance
and coupled with an expression,
of attentions of social reverence.
Such observations are not fictions,
but are true examples
of the best Polonaise Dancers,
which I have seen.
I need to add a remark,
that this Dance is only done,
in the long, padded National Dress
of the men,
and in the light, flowing
almost airy taratka,
by the women.
The short French dress
is unbecoming
for the slow, splendid character
of the Dance,
as is the tight-fitting Karako,
reminiscent of the Soubrette,
or, any other short
corset-like dress.

*“Die Polonoise ist der Triumph
schon gewachsener Personen,
die feinheit in ihre Bewegungen,
Adel in ihren Anstand,
Festigkeit und Geschmeidigkeit
in ihren Gang zu legen,
und ihre Zuge mit Frohsinn
und dem feinsten Ausdrucke geselliger
Achtung zu beleden wissen.
Diese Bedingungen sind nicht erdacht,
sondern wirklich von dem Beispiele
der besten Polonoisen Tanzer,
die ich gesehen habe, abgezogen.
Noch ein mochte ich hinzufügen,
die, dass dieser Tanz nie anders,
als in der langen, volligen Nationaltracht
von der Mannern,
und in der leichten, schwebenden,
von der Lust getragenen, Taratka,
von der Weibern getanzt wurde.
Das kurze franzdssche Kleid
passt eben so wenig
zu dem langsamen, prachtigen Charakter
des Tanzes,
als das knappe,
nach der Soubrette schmeckende Karako,
oder jeder andre kurze
forsertartige Anzug.”*²⁵²

The “taratka” is a long over-garment which reaches at least to the knees. We know that Schulz is describing the Kontusz.

This period of musical history, for Poland, is considered to be the Classical Period, which soon became the Romantic period. This Classical Period, epitomized by Mozart and Hayden, led in two directions in Poland: as solo piano music, and to classical music for a proper full orchestra. Just how large an orchestra this might be may be gauged by the following comment:

The Respected Starościnie [she]
wanted so much to dance,
that hardly had the meal

*“W szanownej starościnie
taka była żądza do tańców,
ze ledwie się obiad*

²⁵² J. Schulz, *Reise eines Lieflanders von Riga nacht Warschau, durch Sudpreussen, uber Breslau, Dresden, Karlsbad, Bayreuth, Numberg, Regensburg, Munchen, Salzburg, Linz, Wien und Klagenfurt, nacht Botzen in Tyrol*, (Berlin: 1795-1797), p.195-196.

been finished,
with much food,
and with much wine,
even with the Starosta tippsey,
although he [usually] drank little,
and hardly had the great hall
been cleared of furniture,
already the 24 musicians
[of the orchestra]
began to play the Polski Taniec.

*skończył,
obfity w pokarmy,
niezbytkowy w wino,
gdyż sam starosta był ludzki,
lecz skromnie używał trunków,
ledwie z wielkiej sali
sprzątnąć zdołano stoły i sprzęty,
już muzyka z 24 muzykantów
złożona
grac polskie tańce.”*²⁵³

So the Taniec Polski done to the playing of a full orchestra of 24 musicians.
This would be quite a full sound.

With these new possibilities of the Classical orchestra, the Taniec Polski takes on its present musical form. But right on the heels of this clean, bright, disciplined sound of the Classical orchestra, comes a mixture of Rococo sensibilities and Romantic emotionalism. Sometimes it separates and we have what we name, from a dancer’s point of view, a “Rococo Polonaise,” a Taniec Polski subdued by French elegance of the latter 18th century. It might be called a “Polish Minuet.” It is marked by many “Minuetic-like” Bows and coquetry. The French influence accounts for the term “Polonaise.”²⁵⁴ The Kontusz is not so fitting here, but rather the French Frock.

*“It is not until about the middle of the 18th century that the name ‘taniec polski,’ mainly in its French form ‘polonaise,’ ‘polonoise,’ became unequivocal both in Poland and abroad.”*²⁵⁵

However, the above is not completely correct. The term “Taniec Polski,” absent generally after 1735, will make a strong recovery during this patriotic period, and will still be used for many years to come, often consciously as a symbol of patriotism or “older Virtues”, along with other terms. We shall discover that the term “Polonaise” is more used in the next century. On occasion, the term “Polonaise” did occur earlier. It first appeared in print, in French, in 1689.²⁵⁶

One can use the term “Polonaise” in conjunction with the term “Rococo” in “Rococo-Polonaise” to denote a variation of the Walking Dance that has the characteristics mentioned above.

Now the question arises: how can such a juxtaposition of terms be justified? There are really two questions to be answered here. Did such music exist and how was it danced to? Or was it in fact danced at all?

The end of the 18th century produced the Rococo style in Art and Music. This same type of music is sometimes designated as “the gallant style.” Some works of Mozart have

²⁵³ Kozmian, *Pamiętniki*, p. 160.

²⁵⁴ “Polonaise” in French simply means “from Poland.” In our case “the Dance from Poland.”

²⁵⁵ Zofia Stęszewska *Saltus Polonici*, p. 39.

²⁵⁶ “S. Burhardt, który zebrał około 10,000 pozycja polonezowych, odnalazł pierwszą nazwę, “Polonaise” w zbiorach D’Anglebert, J. H. *Pieces de clavessin (1689)*.” S. Burhardt, who collected about 10,000 polonaises, first found the term “polonaise” used in the collection of J. H. D’Anglebert (1689). Hławicka, “Ze Studiów . . .,” p. 35.

Rococo elements.²⁵⁷ Was the Polish Walking Dance of this time written in this same style? According to Karol Hławicka the answer is yes:

Polonezes before 1792
have the clear style
of their time,
[the] gallant style
. . . they are in the
first place with a changing
rhythm and clear
structure.

*“Polonezy przed r. 1792
noszą wyraźne cechy stylu
owych czasów,
stylu gallant.
. . . idzie w pierwszym
rzędzie o uplastycznienie
rytmiki i jasności
struktury.”*²⁵⁸

Karol Hławicka also states that the music of this type was not only for listening but also for “use”—or to be danced to. On this point there exists some controversy. Zofia Stęszewska holds that to claim that this type of music (the Gallant or Rococo Style), must have been danced to on all occasions is without proof.

The most recent researches²⁵⁹ which touch on this topic has led to the following two conclusions:

1. that Polonaise music was second to that of the Minuet during the period, 1765-1780's in the catalogs were printed in Dresden and Leipzig. These catalogs were published for the benefit of musicians and people who wished to be prepared for the new Social Ball season of Dances. The subscribers to the catalogs show the centers of Leipzig, Dresden, Hanover, and Berlin listed. These are all in the area of Saxony.
2. that there was a conflation of the musical forms of the Minuet and Polonaise—musicians, and composers, especially by those who did not live for a long time in Poland, mixed up the forms so that a Minuet might sound like a Polonaise and a Polonaise might sound like a Minuet.

It is this second conclusion which is important for the positing or “proving” that the Rococo-Polonaise existed. The Minuet sounding music and Minuet musical phrasing does lend itself to “Minuetic-like” movements.

We must remember that the chief household instrument of this time was the small harpsichord. Educated Ladies exercised their amateurish talents on these instruments. It was for just such small musical instruments that Rococo music was written. Small instruments in an intimate room are mainly for listening and not for dancing.

This does not mean that someone on occasion might not have danced to this music. The only direct evidence that we have for inferring the existence of such a variation is the following: upon practical investigation, carried out in 1972-1973, 1976 and 1977, of how contemporary

²⁵⁷ H. Martens, *Polonaise und Mazurka, Musikalische Formen in historischen Reihen*, Band XIX, (Berlin: 1937), p. 25.

²⁵⁸ K. Hławicka, “Polonez w latach 1792-1830,” Stefan Burhardt, *Polonez, Katalog Tematyczny II*, (Kraków: 1976), p. 20.

²⁵⁹ All this from the aforementioned work of Sarah Reichart.

Polish Dance Groups dance the Walking Dance, the author witnessed several occasions dancing which was not strong, not bold, but a trifle effeminate, a trifle too pseudo-elegant for what would be considered an early 19th century “Taniec Polski.” This elegance is, of course, more apparent in women, but easily perceived in the male dancers.

The key was in the music, in the melodic line. This Walking Dance music was not powerful, bombastic music. It really isn't the music as written, so much as how it is played, but its taste for the ear, and how the dancer responds to it.

Music of this type was used in an experiment with practiced dancers. When asked to dance to this, the most natural dancers did *not* dance it in peasant style, or bombastically as in a Taniec Polski. The steps were more “walked-upon-the-toes” than sliding. Choreographers would use modified bows from the Minuet for the women, whereas male dancers in the experiment would use head bow, and not the “Staropolski” Bow.

It is not too difficult to infer the actual physical character of the movements and attributes of this “Rococo-Polonaise.” Since this form was heavily influenced by the Courtly Culture of 18th century France and in particular of the Dance Culture of Louis' XIV we need only survey the writings of French dance masters of this time in order to learn how these Court Dances were one. Luckily for us, dancers and researchers of today know the dances of the French Court.

We need only cite one comprehensive source from 1725, that of P. Rameau.²⁶⁰ Besides having descriptions of dances, the names of steps, and deportment he also tells how to do the steps. The quality of the step-movement is the defining nature of the “Rococo-Polonaise.” Here we merely excerpt at random his qualitative descriptions from throughout his book. The emphases are those of the present author:

*“For dancing must not be regarded as an exercise designed solely for pleasure...Dancing **adds graces** to the gifts which nature has bestowed upon us...we [the French] have a real gift for **beautiful** dancing...There is hardly a Court in Europe where the dancing master is not French [Poland included]...nature had endowed both [a pair of French dancers] with **grace** and every disposition for **beautiful** dancing...danced with **nobility** and **precision**...took all kinds of parts with **grace, precision, and lightness**...the first requisite for dancing is a **good deportment** [posture]...when you, are able to make a **graceful** bow you unconsciously acquire a **taste** for dancing...dancing is no more than knowing how **bend** and straighten the knees at the proper time.*

*Bows are to be performed with **ceremony** and **grace**. That is, each member of the company [at a Ball] should know how to invite a person to dance, to make his bow properly and to be ready, when he has been invited to dance, to return the compliment with the same **politeness** with which he has been asked. The more steps you perform sur des demi-pointes the **lighter** you will appear.*

*The manner of moving the arms **gracefully** in the Menuet is important because the arms move with the body and are its principal ornament. The head is **erect** but not stiff, it may incline, the shoulders may shade the movement, which affords an infinite **grace** to the step...for **good taste** in dancing the slow pas[step] should be done with **gravity** and the quick one with **lightness**.”*

²⁶⁰ P. Rameau, *The Dancing Master*, trans. C. Beaumont, (London: 1970). Emphasis is the present author's.

Summing up from the above citations we can see that the French influence upon the Rococo-Polonoise would consist in dancing with precision, with gracefulness, with lightness, by stepping upon the toes and not sliding upon the foot, with an erect and easy posture and with due regard for ceremony and bowing. P. Rameau does however warn against “affectations” in dancing.

From all this, the present author imaginatively poses the existence of a Polish Walking Dance done in the variant form hereby designated as the “Rococo-Polonoise.”

Some students of this dance have also noted this difference in the Polish Walking Dance. In an essay of aesthetic appreciation of Dance written by Walery Gostomski the author contrasts the Polish Walking Dance with the Minuet.²⁶¹ Although he uses the term “Polonez” which is basically a 19th century term, he is referring to the Taniec Polski as we can see by his characterization of the dance:

<p>In the music for the Polonez the tones are marcial and sonorous. . . as in a war march. . .</p>	<p>“<i>W muzyce poloneza panuje przeważnie ton marcjalny i dźwięczny. . . jak marsz wojenny. . .</i>”²⁶²</p>
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Music more heavy than light, more powerful than bright, as is a classical orchestra, for example, an orchestra of Hayden:

<p>. . . in it reigned free movements allowing for different expressions, pure individualistic motions. . . in the “Polonez” appears a completely free individualism.</p>	<p>“<i>. . . panująca w nim swoboda ruchów, pozwala na wyrażenie najróżniejszych, czysto indywidualnych ruchów. . . w polonezie objawiają się z całą swoboda indywidualizmu.</i>”</p>
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<p>In the Minuet there is much elegance but it lacks freedom and naturalness, whereas the Polonez is elegant but freer and completely natural.</p>	<p>“<i>W menuecie jest ona pełna eleganci, ale pozbawiona swobody i naturalności, w polonezie mniej elegancka, ale swobodniejsza i zupełnie naturalna.</i>”²⁶³</p>
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²⁶¹ Walery Gostomski, *Polonez I Menuet*, (Kraków: 1897), pp. 21-22.

²⁶² Gostomski, *Polonez I ...*, pp. 21-22.

²⁶³ Gostomski, *Polonez I ...*, pp. 21-22.

While the claims for both dance forms are exaggerated, the reader will see the point of the comparison. Walery Gostomski rightly points out that the Minuet is an intimate Salon dance, whereas the Taniec Polski is a dance for great halls winding its way in and out of the house.

Walery Gostomski does not claim the existence of a “Rococo-Polonaise” as a dance in the period from 1760-1790. Only the present author does so.

Karol Hławicka, while studying a collection of written music in Saxony, uses the very term “Rococo-Polonaise.” He writes:

*“ . . . these polonaises are stylistically similar and date from the same period of development of polonaise music, this fact as well as their texture shows that they belong to the category of stylized Rococo polonaise.”*²⁶⁴

This collection of Polonaises has been studied by others as well. From a recent collection of essays we read:

*“A century later, the daughter of King Augustus III of Poland, Princess Anna Maria of Saxony (1728-1797), had amassed over 350 polonaises, whose features are symptomatic of how enriched the genre had become by the 1770s: instrumentally conceived melodic lines, with rococo figuration . . . ”*²⁶⁵

This Maria Anna is the same Marianna mentioned previously in this text. Exactly how this Rococo-Polonaise music may have influenced dance movements shall be dealt with in the Workbook Section.

This form of the dance would be done mostly by couples dressed in the French Fashion, who knew French dances well-especially, the Minuet. They could be portrayed as French snobs or Frenchified dandies by insensitive and unrefined persons. On occasion, one of these Gentlemen would be seen dressed in the Polish fashion, however he would still dance with the grace and elegance appropriate for the Minuet and not the Taniec Polski.

Summarizing the evidence for the existence of the Rococo-Polonaise we draw upon:

1. the existence of new forms of classical and Rococo music,
2. heavy French influence on the social group of Magnates’ sons and daughters as well as on Polish Culture in general.
3. observations and participation in contemporary Polish Stage Dancing.
4. experiments with present day amateur dancers, who would most correspond to social dancers of the past.

From this we can imply its existence. That today it does exist among amateur stage groups there is no doubt.²⁶⁶

The reader must keep in mind that this genre of music was written only for the “intimate Salon” which was a social institution for only a very small percentage of the

²⁶⁴ K. Hławicka, *Polonezy z XVIII Wieku*, (Warszawa: 1967), p. 28).

²⁶⁵ From the article “Beyond the Dance” in *Cambridge Companion to Chopin*, (Cambridge: 1992), p.146.

²⁶⁶ The amateur group of the Polytechnic University of Warszawa uses one of the most beautiful compositions of this type. It was written only several years ago (as of 1973). Another readily available Polonez with a Rococo flavor is T. Kieswetter’s *Polonez* from his *Tańce Polskie* suite published in Poland in 1947.

population. This was and is music for listening.²⁶⁷ Although the “listening variant” is related to our “Rococo-Polonaise” in some sense there came out of this the new melancholy Polonezes which are Romantic in nature. As such they are different from the “Rococo-Polonaise” which has the rationality of the Enlightenment behind it. During this time, the musical form of the Taniec Polski for dancing was more popular, and remained so up into the next century.

What occurred at Salon gatherings was the attempt to dance to this keyboard music. The results were mixed-sometimes good, sometimes bad. An example of this is what is Pan Ogiński’s most well know “Polonaise,” entitled: “Pożegnanie Ojczyzny” (1794). this, the epitome of the genre, is quite often danced to in our time, without even making musical changes.

Jozef Elsner, composer and teacher to Chopin, in one of his private letters²⁶⁸ considered this listening genre as being less accented and slower than the dancing variant. This implies that by adding these two features to any given piece of “listening dance music,” it would then be more danceable. Experiment proves this to be so.

So far, we may summarize our results in the following fashion.



The reader will recall that the most common term for the dancing form is “Taniec Polski.” Referring to the main form of the Walking Dance we return to the last quarter of the 18th century.

There are no mentions in Polish literature from the decade of the 1770’s. However, in German literature of the period, there is an excellent description of the “Taniec Polski” as either observed in Poland by the writer, or as done in Germany. The dancing master was C. Feldenstein writing in 1772. He clearly recognized the Imposing Grand Nobility of the Dance and gave the Pas de Bouree as its Basic Step done in 3/4 time.²⁶⁹

The description shows little change on footwork from that of Taubert at the beginning of the century. Its main point is the character of the dance. Obviously a foreign dance may

²⁶⁷ Just a reminder. Chopin composed his “Polonaises” in France. He made his living in France. Therefore, it was natural for him use the term “Polonaise” rather than “Polonez.”

²⁶⁸ H. Opienski, ed., *Józef Elsner w świetle nieznanych listów*, Vol. I, (Warszawa: 1935), p. 80.

²⁶⁹ The details of this Step are covered in the Workbook Section.

have arisen from the court dances at the beginning the 16th century but its character became established as that of the “Noble Szlachta” of Poland.

Curt Sachs, after an intense study of German dance books, sums this all up with:

*“The German form of Polonaise (1770-1780) also kept old properties of the choral dance-chains, squares, arches, serpentine, twists, and the like. But serious German masters turned against the debasement of the dance, the dragging, the pas comiques, and the tours pueriles and pointed toward the air grand et imposant of the Polish nobility.”*²⁷⁰

The above passage is significant not only in regard to character-“air grand et imposant” means with an imposing and grand (facial and bodily) expression-but also for the figures in mentions. However, one of the figures is so unlike the others that it was probably a mistake-the square. Squares are appropriate for fast dances, and not for a walking dance. All other figures are of a circling promenading dance.

From this time (approximately 1780), some occasions in Germany had a special form of the Polish Walking Dance. (We use this term instead of “Taniec Polski” because foreigners, generally, did not capture its Taniec Polski character.)

*“The Foketanz was a dance which celebrated the weddings of German royalty. It was torchlight promenade wherein the bride and groom exchanged partners so that everyone danced with the bride or groom. Throughout this entire dance, the Polonaise step was done.”*²⁷¹

Notice that we have confirmation of the figure wherein the main guest, in this case, the bride, dances at least once with everyone else.

We finish our survey of this century with a description of Vienna in 1792:

*“In Vienna I went to several balls, especially to those given by the Russian Ambassador, Count Rasomovski. They danced the waltz there with such fury that I could not imagine how all these people spinning round at such a rate, did not fall down from giddiness; but men and women were so accustomed to this violent exercise that they never rested a single moment while a ball lasted. The ‘polonaise’ was often danced, too, and was much less fatiguing, for this dance is nothing more than a procession in which quietly walk two by two. It suits pretty women to perfection, as there is time to look their faces and figures all over.”*²⁷²

We take this to mean that the Polonaise was done a number of times at each Ball. Here there are no gesticulations, bowings, or poses²⁷³ done by the men as exists in the genuine Staropolska Form, as was done at this time by the Polish Szlachta.

²⁷⁰ Sachs, *Worlds...*, p. 426-427.

²⁷¹ Sachs, *Worlds...*, p. 426. Original descriptions in C.J.V. Feldenstein's *Erweite und der Kunst nach der Choreographie zu tanzen*, (Braunschweig: 1772), p. 84.

²⁷² Vige Lebrun, *Memoirs of Madame Vige Lebrun*, (New York: 1903), p. 78.

²⁷³ See Part II of the present work for a detailed description of these motions.

IN THE 19TH CENTURY

At the beginning of the 19th century there were many instances of the continuing culture of old Poland. In Eastern Poland around 1800 we have an eye-witness reminiscence of a family celebration, a name-day celebration:

Finally the guests began to arrive,
and the Gentlemen, and the Ladies,
all were nicely dressed.
The Ladies in beautiful
lustreous material,
the Gentlemen in Kontusz,
in Zupans, of satiny vivid colors
and with richly [embroidered] belts.
No man was dressed with a
short coat.
It was evident, that all were of
the Szlachta of the middle-class,
who held dearly to
[their] country's customs,
looking with disapproval upon
foreign dress styles above all.
The Ladies appeared, [and with]
did very serious curtsies,
the Gentlemen bowed low,
holding their hats in one hand
and saying some compliment,
which I did not understand. . .
After the dinner
the tables were removed,
[the roomed] cleaned
and [then] the music sounded. . .
When I observed with my
ears and eyes,
watching them,

*“Na koniec zaczęli się zjeżdżać goście,
i panowie, i panie;
wszyscy byli pięknie poubierani.
Panie w ślicznych
jedwabnych materiałach,
panowie w kontuszach,
żupanach atlasowych koloru jaskrawego
i bogatych pasach.
Ani jednego mężczyzny nie było ubranego
kuso, we fraku.
Widmo, że to wszystko była
szlachta średniej klasy,
która trzymała się z zamiłowaniem
krajowych obyczajów,
poglądając krzywo na
cudzoziemszczyznę wciskającą się z góry.
Panie wszedłszy,
bardzo poważnie dygały,
panowie nisko się kłaniali,
trzymając czapkę w jednej ręce
i recytując jakiś komplement,
którego nie rozumiałam. . .
Po skończonym obiedzie
wyniesiono stoły,
uprzątnięto
i odezwała się muzyka. . .
Kiedy ją śledzę
uchem i oczami,
anim się postrzegła,*

how the Gentlemen and Ladies,
 joined hands as a couple,
 [then] began to walk
 ina circle around the room.
 The men stamped their feet,
 clapped their hands,
 finishing [the dance] the hand
 they kissed of their partner
 and separated.
 Yet it was still like that, then.

*jak pany i panie,
 wziąwszy się pod ręce po parze,
 zaczęli chodzić
 w kółko po pokoju.
 Mężczyźni stukali nogami,
 klaskali w dłonie,
 na koniec w rękę
 całowali swoje damy
 i rozchodzili się.
 Jeszcze to było jako tako.”²⁷⁴*

It is significant that these were middle-class, country Szlachta. Note that the partners bowed to each other first, then danced, and the men kissed the lady’s hand at the end of the dance. Note also, that in this case, the men stamped their feet. This reflects the virility of the rural Polonez. This same person also described festivities of a wedding:

After dinner the Ladies
 went thoroughout the room,
 inorder to prepare them,
 for dancing. . .
 While the Ladies were preparing,
 The servants cleaned the tables,
 Placed candles in wall-candleholders,
 [which] decorated with mirror tiles
 of polished triangles;
 producing glimmering light;
 the music [band] which came
 from Radziwillomont
 tuned its instruments,
 and when everything was ready
 as well as the Ladies,
 the music began the Polonez
 [which] was composed in Wilno
 [on the occasion of]
 the arrival of Tsar Alexander
 and the Tsarina, which was
 sung in the Rus’ langugage,
 and for a long time after was
 used to begin Balls and for
 any other ocassion to dance.

*“Po obiedzie damy
 rozeszły się po pokojach,
 dla nich przygotowanych,
 przebierać się do tańca. . .
 Tymczasem kiedy damy się przebierały,
 służba uprzątała salę ze stolów,
 zakładała świece do ściennych lichtarzów,
 ozdobionych lustrzanymi tafelkami
 w trójkąt szlifowanymi,
 dla odbijania światła;
 muzyka sprowadzona
 z Radziwillomontów
 stroiła instrumenta,
 a kiedy wszystko było gotowe
 damy skończyły gotowalnię,
 muzyka ucięła poloneza
 skomponowanego w Wilnie*

*na przyjazd cesarza Aleksandra
 i cesarzowej, ze
 śpiewem w języku ruskim,
 i który długo potem był w
 użyciu przy rozpoczęciu balów i
 w każdej porze do tańca.*

At this music the doors were widely
 opened from the drawing-room
 to the dinning-room,
 each man chose a woman,
 and to the sound of the music
 these couples [one behind the other]

*Na to hasło drzwi się szeroko
 rozwarły od bawialnego pokoju
 aż do sali jadalnej,
 każdy mężczyzna wybrał sobie parę,
 a przy odgłosie muzyki
 te pary szurem*

²⁷⁴ Ewa z Wendorffów Felińska’s account in *Kufer Kasyldy*, (Warszawa: 1983), pp. 109-110. She was a young girl at the time. Book written by D. Steniewska and B. Walczyna.

around the room danced.
 I turned my eyes upon
 the couples filing past,
 in order to know,
 who with whom, was dancing
 and how they were dressed.
 Usually the first dance is done
 to a certain rule [custom],
 corresponding to the
 hierarchy of [local] Society.
 Persons who are the
 most distinguished
 made up the first couple,
 the others according
 to their position,
 [however as to]
 not hurt the feelings of those,
 who were not first,
 the man, who began the dance
 as the first couple,
 [he] in the next Polonez
 takes in the [new] first pair, she,
 who was in the second pair,
 and then the third [woman],
 so that all notable persons
 danced as the first pair;
 after this for the rest of the evening
 without regard to this Etiquette,
 but according to personal liking.
 In this way those, who were last,
 became first and were
 chosen to dance,
 if they were skillful and nice-looking.

*pociągnęły do sali tańców.
 Ja zwróciłam oko na
 te pary defilujące,
 aby wiedzieć,
 kto z kim tańczy
 i jak kto ubrany.
 Zwykle bowiem przy pierwszym tańcu
 zachowywały się pewne reguły,
 zastosowane do
 hierarchii towarzyskiej.
 Osoba
 najdystyngowana
 szły w pierwszą parę,
 inne za nią według
 zajmowanego położenia,

 a dla osłodzenia miłości własnej tej,
 która nie była pierwszą,
 tenże mężczyzna, co rozpoczął taniec
 w pierwszej parze,
 w następnym polonezie
 brał do pierwszej pary tę,
 co była w drugim szeregu,
 a potem trzecią,
 tak aby wszystkie znakomitsze osoby
 tańczyły w pierwszej parze;
 po czym przez resztę wieczora tańczono
 bez żadnego względu na etykietę,
 według osobistych upodobań tancerzy.
 Wtenczas te, co były ostatnie,
 robiły się pierwszymi i były
 chwywane do tańca,
 jeżeli były zręczne i ładne.”²⁷⁵*

Note here that the Polonez was repeated many times not simply out of courtesy but for the Beauty of Dance.

Even as the Taniec Polski became the Polonez, then the Polonaise it maintained, as an Ideal, its Taniec Polski Qualities. This opinion is reflected in the works of any number of European authors. One such Pan-European book was by Lepitre, published in 1820:

The Polnisch [Taniec Polski],
 a Dance of the Nation,
 is full of festive Gravity,
 with which [the] Dress
 and Expression
 thereby to the movement
 very much contributes.

“Polnisch,
 ein der Nation eigner Tanz,
 voll feierlicher Gravitat,
 wozu Kleidung
 und Ausdruck
 durch Stellungen Bewegungen
 Sehr viel beitragen.”²⁷⁶

²⁷⁵ Ewa z Wendorffów Felińska's account in *Kufer Kasyldy*, (Warszawa: 1983), pp. 151-152. Book written by D. Stępieńska and B. Walczyńska.

Politics directly affects Culture.²⁷⁷ There is a constant competition between Social and National Groups. This competition often determines the fate or popularity of Cultural Artifacts, such as a Dance. This was consciously noted by one Heinrich Koch who wrote in 1802:

Until the second half of the preceding century, the Polonoise [sic] was much loved in Germany, both as a dance and as an independent instrumental piece; then for a long time it was forgotten; at the beginning of this century, however, it has come more and more into fashion, and serves now commonly as the introductory dance at the more important society balls.²⁷⁸

In these early years of the 19th century Napoleonic France and Poland were seen as liberal political causes. This liberalism existed in the Germanies as well.

The Polonoise by this time had replaced the Minuet as the opening Ball Dance outside of Poland. The French Revolution destroyed the Minuet.²⁷⁹

With the rise of the whirlwind of Napoleon, the Poles flocked to the French. Napoleon's victories led him to create a tiny, artificial rump state called, "The Duchy of Warszawa" (1807) which was subordinate to Saxony which in turn was dominated by France. During this short period of time of the existence of the Duchy Prince Joseph Poniatowski and his soldiers became a symbol of Polish Patriotism. People began to enthusiastically support him and his army donating money and services. Dinners were given in his honor and for the army. In 1811 a large fete was given in the Saski Palace:

There took part a delegation
of all of the regiments
as well as of pretty,
'distinguished Ladies, such as the
the Princess General [Izabela]
Czartoryska, Lady Zamoyska,
Stanisławowa Potocka, Princess,
Radziwiłłowi,
she the Wojewodzina of Wileńska'.
They opened the Ball, inviting
\the soldiers to a polonez.
In the place of Honor in the room
there was a bust of
Poinatowski . . .

*"Uczestniczyli w niej delegacje
wszystkich pułków
oraz piękne,
'najczcigodniejsze damy, tak
księżna generalowa [Izabela]
Czartoryska, pani Zamoyska,
Stanisławowa Potocka, księżna
Radziwiłłowa,
wojewodzina wileńska'.
One otworzyły bal, zapraszając
żołnierzy do uroczystego poloneza.
Na honorowym miejscu w Sali
balowej umieszczono popiersie
Poniatowskiego . . . "*²⁸⁰

²⁷⁶ J. Lepitre, *La Danse oder Taschenlehrbuch*, (Paris, St. Petersburg, Wien, Berlin: 1820), p.4.

²⁷⁷ As proof merely note that with the rise of American global power Coke-a-Cola and Negro music and dance have spread throughout the world.

²⁷⁸ Reichart, p. 109. "The second half of the preceding century . . .", refers to the period 1750-1800 which was the period of the Partitions of Poland in which the "Germans" participated.

²⁷⁹ The replacement of the Minuet by the Polonoise (outside of Poland) is one of the conclusions of Sarah Reichart's research.

²⁸⁰ J. Skrowronek, *Książę Józef Poniatowski*, (Warszawa: 1986), p. 194. Some people would have liked the Prince to become the King of Poland.

Although the Duchy was only an artificial state of low population, it still maintained an army of 100,000 men. However the Duchy was in no condition to support such a large Army. This was attested to by one of Napoleon's ministers:

"The support of such an army greatly exhausted the duchy, which, besides its natural poverty, was suffering under a scarcity approaching to a famine. Poland has no other revenue or rent than what she derives from the sale of her corn. Her ports in the north are Dantzic and in the Baltic; her ports in the south are the Niester, the Borysthemes, and Odessa. The Continental system had closed the first; the war with Turkey, the latter. Nothing, therefore, could exceed the poverty of the country at this period. There was no money because the corn had not been sold. And still there was no corn because it had become spoiled, the Polish corn not being of a nature to keep.

Under all these circumstances nothing could exceed the misery of all classes. The army was not paid – the officers were in rags – the best houses were in ruins – the greatest lords were compelled to leave Warsaw from the want of money to provide their tables. No pleasures, no society, no invitations as in Paris and in London. I even saw Princesses quit Warsaw from the most extreme distress." ²⁸¹

Not only excessive patriotism supported the Army but also the hope that the alliance with France would lead to the liberation of Poland from Russia, Prussia and Austria.

But Napoleon simply used all his allies as sources of manpower to be sacrificed for his personal ambitions. The Polish Army went all over Europe and Russia, fooled by Napoleon.

Needless to say, the French cultural influence was strong in Poland, so that French terms appeared in the Polish language. Scholars do not know exactly how or when it occurred, but from this period the terms, "Polonez" and "Polonaise" increased in frequency as the name of the Polish Walking Dance. The term "Polonaise" is strictly French, and the European World used this term.

French educated Poles used the term "Polonaise" in Poland itself. Others used the term "Polonez" which may be a Polonization of the original French term "Polonaise." We shall attempt a more accurate fixing of this change in time and the character of the dance associated with these terms.

Generally the present work does not use "literary works" as authentic dance sources. Many of the descriptions in these works are secondhand or imaginary. There are exceptions, one of which is the epic poem "Pan Tadeusz" of Adam Mickiewicz. Although it was written around 1830 it describes the time period of 1811-1812. The action takes place on the estate of rural Szlachta living in the Lithuania woods. It is acknowledged by scholars to be an authentic reproduction of the material and cultural life of that period. Upon the strength of this assessment, we shall use it as a genuine source.

In this startling work there is a description of the Walking Dance (which is called Polonez by Mickiewicz when he wrote the poem) which is completely in character with the Taniec Polski. We shall only include specific facts and not the entire passage. The dance begins:

²⁸¹ M. De Pradt, *Narrative Of An Embassy To Warsaw And Wilna*, (London: 1816), pp. 48-49.

On the green, red
boots sparkling,
the sword brilliant
the belt shining,

*“Nad murawa czerwone
polyskaja buty,
bije blask z karabeli
swiecicie pas suty,. . . ”*

The above description is of the colorful Staropolska Stylę. The relationship between man and woman:

Bending his head
wanting to whisper
she turns away,
ashamed,
not listening,. . .

*“Pochyla ku niej głowę,
chce szepnąć do ucha,
dama głowę odwraca,
wstydzi się
nie słucha,... ”*

Notice the delicateness here, as contrasted with the actual movements of the couples which is gay, and not solemn, as many descriptions of the Taniec Polski state:

And went past
couple by couple
noisily and gayly.

*“I szły
pary po parach
hucznie i wesolo. ”*

That the Walking Dance is circular in form is well established. From Pan Tadeusz we have the first mention of a “cutting-in” figure.²⁸² Thus, we may infer that this figure existed by, at least, the end of the 18th century.

The Envious, already
on the first couple,
cut-in,
but lucky Dąbrowski
was not happy for long,
since on his cut-in
a second,
and then a third
as the second man
cut-in upon
left without hope.

*“Zazdrońnicy już
pierwszej pary go
odbili,
i szczęśliwy Dąbrowski
niedługo się cieszył,
ustąpił ja
drugiemu,
a już trzeci śpieszył;
i ten,
zaraz odbity,
odszedł bez nadziei. ”*²⁸³

With his Allied Armies (including Poland) Napoleon invades Russia in 1812. Napoleon lost, and so did Poland lose its hopes. The Duchy ceased to exist.²⁸⁴

However the Emperor of Russia, Alexander I was not unsympathetic to the Poles at this time. Symbolic of this sympathy is the continued welcome reception of Poles at his Court as well as Russia’s assimilation of Polish Dances. When the Russian Army re-entered Wilno Balls were given. At one such, an English General took part in the dancing having

²⁸² See the Workbook Section for a historical description contained in one of the dance manuals.

²⁸³ Adam Michiewicz, *Pan Tadeusz*, ed. Stanislaw Pigon, (Wroclaw: 1967). pp. 581-584.

²⁸⁴ Incidentally, Kutizoff’s victory over Napoleon was celebrated in Russia with a Polonez written by Jozef Kozlowski.

been urged to do so by both Poles and the Emperor: “ *I danced the Polonaise, Parade, Promenade, and one country dance.* ” ²⁸⁵

During 1813 twelve Polonaises of the composer M. K. Ogiński were published. These are the epitome of the melancholy, sad Polonaises. Coming from a Szlachta Lithuania family²⁸⁶ where Szlachthood, Poland and the Taniec Polski were a cult, Michael Ogiński is recognized as composing stylized music without sacrificing the Polish elements.

Ogiński himself wrote about his music:

My second Polonez in F-major
 . . . called for greater expression,
 than heretofore so that
 I made a great reform
 in the character of the Polonez,
 which up to that time served
 only as a Social Dance,
 but which keeping its
 National Character,
 joined to itself, expression,
 taste and feeling.

“*Mój drugi polonez en fa-majeur*
 . . . *wywołał jeszcze większe wrażenie*
i przepowiadano odtąd, że
dokonom wielkiej reformy
w charakterze polonezów,
które dotąd w kraju służyły
jedynie jako tańce towarzyskie,
a które mogły, zachowując swój
narodowy charakter,
łączyć w sobie śpiew, wyraz,
smak i uczucie.”

But this was not all.

When, as a result
 of the unfortunate campaign of 1792
 the Russians occupied Warszawa,
 my Polonez,
 only appearing, recently before,
 went to St. Petersburg,
 where it was danced at the
 Court of Catherine II,
 calling it the ,
 ‘Ogiński Polonez.’

“*Gdy w wyniku*
nieszczęsnej kampanii 1792 roku
Rosjanie zajęli Warszawa,
mój polonez,
który ukazał się niedawno przedtem,
przeszedł do Petersburga,
gdzie go tańczono na
dworze Katarzyny II ,
zowiąc go
‘Polonzem Ogińskiego’ ” ²⁸⁷

The music of Ogiński’s Walking Dances was considered by his contemporaries as ushering in a new musical era. Karol Kurpiński, the most famous composer at the beginning of the 19th century, characterized the music of the Polish Enlightenment as,

. . . as music not
 for dancing
 but they were
 melancholically-
 sentimental, . . .

“*. . . jako muzyka nie*
dla tańca,
był ich nastrój
melancholijno-
sentymentalny, . . . ” ²⁸⁸

²⁸⁵ Sir Robert Wilson, *Private Diary of General Sir Robert Wilson*, (London: 1861), Vol. I, p. 256.

²⁸⁶ His father, Michał Kazimierz Ogiński (1728-1800) was one of the candidates for the Polish throne in the election of 1764. He also joined the ill-fated uprising of 1768 led by Kazimierz Pułaski. Ogiński led the last bastion of resistance in Lithuania in 1771.

²⁸⁷ M. K. Ogiński, *Listy O Muzyce*, ed. T. Strumiłło, (Warszawa:). Ogiński wrote this in 1828. This Polonez is often danced today as dreary and as sad as the melody is.

The remarks of Kurpiński came from the time of 1815 after the political failures of the French-Polish alliance vis-à-vis Russia. Not many being able to affect outer changes, many Polish intellectuals (and common people) turned inward taking an over-delicate subjective view of Poland's fate. The defeat turned them into effetes so that everything that was sad became good.

Kurpiński divided the Polonez by the Polish Enlightenment as:

BEFORE	AFTER
1. Slidingness	1. Emotional
2. Powerful	2. Patriotic symbols
3. Distinctive	3. Melancholy
4. Staropolska gaiety	4. Pre-romantic

However, we now know from what has been stated previously that the "Taniec Polski" of 1735 was a rather weak affair, and could not have all of those qualities listed by Karol Kurpiński. Why did Kurpiński state these characteristics? Because he was himself writing Polonezes mostly of the heavy pompous, patriot type, which he consistently entitled, "Taniec Polski." He was guilty of a historical transfer by seeing the characteristics of Polonezes of the early 19th century in previous centuries.

Some scholars also hold this view-for instance, Karol Hławicka. Zofia Stęszewska has pointed out the full development of the Polish Walking Dance necessitates a simpler 18th century form. The elements of the Taniec Polski may have been dormant in the 18th century, but required a hundred years of growth to become apparent.

After the defeat of Napoleon²⁸⁹ and Poland the state of Prussia was revived under the Kaisers, one of whom was Wilhelm I. His fondest life memories were two: that of his mother and his only true love, Elisa Radziwiłł. He could not marry this Polish-Prussian princess because her family was not of royal blood.

His happiest memory of his mother allows us to definitely date the active use of the Polonaise among the Prussian Nobility. When he was 10 years old (in 1807) he was so grateful that his mother, Queen Louisa, danced a Polonaise with him that he: ". . . *kissed her hand with the deepest gratitude.*"²⁹⁰ On this occasion many Polonaises were danced.

From the year 1814 we have a description of a piano which served also as a source of music for dancing:

To this instrument,
one of its kind

"*Ten instrument,
wytwór w swoim rodzaju,*

²⁸⁸ Chominski, *Historia...*, p. 387

²⁸⁹ In 1812 Duke Wellington was the English Ambassador to defeated France. He, besides being a General, was a womanizer. "*The husband was not always there, though: the Duke had once taken the wife in his arms and danced a polonaise with her all round the house, downstairs and upstairs.*" From, Christopher Hibbert, *Wellington*, (Reading: 2001), p. 195. Did he already know how to do the Polonaise? Was the dance done by the French at this time? In this case the woman was an Englishwoman. We do know that in the summer of 1814 both Wellington and Blücher were much feted in England. "*At a ball given by the Prince Regent, Wellington unbent and danced a polonaise; . . .*". Evelyn Blücher, *Memoirs Of Prince Blücher*, (London: 1932), p. 35,36.

²⁹⁰ Theo Aronson, *The Kaisers*, (New York: 1971), p. 149.

which stood in the room,
all danced the,
Polski, while the young,
[did] my [favorite]
the mazur.

*stal w sali,
i z niego tańczyliśmy
polskiego, a młodzież
mojego
mazura.”* ²⁹¹

Very important is the use of the term “Polski,” derived from “Taniec Polski” from a contemporary of this time, that is, from the year 1814. Equally important is to notice that this dancing took place in private homes.

It has always been the custom that the upper-classes had private dance lessons. But this was not the only place to learn how to dance. There is always the school—for those that went to school. One such school’s dance classes, as it existed in 1815, has been described for us. The school was located in the town of Winnica:

At the start of the music, as the
Master-of-ceremonies, acted [the]
Pot-bellied but light and bouncy,
as a ball, [the] former dancer
of King Stanisław,
but now a teacher of dances,
Pan [Sir] Kurz;
with refined steps led to
the center of the room
the finest dancing couples.
Miss Ksawera had just begun
to play the Polski on the Harpsichord,
[and with] yet to the applause,
she already stood to dance.
– In the dance there now appeared .
a new grace and life; [one could]
not look at her
lightly [moving] feet, which appeared
not to touch the floor, . . .

*“Po muzyce jak
mistrz obrzędów wstępował
brzuchaty a lekki i skoczny
jak piłka dawny tancerz
króla Stanisława,
a wówczas nauczyciel tańców,
pan Kurz;
wykwintnym krokiem wprowadzał na
środek izby strojne
pary najlepszych tanecznic.
Panna Ksawera tylko co
odegrała polskiego na klawicymbale,
jeszcze trwają oklaski,
a ona już stoi do tańca.
– W tańcu nabywała
nowego wdzięku i życia;
nie można się było napatrzeć
jej lotnym nóżkom, którymi zdawała się
ziemi nie tykać, . . . ”* ²⁹²

This is one more illustration of the lightly stepped Polonez—this one, to the music of a Harpsichord. Does not this example prove the existence of the Rococo-Polonaise?

From the Polish newspaper, *Gazeta Polska* # 38, of the year 1830 excerpts appeared of an article that originally appeared in the English *New Monthly Magazine*. It was a description of the 1828 Carnival season in Moscow. It contained an unflattering account of the Polonez done at a Ball in Moscow. We cite it here:

“In the evening a ball was given by the governor. In Russia the dance is opened by a Polonaise, the most silly performance imaginable, in which the old and young alike join. It is merely walking with a lady through the entire suite of apartments, to the

²⁹¹ Bartłomiej Michalowski, *Pamiętniki od roku 1786 do 1815*, (Warszawa: 1858), Vol. V, p. 21.

²⁹² Alexander Jelowicki, *Moja Wspomnienia*, (Warszawa: 1970), p. 27.

*great annoyance of the card-players and loiters. After this nonsensical parade is finished, . . . ”*²⁹³

The author of the Polish article cited in turn descriptions of Polish Dances written by an unknown French soldier in the army of Napoleon. This was a collection of letters. The title page was missing but the individual pages were headed as, “Letters of a Prisoner.” From his 15th letter, dated May 12, 1815, from Vienna he wrote:

“. . . I do not particularly write to you, but for your wife and daughter; they like to hear of what is pleasant in human life and eagerly want to read about dances rather than of weapons, marches, hunger, poverty, death,. . . In Poland there are three National Dances: Polonez, Mazurek, and Krakowiak. The first [Polonez] is nothing more than the walking of couples around the room to the accompaniment of pretty, serious music, which type is well known to you. Immediately me and my friends [all foreign observers] were surprised because we generally understand that dancing is to mean hopping, jumping; but here there is only walking in musical time. However as I came to know [the dance] better I have become the greatest defender of the Polonez.”

We do remind ourselves that this was a common complaint against the Polonez—that it was too simple. We know, now, that there is a great difference in Quality between the “physical movements” and “how to do the physical movements.”

“Directly it is a dance which no one refuses to do; from the oldest to the youngest dance it. Among us [the French, that is, outside of Poland] the old are condemned to either play cards or sit in a corner and make boring conversations. Furthermore you should know, that since the people at a Ball are not the same age, etc., the Polonez allows these various people to dance. Those whom other dances make tired can do the Polonez. The young think of it as an opportunity to rest: one and all look upon it favorably. The Polonez begins and ends each Ball: therefore everyone can participate at the Ball. It is thought by all to be important. It is also done during a Ball in order to separate other dances [so that there is variety]. In this way the Ball is enlivened for the entire evening; all are participating irrespective of age, no one gets tired. It gives the men a way to become acquainted with the older women, and grandchildren their grandparents.

Certainly if only the Polonez were done then the occasion would not be fun, not be enjoyable. But if it is done at a Ball, interweaving itself in the background, [then the various ages may participate] then in this, I find the benefit of the Polonez.”

What this author is proclaiming is the community-building aspect of the Polonez. Also the Polonez can provide the structure upon which a Ball or Social Event can be built.

“Over and above this all Polish Balls, which observe all Etiquette, were completely enjoyable, not like us where Social Events are often simply a mere Ritual or empty Ceremony. Besides this the Polonez has other charms; it honors the past [Traditions] and virtuous persons since it is the most dignified or honored person that leads the Polonez. The other couples are honoring the first couple. Because of this [custom]

²⁹³ *New Monthly Magazine*, Vol. 26, (London: 1829), p. 416.

when the Polonez is to begin the Young cheerfully surround the older man or citizen and entreat him to be in the first couple. This man then stands [for the Polonez] and asks either the Hostess of the Ball or the most important woman to be his partner. The other couples then form behind him [and danced].

During the dancing another man may cut-in upon the first couple. The former first man, in turn, then cuts-in upon the second couple and so on down the line. This is an honorable action because the men are honoring the woman who is the first couple. This woman [in the first couple] is always in the first couple.

In all of this I see something so Original, so National, so Traditional, so Pleasurable, that at this time I think, that only where the Polonez is done, can one play [have fun] without card-playing [gambling]. Too see people playing cards at a Ball destroys the atmosphere of a Ball. A Ball with the Polonez leads to pleasurable evenings which fills [one] with honor and respect.”²⁹⁴

This French observer was speaking not of the pomposity of the Polonez, which can exist, but of its easy blending of Good Fellowship, Etiquette, Harmony, Beauty and Good Taste.

After the first defeat of Napoleon the Congress of Vienna of 1814-1815 partitioned Poland for the fourth time while at the same time creating the tiny city-state the unnatural “Republic of Kraków.” At the peace settlement of Vienna (1815) a Polish Kingdom was created for the Tsar from the central remnant of Poland. The Russian Tsar for his part became the King of the Congress Kingdom of Poland. The Poles were optimistic. This Congress of Vienna was often referred to as “the dancing congress” because of the constant rounds of parties and Balls at which various National Dances (and the new Waltz) were introduced:

*“In those days no effort was spared in order to take an active part (in entertainments). There was ballroom dancing; and the stately Polonaise, lasting hours, would wind its mile long way through flights of suites of the hugest of palaces.”*²⁹⁵

There is corroboration for the Polonez being done at this Congress:

*“The Polonaise at Petersburg recalled to my memory the congress of Vienna, where I had danced it in 1814.”*²⁹⁶

There are several testimonies to the popularity of the Polonaise in Vienna at the Congress:

“The Empress and the ladies were seated; the men conversed, standing together in the middle of the room, while a large party of dancers marched round and round, to the

²⁹⁴ *Gazeta Polska*, # 38, (Warszawa:1830), pp. 3-4. People versed in Polish Dance will recognize that as of this date, 1830, the Polish Dances, Oberek and Kujawiak were not even mentioned. This may be an oversight or it may imply that these two dances became “National Dances” at a later time.

²⁹⁵ Spiel, *Congress of Vienna* (New York: 1968), p. 90.

²⁹⁶ Marquis de Custine, *Empire of the Czar*, (New York: 1989), p. 163. Perhaps he had in mind a Ball which was held on October 2, 1814 at the Hofburg Palace. The Tsar began the Ball with a Polonaise. He led it up staircases, through rooms and finished in the Audience Chamber. S. Alsop, *The Congress Dances*, (New York: 1984), p. 126.

sound of music, in a quiet, graceful polonaise . . . After pursuing their varied windings for a time, as if discontented with the narrow limits of their sphere, the dancers would venture, under the conduct of their gallant general, Prince Schwartenburg, to explore the endless suit of apartments, 'till the music, almost dying on the ear, warned them to return.'" ²⁹⁷

We note here that this was not loud, nor pompous. It probably was just a walking around. They did use the entire building and rooms; they almost danced out of ear-shot of the music. This particular event was an official Court Day with all present watching the dancing Royalty:

"...and, as the monarchs universally joined in the dance, it was commonly restricted to the polonaise: for the rapid revolutions of the waltz were not deemed quite suitable to the dignity of these great personages." ²⁹⁸

An account of the Congress by an Englishmen gives us several more citations:

"About nine o'clock we reached the imperial palace, called the Burg, where the Ridotto balls are held. The large room, which was splendidly lighted, was encircled by a gallery leading to the supper rooms. Round the principal room was seated an elegant assemblage of ladies, some in dominos, and some in fancy dresses, while bands of music, stationed at certain distances round the circle, alternately performed waltzes and Polonaises. In the adjoining rooms some of the company, who were dancing minuets with true German gravity, formed by no means the least comical part of the picture." ²⁹⁹

Note here how the Polonaise and Waltz are contrasted with the Minuet as danced here. The Polonaise and Waltz are the "least comical" of the dances. But does the English Count mean that the Polonaise and Waltz are the elegant dances and not the, "Minuet danced with German gravity"? If he did than it would seem from this that a serious, heavily done Dance cannot be an "elegant" Dance: that an "elegant" Dance has a "light-quality" to it.

Also note how the Polonaise and Waltz were alternately done throughout the Ball, that is to say, repeatedly enjoyed.

The Count also attended a Ball given by the Emperor of Russia:

"The Emperor Alexander had opened the ball with the Empress of Austria, by a polonaise, a kind of dancing march with which the court balls are always begun." ³⁰⁰

The same eyewitness of the above quote also described a Ball given by Prince Razumowski:

The Ball begins with the inevitable and methodical Polonaise.	<i>"Le bal avait commence par l'inevitable et methodique polonaise.</i>
But done with its particular character and gracefulness appropriate	<i>Mais ce qui eut un caractere tout particulier et gracieusement approprie</i>

²⁹⁷ R. Bright, *Travels From Vienna Through Lower Hungary*, (Edinburgh: 1818), p. 18.

²⁹⁸ R. Bright, *Travels...*, p. 21.

²⁹⁹ Count August de la Garde-Chambonas, *The Journal Of A Nobleman*, (Philadelphia: 1833), p. 23.

³⁰⁰ Garde-Chambonas, *The Journal...*, p.88. Logically this description should have preceded his first citation but it comes later in his book.

to the occasion, . . .

a la fete, . . .”³⁰¹

Obviously the Count, as with most English and French people who had not travelled to Central Europe or Russia, was not familiar with the Polonaise before he attended the Congress.

The Viennese also gave what were called “Picnic Balls.” These were smaller, intimate gatherings of invited guests that lasted to the early hours of the morning.

The Congress reconvened after Waterloo.

In late October of 1817, there was a masked ball for 8,000 people at the famed Vienna Imperial Riding School. From one eyewitness report we read, “. . . *the rulers (of Europe) walked through the Figures of the Polonaise in the huge riding hall.*”³⁰²

Alexander I, the constitutional King of Poland, was well liked in Poland because of his personal liking for Poland. However, the king soon did not follow the new Polish Constitution but rather narrow Russian interests.³⁰³ Alexander I was very fond of coming to Warszawa for its balls and Paris-like atmosphere. Alexander’s favorite dance was the Polish Mazur.

Every time Alexander of Russia came to Poland there were receptions.³⁰⁴ Also, on the Emperor Alexander’s NAMEDAY, there was a ball. The present author has a collection of the very dance music that was done on those occasions. Below are the date, title, and composer of this music interspersed with dance descriptions.

To open the first Sejm or Parliament (28.III-27.IV.1818) in the Congress Kingdom, Alexander I and his tyrannical brother, Constantine, attended the proceedings. During this time a Silver Ball was given:

1818

I had the honor
to touch the hand of the
Tsar's in the Polonez
as well as that of
the Great Prince
Constantine.

“*Miałem honor
dotknąć ręki
cesarskiej w Polonezie;
jako i
wielkiego księcia
Konstantego.*”³⁰⁵

³⁰¹ Count August de la Garde-Chambonas, *Souvenirs Du Congres De Vienne*, (Paris: 1901), p.200. At this same Ball various National Dances were done as demonstrations by Notables or their sons or daughters. Among the dances was the Mazurka which was described as a sort of original Quadrille from the Polish province of Mazovie (Mazowsze). This may be the first appearance of the Mazurka in Vienna.

³⁰² Henrieta Błędowska, *Pamiętka Przeszłości*, (Warszawa: 1960), 177. At an earlier date, February 17, 1803, the famed horses of Vienna performed not only a Polonaise but also a Contradanse, Molinet, Grand Rond and Ecossaise. This from the diary of Count Karl von Zinzendorf, *Wien Von Maria Theresia Bis Zur Franzosenzeit*, (Vienna: 1972), p. 51.

³⁰³ Actually it was not so simple as that. Alexander earlier had held liberal ideas. These ideas clash with his desire to resort to the pre-revolutionary Social Order and Peace in Europe. He came to see that Austrian conservatism would not allow for a resurrected Poland.

³⁰⁴ The Polonez has often been described as a walking around and around in a circle. This should not be confused with the custom of people or persons greeting quests by walking from one to another. One such instance from March 20, 1814 when Alexander I was in London was recorded in a diary. “*The Emperor of Russia with the Duke of Oldenburgh, King of Prussia and all arrived at ten o'clock, I was close to them when they first walked round the Ball room and saw them very plain, they afterwards mix'd in the Crowd and Alexander danc'd the whole evening . . .*” From, *The Wynne Diaries, 1789-1820*, (Oxford:1952), p.527.

³⁰⁵ Błędowska, *Pamiętka*..., p. 177.

One cannot but help notice the reverence with which Poles treated the Tsar in the beginning of his reign. She, Pani Błędowska, danced with both. This implies that the dance was either done twice or the “cutting-in” figure was used. But could a younger brother prince “cut-in” on the emperor? We suspect not; thus, the dance was repeated.

The first piece of music which we have was for the mother of the Tsar, Marii Teodorona.

IX.1818

Taniec Polski

Karol Kurpiński

During this time, a masked ball was given for the Tsar by the people of Warszawa:

When all had
gathered the Tsar entered
and began the ball
with the Princess General
in the Polish Taniec.

*“Gdy się wszyscy
zgromadzili, wszedł Cesarz
i zaczął bal
z Księżną Jeneralowa
Polskim tańcem.”*³⁰⁶

The nameday of the Tsar was September the eleventh.

2.IX.1820

Polski Taniec

Karol Kurpiński

In 1820 Karol Kurpiński wrote an article entitled *O Tańcu Polskim, czyli tak przewanym Polonezie*. This translates into: “Concerning the Taniec Polski, or as nicknamed the Polonez.” This indicates that the term “Polonez” was becoming more widely used. At this time, Pan Kurpiński’s title implies that they represent one and the same dance. We think the contrary for already, around 1820, this use of the term is a conscious “Historicism.” It is used to conjure in the mind of the listener and dancer the “Staropolska” Szlachta days of an independent Poland. This is continuation of the trend, which views the “Taniec Polski” as a patriotic and Polish cultural symbol.

2.IX.1820

Polonez

Jozef Damse

At three balls for the Tsar of all Russia and Polish King.

2.IX.1822

Polonez

Karol Kurpiński

18.I.1823

Polonez

Karol Kurpiński

While in Wilno, and at many homes in Lithuania-Rus:

³⁰⁶ Aleksander Tarczewski, *Historii mego życia*, (Warszawa: 1967), p. 206.

<p>. . . during Polonez a long serpentine movement was done with my mother at the front. . . all one's thoughts turned to this staropolska dance . . .</p>	<p>“ . . . puścił się Polonez długim wężem z matka na czele. . . , wszelka świadomość staropolskiego tańce . . . ”³⁰⁷</p>
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2.IX.1824

Polonez

Karol Kurpiński

9.V.1825

Tańce Polskie

Karol Kurpiński

The above music was played at a ball on the birthday of the Grand Duke Constantine's wife.

We see that within this time period, the term “Polonez” outranked “Taniec Polski” in usage by the urban classes of Warszawa and among composers. Another example of the mixture of term usage may be illustrated with the Patriotic song entitled, “Polonez 3 maj w roku 1791,” or the third of May Polonez from the year 1791. This was originally titled, “Taniec Polski,” and was written in 1828.³⁰⁸ This illustrates, in the composer's mind, that “Taniec Polski” is not the same as the “Polonez.” “Polonez” is the term and dance for his time, and not of the previous century.

Outside of Poland the term, “Polonez” or “Taniec Polski” was not used. Here is a citation from the diary of an American living in Paris in the 1820s.

*“We had a Maypole dance; there was a beautiful ‘maypole’ decorated with flowers and ribbons. After this was finished we all (the young people) filed before the Ambassador and Ambassadress dancing a polonaise.”*³⁰⁹

After the Congress of Vienna (1815) the Polonaise was still alive in Austria. As one traveler described a Ball in Vienna:

1828

*“It opens with a polonaise, followed by a cotillon which is repeated twice . . . The ball continues with waltzes and cotillons. The rooms from the dancing saloon to the boudoir, are occupied with card-tables, dainties, decorated with a profusion of flowers, . . . At twelfe [sic] o'clock [midnight] supper is served. The ladies are led in a polonaise by their partners to the dining room, and occupy their chairs according to the cards on which their names are put.”*³¹⁰

Here, we see, that outside of Poland, the Polonaise is just part of a larger ceremony.

³⁰⁷ Gabriela Puzynina, *W Wilnie I w Dwórach Litewskich*, (Wilno: 1828), p. 54.

³⁰⁸ Novak-Romanowicz, “Muzyka Polskiego . . .,” p. 41.

³⁰⁹ James Gallatin, *A Great Peace Maker*, (New York: 1914), p.169.

³¹⁰ Charles Sealsfield, *Austria As It Is: or Sketches of continental courts, by an eye-witness*, (London:, 1828).

Reprint (Vienna: 1994), p. 89. At a costume Court Ball given in 1820 a “serious” Polonaise was done as witnessed by Martha Wilmot. Otherwise it was a raucous affair. This highlights the dignity of the Polonez. This from, *More Letters from Martha Wilmot*, (London: 1935), p. 240.

In Paris the Polish émigré-community gave Balls. One such in August of 1827:

*“Dined with the Prince at the Salle de Saxe, where the Poles gave a ball in the evening.”*³¹¹

In May of 1829 Nicholas I came to Warszawa to be crowned King of Poland. We read that:

The day after the coronation,
which ended
with the city illuminated,
[there]followed many fetes and Balls...
The series of Balls [followed]
the Court Ball given
in the Knight's Hall;
[it] was begun by the Empress'
Taniec Polski with p. Zamoyski,
the President of the Senate;
next she danced with Count Tolstoj,
third was Rozniecki,
whomever was to dance with her...
this ceremonial dance
was appointed [to do so];
[she] danced alternately
with Poles and Russians,
but only with Generals,
Ambassadors,
Ministers and Court Officials.
Prince Czartoryski had number 25
and was the next to last
of the Empress' partners.
She liked to dance,
tastefully [she] danced,
with grace and dignity;
[she] did not confine herself
only to the Polonez,
but gladly Waltzed,
and in the Mazur also she went.
Her choice partners were
Leon Sapieha, Leski, adjutants to
Prince Monroe, Bezobrazow,
Wladyslaw Zamoyski, and adjutant
to the Emperor, Prince Woroniecki.
After this Court Ball
followed other Balls . . .

*“Po dniu koronacji,
który zakończyło
wspaniale oświetlenie miasta,
nastąpiły liczne festyny i bale...
Szereg balów
otworzył bal dwórski
w sali Rycerskiej dany;
rozpoczęła go cesarzowa
tańcem polskim z p. Zamoyskim,
prezesem Senatu;
następnie tańcowała z hrabia Tolstoj,
trzecim był Rozniecki,
którego do tańca cesarzowa wezwano...
osób do tego ceremonialnego tańca
przeznaczonych;
tańcowała cesarzowa na przemiany
z Polakiem i Rosjaninem,
lecz tylko z jeneralami broni,
ambasadorami,
ministrami i wielkimi urzędnikami dworu.
Książę Czartoryski miał numer 25
i był przedostatnim
cesarzowej tancerzem.
Cesarzowa namiętnie lubiła taniec,
wybornie tańcowała,
z wdziękiem i powagą;
nie ograniczyła się wic
na polonezie,
lecz ochoczo i walca,
i mazura puszczała się.
Wybranymi jej tancerzami byli
Leon Sapieha, Leski, adiutanci w.
księcia Monroe, Bezobrazow,
Wladyslaw Zamoyski, i adiutant
cesarski Książę Woroniecki.
Po balu dworskim
nastąpiły bale . . . ”*³¹²

³¹¹ *The Diary Of Philipp Von Neumann*, trans. E. Chancellor, (New York: 1928), p.173. In the literature citing these Balls in Paris none mentions Polish Dances! So we can only infer that they were done.

³¹² Stanisław Szenic, *Maria Kalergis*, (Warszawa: 1963), p. 37. Original citation is from A. Kozmian.

From the memoir of Prince Sapieha we learn about the political-social aspects of this dancing of the Polonez. He is describing the very same even:

In the evening there was
a Great Ball at Court.
For the first and last [time]
I functioned as
the chamberlain
to the Emperor.
At this kind of Ball
only the Polonez is danced.
They gave me a list of persons,
[who were] with the Empress
to dance,
in [a certain] order, how they were
to follow each other.
My obligation was to, in turn,
bring them to the Empress.
On this list the first
was Ordynat
Zamoyski, as Senate President, -
second General Rozniecki,
as the oldest General
of the Army of Poland.
Pan Zamoyski was then
suffering from [being]disliked
and did not attend,
therefore was opened the Ball
by the Empress with
General Rozniecki.
. . . When several partners
had danced,
to me came,
the Grand Prince Constantine
with a question, . . .

*“Wieczorem był
wielki bal u dworu.
Po raz pierwszy i ostatni
pełniłem na nim służbę
szambelańska
przy cesarzowej.
Na takich balach
tańczą tylko polonezy.
Dano mi spis osób,
mających z cesarzowa
tańcować,
w porządku, jak mają
po sobie następować.
Moim obowiązkiem było z kolei
przyrowadzać je cesarzowej.
Na tym spisie pierwszym
był ordynat
Zamoyski, jako prezes Senatu,-
drugim jeneral Rozniecki,
jako najstarszy jeneral
wojska polskiego.
Pan Zamoyski wtenczas
cierpiał na podagrę
i nie był na tym balu,
a wiec otworzył bal
z cesarzowa
jeneral Rozniecki.
. . . Gdy jeszcze parę osób
przetańcowało,
przypadł do mnie
wielki xiaze Konstanty
z zapytaniem, . . .”*³¹³

These two accounts differ as to the presence of Zamoyski. Was he there or wasn't he? (Zamoyski was hated because he was the head of the secret police for Russia.)

As far as the dancing is concerned, however, not only do we learn from the above passage that the Empress knew the Polonez, Waltz, and Mazur but she enjoyed doing these dances. Choreographically, it seems, that the men lined-up at one end of the hall and took their turns with the Empress. Probably they danced once around as was the custom at the Court of St. Petersburg

As the policy of Russia and Prussia became more oppressive, there was an increase of patriotic manifestations. One such is the November Insurrection of 1830-31. General Jozef Chlopicki was elected dictator of this uprising. He, seeing no hope of victory, wanted no

³¹³ Leon Sapieha, *Wspomnienia*, (Warszawa: 1915), p.94.

fighting. But the so-called radical revolutionary “progressive elements” of the uprising would not permit this, and called for the dethronement of the Tsar, Nicholas I, from the Polish throne. Of course, the progressives lost—and so did Poland, again.³¹⁴

During the year of fighting which followed many pieces of dance music were written in honor of various men, soldiers, heroes, etc., of which three follow.

1830	Polonaise a la Chlopicki	T. Klonowski
1.VI.1830	Polonaise	C. Kurpiński
1831	Polonaise Militaire a la Skrzynecki	J. Kiszwalter

It must be mentioned that the influence of Polish émigrés was strong. Most emigrants during this first half of the 19th century went to France and rapidly assimilated French Culture. In their affairs with Poland, they strengthened the “French mode” and fashions in Poland. In a similar fashion, they introduced Polish dances to the French scene, and thus the world.

1830

*“I have seen an account of a Polonaise danced in Paris as early as 1830, that is even before the coming of the Polka. This was at a great ball in the Paris Royal given by the Duc d’Orleans, and was led in Hungarian costume by Rudolf Apponye . . . ”*³¹⁵

Here at the juncture of 1830 and 1831 we conclude the third and last phase of the development of the Polish Walking Dance, now entitled the “Polonez,” the “Polonaise,” or still on occasion, the “Taniec Polski.”

At last we have full melodic lines with complete pauses at their end-perfect for bows. The rhythm pulsates completely: One, two, three, One, two, three, more heavily with the “on-One” accent. This type has come to represent, for most people, the Polish Walking Dance—they think of it today as the only “true” variant. The first count they do as an enormous slide. This enormous sliding step-movement was and still is sometimes called the “Posuwisty” or “sliding” form.

The Taniec Polski in the hands of some rural Szlachta developed a variant on the theme of “every man dancing with one leading woman”:

³¹⁴ This uprising was severely repressed and punished. This repression was noted in the foreign presses of Europe. One such we include here in order to aid the understanding of the reader concerning the relationship between Politics, Culture and Ethnic Enmity. The following quotation is from the English periodical, *New Monthly Magazine*, Vol. 37, (London: 1833), p. 131. “The Emperor Nicholas has issued orders for the transplantation of five thousand families of Polish gentlemen from the province of Podolia to the Steppes on the line of the Caucasus . . . their families are to be sent after them . . . The University of Warsaw, except the faculties of Medicine and Theology, is abolished. The library and collection of medals are ordered to be transported to St. Petersburg.” Imagine! Not 5000 men but 5000 families! The Russians were thereby de-polonizing these Commonwealth lands. These were the Gentry families who developed and supported the Polonez and Mazur Dances. Their separation from Poland weakened the continuous presence of these dances. After the uprising about 10,000 fled Poland.

Most went to Paris. “Many were soldiers, others were outstanding figures in politics, learning, literature, and the arts.” J. Kutolowski, *The West and Poland*, (Boulder: 2000), p. 58.

³¹⁵ Philip Richardson, *Social Dancing of the XIX Century in England*, (London: 1960), p. 95.

. . . after the evening
all returned to the room
to dance the polonez
and formed a
large circle
into the center of which
went the first couple. . .
the man kissing
her hand,
bowed deeply and
left her in the circle . . .

“ . . . iż od wieczery
powracano do sali
tańców polonezem,
tam tworzone,
wielkie koło,
w środek którego
wchodziła pierwsza para. . .
mężczyzna całował
damę swoją w rękę,
składał jej ukłon głęboki
i opuszczał koło . . . ”³¹⁶

After which each man in turn dances with this same woman, leaving her for the next man, with a bow:

This same,
Polonez frequently ended
parties in Poland . . .

“Takim samym,
polonezem kończono częstokroć
zabawy w Polsce . . . ”³¹⁷

The older genuine Polish form of the “cutting-in” of partners did exist even outside of Poland. One eyewitness account takes us deep into Hungary in 1835.

*“Another ball, given by two gentlemen, concluded our visit to Fured. It differed little from the former, except that the company was more select, and the supper much better. It was opened by a polonaise, a solemn kind of promenade, in which every one is expected to take part. Each gentleman, touching the ends of a lady’s fingers, marches with her to slow music for two or three minutes, and then, yielding her to the gentleman before him, takes the partner of the one behind; and so on in turn with the whole party, so that in time every gentleman has danced with every lady. To men short of conversation it is a most convenient arrangement. I tried the effect of making the same observation – of course a brilliant one – to every passing lady, and amused myself with watching the different answers it produced.”*³¹⁸

We may say in passing that the Dance does have a different Quality when the man holds the woman by her fingertips.

Whilst the Polonez became a “Russian Dance” among the Russians the Austrians did not make the Dance their own. In the Austrian partition of Poland the Polonez was still viewed exclusively as a Polish Cultural possession—it was still identified with this land of the Poles. It was occasionally done within the Austrian-Hungarian Empire.

The administrative center for the Austrian partition of Poland was Kraków. They installed their regent there. In 1836 the regent was Sternberg. The Austrians tried to rule mildly. After the failed Polish revolt of the 1830’s there existed in Poland a social rejection of the Society of the Partitioning Powers. This social rejection could not last forever. Social

³¹⁶ Arkadiusz Kłęczewski, *Tańce Saloonowe*, (Lwów: 1879), p. 13.

³¹⁷ Kłęczewski, *Tańce* . . . , p. 9.

³¹⁸ J. Paget, *Hungary and Transylvania*, (London: 1855), p. 279.

interaction was forced upon the Poles. One method was by the sponsoring of social events, such as the giving of Balls.

During the Carnival Season of 1836 Sternberg gave a series of Balls. One such was on April 20, 1836. All the representatives of the Partitioning Governments were there as well as some Poles:

All the dancing was begun
by Pan Stanisław Wodzicki,
[dancing the] Polonez
with Pani Hartmann,
wife of the Prussian Resident,
the Mazurka with Seweryna Szembek,
who this day looked wonderful,
very nice and elegantly dressed.
One must recognize,
that she rivalled
Luseta Wintzingerode
and Zofia Stadnicka,
the latter however
was the [Queen of the ball] favorite,
she was so majestically beautiful,
that one from her, could
not take their eyes.
Already one had to recognize,
that the group of Polish Women
were different from the ugly
and ordinary foreigner Women,
so much so that even Sternburg
exaggeratedly showed to them
mannerliness.
The last Polonez he danced
with Pani Wegierska,
who with this, was delighted.
Not many officers danced,
[but] only drank,
however their wives ate,
observed and
wondered at all this.

*“Wszystkie tańce zaczynał
pan Stanisław Wodzicki,
poloneza
z panią Hartmannowa,
żona rezydenta pruskiego,
mazurka z Seweryna Szembek,
która tego dnia ślicznie wyglądała,
bardzo ładnie i szykownie ubrana.
Trzeba przyznać,
ze była śliczna i rywalizowała
z Luseta Wintzingerode
i Zofia Stadnicka,
ta ostatnia jednak
królowała,
tak była majestatycznie piękna,
ze oczow od niej oderwać
nie można było.
Już to trzeba było przyznać,
ze grupa pan polskich
odznaczała się od tych brzydkich
i ordynarnych cudzoziemek,
toteż Sternberg
przesądzał się dla nich w
grzeczności.
Ostatniego poloneza tańcował
z panią Wegierska,
która z tego była uszczęśliwiona.
Oficerowie niewiele tańcowali,
tylko pili,
a żony ich jadły,
przypatrywały się
i dziwowały wszystkimu. ”*³¹⁹

Besides the underlying social tensions, which reflected the political tensions, we do learn that the Polonez was done twice: as an Opening and Closing Dance.

At the end of the year, on December 19th, Sternberg gave another ball to honor the Tsar's nameday. Sternberg wanted to open the Ball with Helena Malachowska who was one of the Tsarina's companions. However she excused herself from the dancing on the pretext the Catholics did not dance during the pre-Christmas Season of Advent:

³¹⁹ B. Lopuszanki, ed., "Dwa Lata Moich Wspomnień Z Życia Krakówskiego, 1836-1837", Helena z Mieroszawskich Dąbrowska, in *Kapitan I Dwie Panny*, (Kraków: 1980), p.97.

One by one the other Polish Women
 did the same and Sternburg
 was forced to begin the Ball
 with General Kaufmann's wife.
 The dancing went reluctantly
 and was unlively.
 Afterwards it liven up somewhat,
 but the dancing was done only
 by the Russians and Germans.
 [The] Poles did not
 take part [in the dancing].

*“Dalej z kolei inne panie polskie
 to uczyniły i Sternburg
 był zmuszony bal rozpocząć
 z generalowa Kaufmann.
 Z początku tańce szły opornie
 i nieożywienie.
 Potem rozochocili się trochę,
 ale tańcowali tylko
 Rosjanie i Niemcy.
 Polskie towarzystwo nie brało
 w nich udziału.”*³²⁰

This social event, to honor the Tsar, was a failure.

At a Ball given during the 1837 Season the dances done were Quadrilles, Mazurs, Cotillion, Waltzes, Galops, and Polkas in a continuous sequence. The writer of this memoir was a happy young woman of 18 years who enjoyed dancing for its own sake. She was comfortable with the small insularity of the Social Set of Kraków—she described it as a family. She was also aware of how political power affected Social Relationships:

The Ball was begun by
 Pan Franciszek Wodzicki
 with Pani Starkmann, and by
 Władysław Wodzicki with
 Pani Liehmann.
 I do not know, why these
 Gentlemen gave preference
 to the German Ladies
 before our Polish Ladies.
 This provocative politics
 affects everything,
 even in the Ballroom.
 The opening dance was a Waltz,
 and only after it was the Polonez,
 which was led by Pan Franciszek
 with the President Haller's wife.
 This looked a little like a
 manifestation in favor of
 the foreign Ladies,
 because a Ball properly [only]
 begins with the Polonez,
 [therefore] the Waltz was only
 an after thought for the Residents.
 In minor and major matters there
 is always this forced [good] manners
 and regard for the Residents
 and their wives, which at times
 arouses indignation [among Poles],

*“Bal rozpoczął
 pan Franciszek Wodzicki
 z panią Starkmannowa, a
 Władysław Wodzicki z
 panią Liehmannowa.
 Nie wiem, dlaczego ci
 panowie dali pierwszeństwo
 tym Niemkom
 przed naszymi paniami polskimi.
 Ta nieznośna polityka wszędzie
 bierze gore,
 panuje nawet na balowej sali.
 Przetkańcowali tak walca,
 a po nim nastąpił polonez,
 ktoren prowadził pan Franciszek
 z prezesowa Hallerowa.
 Wyglądało to trochę
 na manifestację względem
 cudzoziemek,
 ze bal naprawdę
 rozpoczął się od poloneza,
 a walc to była
 zdawkowa moneta dla rezydentowych.
 W małych i dużych sprawach
 jest zawsze ta przymusowa grzeczność
 i względy dla rezydentów
 i ich żon, które czasem
 spektatorów oburzają,*

³²⁰ Dąbrowska, *Kapitan I* ..., p.114.

because we desire to
show them [our] fists,
and not nice Bows and sweet smiles,
and this real feeling was
in the atmosphere of the Ball,
that first Waltz was only
for the German Ladies,
in order to show them,
that it was only for them,
to be done with it.
After the Polonez there was again
an hour of Waltz's
and a spirited Mazur.
I danced it with Pan Franciszek
Wodzicki, and a Cotillon
with Ludwik Popiel.

*bo miałoby się ochotę
pokazać im pięść,
a nie grzeczny ukłon i słodki uśmiech,
i rzeczywiście czuć było
w atmosferze balowej,
ze ten pierwszy walc był tylko
dla Niemek,
aby im pokazać,
ze tylko był dla nich,
żeby się pozbyć.
Po polonezie był znów
godzinny walc
i siarczasty mazur.
Tańcowałam go z panem Franciszkiem
Wodzickim, a kotyliona
z Ludwikiem Popielem.”*³²¹

Notice once again how, for Poles, a ball only really begins with the Polonez. In spite of the power political relationships there should always be Good Manners.

The charity ball given on January 22, 1837 in Kraków was a happier event:

Began the Ball with the Polonez...
There were so many couples,
that there was no end,
couple after couple,
like a circle without a beginning
and end it looked.
Always a different couple,
a different look moved
before the eyes, different faces,
different aspects,
always different clothes, . . .

*“Rozpoczął się bal polonezem...
Tyle szło par poloneza,
ze końca go nie było,
para za para,
jak koło bez początku
i końca wyglądało.
Coraz to inne pary,
to inne postacie przesuwały się
przed oczy, to inne twarze,
to inne imprezy,
coraz to inny strój, . . .”*³²²

So many couples, one after the other, so that this Polonez just flowed.

The rising middle class gave birth to the public Ball. One Anusia Lyskowska of Mileszew at such a ball in Wabrzeznie:

. . . when a dignified
citizen,
as was her uncle
Rutkowski, stood
before her,
in order to
lead her in the
Polonez.

*“. . . gdy tak poważany
ogólnie obywatel,
jakim był jej wuj
Rutkowski, stanął
przed nią,
by ja
poprowadzić do
poloneza.”*³²³

³²¹ Dąbrowska, *Kapitan I* ..., p.118.

³²² Dąbrowska, *Kapitan I* ..., p.121.

³²³ Anna z Bardzkich Karwatowa, *Moje Wspomnienia (1828-1914)*, (1932), p. 14.

We see that the most honored company goes first. This proper ordering of couples was also maintained abroad. Interestingly enough the Polonez, called “Polonaise” abroad, was used to open costume balls in England during the remainder of the 19th century. This was so because of the participation of the English aristocracy and some of the guests were dressed in the East Central European fashion to lead it.

One of the more splendid balls was one that was given for Queen Victoria on June 6, 1844:

“This is the most stately of dances (or it may be called rather, a grand promenade). In all the aristocratic Courts, and, above all, those of Northern Europe-- from Vienna to St. Petersburg-- this is the prelude to the balls of the highest sphere of society, as it was at Her Majesty's Bal Costume on the 6th of June, 1844, Whilst every costume is in its freshness and every plait of dress and lock of hair still retains the form most becoming to the wearer, then, and not later, the Polonaise is danced. From its dignified measure none may abstain-- from the King to the Ensign-- from youngest of belles to the oldest of the ancient regime of beaux. Then is the line formed for such a review as not a field of battle can present--for all parties retire amidst the lustre of silks and satins and the brilliancy of gems and diamonds. At Her Majesty's fete the Polonaise first appeared in England, but now it will assume its place at all the great the great re-unions patronized by the noble leaders of fashion, whence it will travel into the provinces, to preface the race and county bails [sic].

To perform this promenading dance, all those who desire to engage in it, must assemble in the first drawing-room, and then the Lady Patronesses, or in their absence, the Master of Ceremonies, assigns to each lady a cavalier-- in a Bal Costume care being had that there be a perfect correspondence of costume betwixt the parties. Then the inspiring measure is struck up by the orchestra. The folding doors are thrown open and the assemblage of dancers make their entrée into the apartments, hand in hand, slowly marching, and conversing in an under tone--the ladies playing or coquetting with their fans or their bouquets. The march at Court is preceded by the Chamberlains --in other places by the Master of Ceremonies with their white staffs. Thus marshalled, the promenaders visit room after room--the beauties of the above are thus displayed, and still more advantageously those of the promenaders.

*Those who do not join in the march have their full share of enjoyment-- for they behold to the best advantage all the marvels of the toilette and the grace and elegance of those who figure in this distinguished measure. ”*³²⁴

With all this praise for the Dance one wonders why the dance did not last in England.

Further testifying to the Polonaise on the shores of England we cite two English dance manuals from the mid-19th century. In addition they give more evidence for the existence of the cutting-in figure for the Taniec Polski Form. We present their descriptions together. They are only one year apart, being from 1854 and 1855.

THE POLONAISE

³²⁴ From an apparent eyewitness account of a dance teacher. E. Coulon, *Coulon's Hand-book*, (London: 1873), pp. 51-53.

“This dance, if it can be called a dance, is also of Polish origin, as the name will testify. It is merely a dignified and graceful march. It is exceedingly social; the couples advance lightly, marking the time with their feet, while they enjoy every opportunity for agreeable conversation. The only figure which varies this dance is a change of hands, resembling a movement of the Minuet.

*At the commencement, a gentleman presents himself at the head of the line, and clapping his hands becomes the partner of the first lady; the gentleman superseded takes the hand of the next lady, and so on through the whole file. The last gentleman, who is by this means deprived of a partner, either retires, or advances to lead off in his turn.”*³²⁵

THE POLONAISE

“This dance is little beyond a march or promenade. It combines grace and dignity, and is performed in couples, who advance, making the measure with the their feet. The only figure by which it is varied is the change of hands resembling the Minuet.

*In the Polonaise, a gentleman by presenting himself at the head of the couples, and clapping his hands, becomes the partner of the first lady; the gentleman whom he has thus superseded takes the hand of the next lady, and so through all the couples. The last gentleman is by this means deprived of a partner, but he has the option of retiring or advancing to the top of the dance, and leading off again in his turn.”*³²⁶

It certainly seems as though there was deliberate copying here. One would like to deduce that the Polonaise was in general use among the English dancing public—but this would be an erroneous deduction.

What it is, is just another example of the writers of dance manuals filling up the pages of their manual with “dance-material”—in order words, of “padding” their manuals. Thus in this way, a dance which has fallen into desuetude can be given a long life in the pages of dance manuals gathering dust on the shelves of libraries.

An interesting intellectual puzzle would be to find and trace the sources for these English descriptions. Most likely the main source would be the article, previously mentioned herein, published in the English periodical, *New Monthly Magazine*, in 1830. Another interesting project would be to uncover the dance teachers of the Polonaise in England.

Perhaps a more profound speculation is why the English upper class did not adopt the Polonaise as a long-lasting and integral part of their Dance-Life, as the Russian upper class did, since they did have the custom of marching into supper by couples, arm in arm, according to the person’s social rank.³²⁷ Even with waves of lower-class democracy in England the English upper class has maintained their Aristocratic inclinations and breeding into the late 20th century.

While the English did not take to the Polonez the dance received a more-lasting reception in the Scandinavian countries. Sweden has already been mentioned in this regard. One recent article sheds light upon the Polonaise in Norway:

³²⁵ David Bogue, *The Ball-Room Preceptor*, (London: 1854), p. 71.

³²⁶ H. Elliot, *The Ball Room Instructor*, (London: 1855), pp. 6,7.

³²⁷ Leonore Davidoff, *The Best Circles*, (London: 1973), p. 47.

*“The earliest description I have come across [in Norway] of the dance being used from around 1850 and comes from the memoirs of Michael Wallem Brun, the director of the Royal Danish Theatre: ‘Two days later there was a Ball arranged by the citizens [here probably upper middle class] for the King [Frederik 7. (1808-630)] and the Countess in the spacious rooms of the Citizens Club. One knew in advance with whom his Majesty was to open the ball, but were lost in discussions about who were going to be opening it with the Countess. There were the supreme Marshall of the Court, the supreme President, the commanding general, the president of the Supreme Court of Appeal – in short many to many to choose among, and many who felt entitled, but who was chosen one? ...Finally the Polonaise started. The King with Mrs. Smith, the minister with the Countess and then an endless file of all the world and his wife. ...As one knows the Polonaise is only a promenade where gentlemen exchange ladies, and the ladies of course gentlemen. Every lady accordingly was slowly given the opportunity to press the King’s hand and every gentlemen to touch the Countess’s hand and to exchange a few words of insignificant remarks with them.’ ...It seems to have spread to Norway to be included in the balls of the very modest Norwegian upper class during the following decades. ...In the late 19th century the Polonaise seems to have been well established as the opening dance or ceremony of the balls in these circles. ...The music played for the dance was also here the three-quarter music of the Polish Polonaise,...”*³²⁸

By the latter 19th century a substantial Community of Polish Nobles was established in Vienna. All Communities, Societies and Organizations in Vienna had their particular Balls, some private some public. The Poles had their special “Polish Ball.” Events of this type had their own limited political significance or symbolism as members of the Austrian Royal Family and the Viennese Aristocracy might attend these affairs. On one occasion his son and daughter-in-law represented the Emperor, Francis Joseph:

The Ball began with the Polonez, immediately followed with the obligatory (in Vienna) Waltz, [then] danced was a Mazur . . .	<i>“Bal rozpoczął się polonezem, a zaraz po obowiązkowym (w Wiedniu) walcu tańczono mazura . . .”</i> ³²⁹
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Selected Polish couples did the Mazur. Polish “influence” notwithstanding neither the Polonez nor the Mazur had a long life in Austria-Hungary.

Teofil Kwiatkowski was a Polish artist who was one of the coterie which surrounded Chopin in Paris. His sketches and drawings for his painting “Polonez Chopina” were done in Paris during the 1850s.’ This was a romantic evocation of both the Historic Glories of Poland and of Chopin and his Polonez music.³³⁰ It depicts Poland’s Heroes and Heroines of the Past in anachronistic clothing dancing (it is more like posing, however) in couples. It is a moody painting: it is more like a dream. The models for the people were contemporary persons of the Polish émigré community in Paris which was centered around the person of Prince Adam Czartoryski and his residence at the Hotel Lambert. The final painting was done in 1857.

³²⁸ Egil Baka, “The Polonaise In Norway”, *Biuletyn Polskiego Towarzystwa Etnochoreologicznego*, (Warszawa: Nr 10/1999), pp. 206-207.

³²⁹ Bogdanowicz, *Wspomnienia*, Vol. I, p. 247. According to the author Crown Prince Rudolph met his future suicide partner at the “Polish Ball.”

³³⁰ It is the particular Polonez In A-flat, Number 1, Op. 40.

Here we present an abstract of the painting. We can see here that the man's left hand, for both couples, is holding the women's left hand. Both men are not wearing their hats. One man is in Kontusz; the other, in body armor. There is an additional significance that this painting has. It is a visual "proof" that costume Balls were held at that Hotel Lambert and that some Polish dances were done there and probably it was there that French dance teachers saw and may have learned Polish Dances. This is particularly important for the history of the Polish Mazur Dance.³³¹



In 1856 an article appeared in the Polish periodical "Czas" wherein the claim was made the Polonez Dance was disappearing from the life of Kraków. This was not true:

At the end of this part
a few words
about dances.
Every Ball began with the Polonez.
Indeed [was written] in 1856
in 'Czas',
that it was no longer done
in Kraków,
although even the King of Prussia
opened the the present Carnival
with it at a public Ball,
but this alarm was just
probably as isolated case,
because the Polonez has held its
[place] at all the important events
[even] up to our times.

*"Na zakończenie rozdziału
parę słów o uprawianych
wówczas tańcach.
Bal każdy zaczynał się polonezem.
Wprawdzie w r. 1856 oburza
się 'Czas',
że go w
Krakowie zarzucono,
chciaż nawet król pruski
w bieżącym karnawale
otwierał nim bal publiczny,
ale ten alarm odnosi się
chyba do odosobnionego wypadku,
bo przecież polonez utrzymał się
w programie większych zabaw
aż do naszych czasów."*³³²

However, the influence of the Austrian-German Waltz, was very great. At the German and Austrian social events the Waltz was the opening dance. These to dances became symbols of national-cultural. This conflict even spilled over to the musical Concerts and Stage Plays in Kraków.

Kraków was very conscious of its symbolic role in the maintaining of "Polishness." Not only that but they were very conservative in up-holding the distinctions between the social classes as well. This gave a definitive atmosphere to each type of social event.

The term "Ball" or "Bal" in Polish has been mentioned many times. A "Ball" is not just a "Dance" as occurs at the beginning of the 21st century. In particular, the Balls in Poland or those given by Polish people had a definite atmosphere which made them different

³³¹ It is still somewhat of a puzzle as to why the Polonez did not find a place in French Dance Culture.

³³² Estreicherówna, *Życie Towarzystwa I* ..., p. 70.

from European or American Balls. Here are a few comments about one Polish Ball from the 1870s:

At this opportunity I feel that it is my obligation to inform my readers, that in Poland dance parties and Balls are different somewhat from those similar [activities], in the world, dedicated to Terpsichore in other countries. Our custom is to dance the entire night, with the height of this type of Ball being not a Cotillion Waltz, danced usually at midnight, but, for those who have the desire, that which is known as the, ‘white[dawn] mazur’ — at sunrise. Those Ladies, whose complexion [make-up] did not or could not critically sustain themselves in the light of day, left the Ballroom at the coming dawn’s light; but those [Ladies], who did not need to use the ‘milk of beauty’ or rouge, wash their face, put on, if needed, a new pair of satin slippers (the custom is to have a supply of such a reserve of footwear), to repair a torn flounce or frill and then return to the Ballroom refreshed and ready for the ‘white mazur’.

At eight o’clock in the morning breakfast is served: Bulion, Barszcz, . . . , and this is the end of the Ball.

“Przy sposobności czuję się w obowiązku poinformować moich czytelników, że w Polsce zabawy taneczne i bale różnią się cokolwiek od podobnych

świąt urządzanych w służbie Terpsychory po innych krajach. U nas zwyczajem jest tańczyć przez całą noc, punktem szczytowym takiego balu bywa nie walc kotylionowy, tańczony zwykle o północy, ale, jeżeli ktoś ma ochotę, tzw. ‘biały mazur’ — nad ranem. Te panie, których cera

nie znosi już krtycznych spojrzeń w świetle dnia, schodzą z Sali balowej przed brzaskiem; ale te, które nie muszą używać ‘mleczka piękności’ czy różu, myją twarz, wdziewają, jeżeli potrzeba, nową parę satynowych pantofelków (zazwyczaj mają w zapasie taką rezerwową parę obuwia), reperują naddarte falbany i powracają na salę odświeżone i gotowe do ‘białego mazura’.

*O godzinie ósmej rano podaje się śniadanie: bulion, barszcz, . . . , i to jest zakończeniem balu.”*³³³

There is more to the Ball experience than this. Of course everyone mentions the last Mazur dance because of its excitement and the fact that it closes the Ball. It goes without saying that the Polonez started the Ball.

In the latter 19th and early 20th centuries the leading composer of Ballroom music in Warszawa was Leopold Lewandowski. Many Balls were given in order to raise money for

³³³ Helena Modrzejewska, *Wspomnienia I Wrażenia*, (Kraków: 1957), p. 205. In the companion volume to this one about the Mazur Dance there shall be a fuller account of the nature of these Balls.

charitable causes. One such was given to fund the formation of the Musical Institute of Warszawa:

<p>The Ball at the Pac Palace was Wednesday, 8 Feb., 1860. A special Polonez for the Ball was composed by Leopold Lewandowski,... The Dance was begun by Princess Gorczakowa, giving her hand to Governor Laszczynski [since he was] the host of the Ball, . . .</p>	<p><i>“Bal w pałacu Paca odbył się w środę 8 lutego 1860 roku. Specjalny polonez na bal skomponował Leopold Lewandowski,... Tańce rozpoczęła księżna namiestnikowa Gorczakowa, podając rękę gubernatorowi Laszczynskiemu jako gospodarzowi balu, . . .”</i> ³³⁴</p>
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“Celebrity” Balls were given for artists, as for Franz Liszt in 1860 as he concertized in Poland.

Some Balls were objects of political controversy. One such was that of October 23, 1860. On this occasion the three rulers of Poland danced the leading Polonez. The Polish women of Warszawa protested by refusing to attend the Ball. In order not to cause more difficulties with the partitioning Powers some Polish women did attend.

<p>Following the Monarchs and ruling Princes were [other] Princes leading Countess Kalgeris, Senatoress Platonow, Princes with Countesses... Behind these couples came others, in which all the foreign dignitaries and [of] the state lead Ladies, circulating several times around the rooms . . .</p>	<p><i>“Za monarchami i panującymi księżętami postępowali księżęta krwi prowadząc hrabinę Kalergis, senatorowa Platonow, księżne z hrabiów... Za tymi parami szły kolejno inne, w których wszyscy dygnitarze zagraniczni i państwa prowadzili damy, okrążając kilkakrotnie salony . . .”</i> ³³⁵</p>
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Later, when in Wiłno the Russian Emperor, Alexander II expressed his anger at the absence of so many of the Polish Aristocrats during his trip to Warszawa. It was there that he made his famous remark about “Polish dreams” and that Poland would always remain a Russian province.

Patriotism aside the Polonez was also a witness to the pauperization of the gentry-class of rural Poland. Some weak-minded individuals just spent themselves into poverty. The final, last “celebration” was called in Austrian-Poland, “na zajutrz po balu.”

³³⁴ Stanisław Szenic, *Maria Kalergis*, (Warszawa:1962), p. 298.

³³⁵ Szenic, *Maria...*, p.322.

Guests would be invited from near and far, put up in hotels, there would be all kinds of drink and food, in short, no care was given to expense:

In an improvised room
 brightly illuminated,
 [were] placed two orchestras,
 to play successively,
 and by the tens pairs stood to dance.
 Inseparable at each party, were
 Mothers and Aunts,
 [who] accompanying
 [both] pretty and not pretty,
 Maids[unmarried Young Women]
 took [their] traditional place
 along the walls of the room.
 And again, like yesterday,
 there followed in succession,
 [the] Polonez, Waltz,
 Mazurs and Polkas,
 until the [final] White Mazur,...
 after which the crowd of guests
 fled to their carriages,
 tearing [themselves] away
 from viewing the chaos and ruins,
 which was the normal picture
 at each end of these parties,
 known as
 ‘na zajutrz po balu.’

“W improwizowanym salonie
 zabłyśły rześiste światła,
 uszykowały się dwie orkiestry
 mające grac kolejno,
 i dziesiątki par stanęły do tańca.
 Nieodłączne zaś do każdej Zabawy,
 mamy i ciocie,
 towarzyszące
 ślicznym i nieslicznym
 pannom,
 zajęły tradycyjne miejsca
 pod ścianami sali.
 I znów, jak wczoraj,
 następowały po sobie,
 polonez, walce,
 mazury i polki,
 aż do białego mazura,...
 poczem goście tłumnie
 uciekali do powozów,
 by się oderwać
 prędzej od widoku chaosu i ruiny,
 stanowiącej normalny obraz
 każdej kończącej się zabawy,
 tak zwanego
 ‘na zajutrz po balu.’ ” ³³⁶

During the 19th and 20th centuries the real Staropolska character of the Polonez was most often found among the Gentry in the rural areas of the former lands of Poland. These people were more conscious of its pleasures, of its symbolic meaning as well as expressing the old but good manners of their life. Here is an eye-witness account from 1861. It is part of a description of the country Winter Season party known as “kulig.” We cite only the section dealing with the Polonez:

. . . ,they advanced with slow steps
 to the measures of the dance,
 and behind them, followed a
 long column of couples
 stately and of the young...
 In order to [understand] the entire
 dignity and beauty of this dance,
 the tradition of which is being lost,
 it is necessary to see our old
 Kontusz-wearing-men,
 with what grace they show

“ . . . ,postępowali wolnym krokiem
 w takt tańca,
 a za nimi w ich tropy rozwijał się
 długi korowód par
 statecznych i młodzieży...
 Aby poznać całą
 powagę i piękność tego tańca,
 którego tradycją coraz bardziej zatracamy,
 trzeba było widzieć naszych starych
 kontuszowców,
 z jaką gracyą wiedli

³³⁶ Waclaw Lasocki, *Wspomnienia*, Vol. I, (Kraków: 1933), p. 281.

<p>to their Lady; with what respect they bow their grey heads before them, when they circle around to the other side; with what energy and liveliness they stamp [their feet] to the measure, slidingly walk; with what charm and with what niceness [he goes and] takes her hand at her side, twisting [his] long bushy moustache; [and] with what final attention and reverence toward his partner he leads her back to her place and thanking her, kissing the hand, of whom they danced with.</p>	<p><i>swoje damy; z jakim uszanowaniem pochylali siwe głowy przed niemi, gdy zataczali kołem w inną stronę; z jaką energią i życiem przytupywali w taktowym, posuwistym chodzie; z jakim wdziękiem i z jaką składnością to ujmowali się pod bok ręką, to pokręcali sumiastego wąsa; z jaką wreszcie atencją i rewerencją tanecznicze swoje odprowadzali na miejsce i dziękowali ucałowaniem ich rączek, że raczyły towarzyszyć im w tańcu.”</i>³³⁷</p>
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Of course the manners are of the Taniec Polski. However notice here the stamping and sliding step-movements by the men.

In 1865 a book was published in Poland in the Polish language. However it was a translation of a French book, probably from an edition of 1852. There is no step description. It is just a set of choreographies of various dances, the Polonez included. Here are some comments about the Polonez:

<p>Because the dance is really only a dance of walking, it is necessary only to give it order, which [makes] it pleasant,...</p>	<p><i>“Ponieważ taniec ten jest prawie tańcem tylko chodzącym, należy przeto nadać mu porządek, któryby go uprzyjemnił,...</i></p>
<p>The Polonez lends itself to executing very unusual figures or changes in directions [of the] dance – as well as – turnings in serpentine form – . . .</p>	<p><i>W polonezie dają się też wykonywać bardzo zajmujące figury czyli zmian w kierunku tańca – także – obroty w kształcie węża – . . .</i></p>
<p>[When] the Polonez is done with spirit and according to [its] rules, is a proper introduction [start] for every Ball – and [if] done as it should be done, brings humor to the entire Ball and gives each party graceful dignity – and because of this the Polonez today is [the preferred] introductory [opening] dance.</p>	<p><i>Polonez wykonany z gustem i według prawideł, jest właściwie introdukcją do każdego balu – a wykonanie jego należyte, usposabia zwykle humor na cały bal i dodaje każdej zabawie poważnego wdzięku – i dla tego też Polonez stał się dziś tańcem introdukcyjnym powszechnym.”</i>³³⁸</p>

³³⁷ From the periodical *Tygodnik Illustrowany*, Vol. III, (Warszawa: 1861), p. 165.

³³⁸ Jean Jaques, *Mistrz Tańców Kieszonkowy*, (Kraków: 1865), pp. 9, 13-14.

The author of the above citation gave instructions on how the Polonez could be used as a “novelty” dance, for example, going in and out of unlighted rooms, in the open air, carrying lanterns, etc.

The “Mazurka,” a Polish dance made its appearance, if only in Dance Manuals, in the United States during the 1850s or so. We read of the Polish Walking Dance, called the “Polonaize” in 1885. From a dance manual published in New York, the author describes the dance as being used at the opening of state balls of the European courts. Which courts, and whether he was actually an eyewitness, he does not say. However, his characterization is quite good:

1885

*“The master of ceremonies takes command and conducts the dancers through various evolutions . . . after marching round the room, and then up the centre, at the head the gentlemen turn to the left, ladies to the right, marching round so as to meet again at the bottom of the room, at a signal (clapping hands), each gentleman disengages his partner's hands, pauses a moment, allowing the next lady behind to overtake him, when they proceed together. The same is repeated, when ladies pause, allowing gentlemen to return to partners, with many other movements easily suggested by the master of ceremonies.”*³³⁹

We see that all the dancers together with a handclap signal may start a new figure action. Even to the close of the 19th century it was still danced in England, on occasion, as a character dance.

In 1887, a remarkable dance manual was published by a dance master who taught in Russia. It presents a good picture of popular social dances of the 19th century and early 20th centuries. The author describes the “Polonaise” of the 1880s in the following way:

“This being neither a difficult nor a tiresome movement, even the oldest and the youngest of the gentlemen present should be sufficiently polite to invite some lady to participate in the pleasure of it, especially at private or house parties. It would be well for the young gentlemen of to-day to follow the example of the old Polish and French gentlemen, who are, in this respect, perfect models of politeness.

It was at one time customary to exchange ladies at different points in the Polonaise, but the practice is now obsolete.

If no one lady has a particularly prominent part, as in the case of public parties, where an admission fee is charged, the manager or director should ask of the older ladies to commence the Polonaise.

This beautiful beginning to a social function should never be omitted, because of its sentiment, and the dignity that it casts upon what follows it.

*The Polonaise is sometimes executed at the conclusion of a ball, but when this is done, the **reverences** are made at the end instead of the beginning of the dance, and are expressive of a farewell.*

³³⁹ Allen Dodworth, *Dancing and Its Relations to Education and Social Life*, (New York: 1885), p. 139.

*The different figures and changes of the Polonaise are of little moment, and are left to the judgment of the leading couple, who should, in selecting them, bear in mind at all times, (1) the amount of space necessary for their execution, (2) the number of participants, and (3) their ability.”*³⁴⁰

So we see that the Lead Couple (usually of some person to be Honored) makes a circuit of the room themselves bowing to the others as they do so. Then the other couples fall into line behind them. The actual step movements are easily done. (Zorn gives the tempo as 88 beats per minute.) The custom of changing partners or “cutting-in” is out of fashion. It is still the best way to begin a Ball because it lends beauty, feeling and dignity to the occasion. However, as previously noted the Polonaise may conclude a Ball as well with Bows of farewell:

1890

*“I can remember that at a Costume ball held at the Portman Rooms as late as the nineties the Committee (some of Russian extractions) decided on a Polonaise before Supper.”*³⁴¹

Let us return for a moment to Germany. Some of the Courts of Europe opened the Social Season with an official Court Ball. Under Kaiser Wilhelm II of Germany the Court Balls were grand, imposing occasions but not pleasurable. During the Season various other social functions were more pleasant: they were also less exclusive and there was less rigid protocol to be observed:

*“The day after the Great Court a ball took place in the Opera House. It was a charity feast which was honoured by the presence of every member of the Royal family. The ball was opened by a polonaise led by the Court Marshal, Count Fritz von Perponcher, and the Countess Hacke, lady-in-waiting to the Empress. The Sovereigns then followed them through the room, which was beautifully ornamented with flowers and plants from the Royal hothouses of Potsdam . . . The whole effect was magnificent. The omnibus box on the left side was occupied by the members of the Royal family, whilst the two boxes facing it were reserved for the ambassadors and their wives, and for the Princes and Princesses belonging to those German families having the right to the title of Serene Highness. When the polonaise was over, the Emperor used to visit these two boxes, staying some time in familiar conversation with their occupants.”*³⁴²

This is the normal Polonez. But what about that special German Wedding-Torch-Polonaise, called the “Fackeltanz”? Here are two descriptions:

³⁴⁰ Friedrich Albert Zorn, *Grammar of the Art of Dancing*, 3rd edition (Boston: 1905), p. 203.

³⁴¹ Richardson, p. 41. If one recalls to mind that Vienna was also a 19th and early 20th century dance capital, one would expect to encounter the Polonaise there. And so one does. One very grand piece of dance music the “Facherpolonaise,” by Carl Michael Ziehrer is an excellent example of just how “inspired” the Polonaise could be in its 19th century social form. This music is in common use today as the opening dance for “Viennese Balls.” Johann Strauss, himself, had a sentimental fondness for Poland which is partly explained by the alleged fact that he was beaten by Russian officers when he was in Warszawa in 1870. So the story goes.

³⁴² Countess C. Radziwiłł, *Memories of Forty...*, p. 67.

“These two weddings, . . . had given rise to much talk and gossip, and society had been wondering whether the old etiquette usually observed on such occasions would be followed.

*In order to explain this excitement, I must mention that one of the features in Prussian Royal marriages was always a kind of polonaise danced after the religious ceremony by the bride and bridegroom with every single member of their family, and with the guests of high standing, and during which all the Ministers walked before them each carrying a lighted taper in his hand. The great question was whether Prince Bismarck would consent to lend himself to the old custom, . . . ”*³⁴³

In 1900 the wedding of the only daughter of the Kaiser, Princess Louisa, was celebrated:

“As soon as the dinner was over, the White Hall became the setting for the traditional torch-dance, a sort of polonaise which, in earlier times, was danced with senior Court officials carrying big, heavy candles ahead of the procession of dancers. For these elderly gentlemen then it was certainly no easy task, but in my time these duties were taken over by pages, who were physically better equipped. My father gave the Chief Marshal orders for the torch-dance to begin. Prince zu Furstenburg came up to my husband and me, bowed, and invited us to lead the polonaise, the Chief Marshal placed himself at the head of the procession of dancers and, with twelve pages lined up two by two behind him, signalled for Ernst August and me to lead off the dance round the room.

‘There was a look of joy and happiness on the faces of the newly-wedded pair and also on the countenance of the Kaiser and Kaiserin’, an observer wrote later. ‘It was a glittering spectacle, full of dignity and charm, particularly the sight of the Chief Marshal wielding his tall staff, leading the twelve tall, young, and handsome pages in their red coats, jabots and swords behind him, and the bride flaming torches held aloft. Then there was the bridegroom leading his bride by the hand, and the four maids of honour in pink who were carrying her train. After the first round was over, the bride approached the Kaiser, bowed, and invited him and the Duke of Cumberland to join her in the dance. At the same time, the bridegroom approached the Kaiserin and the Duchess of Cumberland and invited them to join him. A new round began. At the next round, the bride asked the King of England and the Czar of Russia to dance, while the bridegroom sought out the Queen of England and the Crown Princess.’

The spectacle of my dancing with the King of England and the Czar of Russia absolutely fascinated everybody present. It wasn’t something that happened every day, of course, but there were the rulers of the two mightiest nations on Earth, with the daughter of the German Kaiser between them, all dancing together. At the end of the dance the Czar turned to me and said: ‘My wish is that you will be as happy as I am.’ I have never forgotten those words: they were the last I was ever to hear from Czar Nicholas.

*The torch-dance was over.”*³⁴⁴

³⁴³ Radziwiłł, *Memories of Forty...*, p. 117.

³⁴⁴ Princess Louise, *The Kaiser’s Daughter*, (Englewood Cliffs: 1977), p. 72-73. In the 20th century Polish ballet “Pan Twardowski” the Polonaise is done in one scene with torches but as a “Death Dance”.

So the peace of pre-WW I was symbolized here by this Polonaise. From the above description it is not clear if it was danced by a couple-of-two-people or of-three-people since both the bride and bridegroom ask two other people to dance at the same time. Since this has been referred to “as a type of polonaise” it was probably just a ceremonial walking. This implies, perhaps, that there was not any bending or sliding movements to the steps. It is these movements which give most of the pleasure to the Dance. If the King of England had experienced this pleasure then perhaps he would have made it a part of the dance-life of England.

Apparently in some of the minor principalities of Germany the Polonaise was done. Proof of this was the wedding celebration of Andrew of Greece to Alice of Battenburg in 1903, which was held in the state of Hesse:

*“The same evening the Grand Duke of Hesse gave a ball in his palace in honour of the young couple. When the Polonaise was being played the Empress Alexandra, giving her hand to her eldest sister, Princess Victoria of Battenburg, made her appearance, then followed her two sisters, the Grand Duchess Sergius and the Princess Henry of Prussia.”*³⁴⁵

Notice that this was a Polonaise danced only or at least led, by women—and all were sisters.

The Polonez may have indirectly influenced millions of Japanese and Koreans. In the latter years of the 19th century, today’s Japanese national anthem, the Kimigayo, was written. The verses were from a poem. Franz Eckert who was from Śląsk part of Poland, set them to music. As has been mentioned in this work, Śląsk was the probable origin of Polonez music and Dance. The elegiac Kimigayo is similar to many a melancholic Polonez. Significant is the fact that the Russians, both in Russia and abroad, regarded what was an assimilation of this Polish Dance, as a Russian Dance.³⁴⁶ They did make it their own.

Even into the 20th century and up to the 1917 Revolution in Russia this dance was popular with the Russians. At the 1903 Winter Ball (an annual Ball), Tsar Nicholas II danced it.

1903

*“Nicholas, who loved to dance, opened the ball with a Polonaise.”*³⁴⁷

The Polonaise may also conclude an affair so that the affair may end with a final reverence. As mentioned above, the 19th century marks the rise of the middle-class. This leaves its mark upon the Polish Walking Dance. This time in history cannot be strictly defined. We chose the date of 1850-1880 as a transitional time in the history of the Walking Dance.

During this period general European and American social dancing spreads to dance halls which are for the general public. Poland was no exception.³⁴⁸ The Żywiec town of

³⁴⁵ A. Savinsky, *Recollections Of A Russian Diplomat*, (London: [n.d.], p. 60-61.

³⁴⁶ The reverse has also occurred, for at Polish-American Social events held in 1977, a dance suite was done which is called, “figure Dances.” It consists of four melodies; all are from old Russian Dances. But most people think that it’s “Polish.”

³⁴⁷ Tamara Rice, *Czars and Czarinas of Russia* (New York: 1968).

developed a “middle-class Polonez.” A full description is contained at the end of the present work. Although the Values of the middle class will come to reign supreme, there is still a very conscious effort to be graceful and decorous—the values of an upper-class, of “polite society,” remains.

By the mid-19th century this democratization in the city of the Polish Walking Dance, has only one variant-form with which to work from—that of the Polonez or Polonaise. The difference is more in the character and style of upper body movements than in the leg movements. This difference in character we repeat again is attested to by scholars.

. . . The notions [terms]
‘Taniec Polski’ and
‘Polonez’ refer to
two different
periods
in which
the dances appeared.

Likewise the names:
Polonaise, Polonoise,
[Polonez],
were used in Poland
only, more or less
at the beginning
of the 19th century,
they were common
from 1820 . . .

“ . . . *pojęcia*
‘taniec polski’ i
‘polonez’ stosuje w
odniesieniu do dwóch
roźnych okresów,
w których
te tańce występowały.”

”Również nazwy tańca:
polonaise, polonoise,
używane w Polsce
dopiero mniej więcej
od początku
XIX wieku
a powszechnie
*od 1820 roku . . . ”*³⁴⁹

The above citations clearly indicate that the Polski Taniec and Polonez variants are distinct. The first quarter of the 19th century in Poland is still very aristocratic and military. We maintain that the dancing Polonez of this time is a diluted Taniec Polski. These people were eminently conscious of the Taniec Polski as a living symbol, as opposed to the next generations for whom it was only a symbol of lifestyle and values which they actually did not see, although they may have shared the same values. The fashions of their time did not “allow” them to express themselves in the same way.

Thus in this early Ułan period, which we may date from 1800-1830, we have a Polonez in which the women’s part is essentially little changed, but with a more lighter step which corresponds to the Empire-gown fashion.

As for the men, we may distinguish three tendencies. They are listed below:

³⁴⁸ We must remind ourselves that in the days of primitive technology, as in the 19th century, before movies, radio, and television, people were more active than we are at present. For example, during January of 1899 in Warszawa there were 44 public Balls which were attended by 200,000 people! To this number must be added 40,000 people who attended private Balls. So there was a great deal of Polonaise and Mazur dancing. Małgorzata Baranowska, *Warszawa*, (Wrocław: 1996), p. 45.

³⁴⁹ Zofia Stęszewska, *Historii Poloneza*, p. 77.

TYPE	DRESS	CHARACTER
TANIEC POLSKI STYLE	Kontusz and Żupan	Same as 18th century. Done in the country and by older men.
UŁAN STYLE	Military uniform of the time	Crisp, elegant, urbane, heel clicks.
SALON STYLE	Well dressed civilian clothes	Not very strong, not crisp, decorous. Bland in comparison to the previous two.

In time, both Ułan and Taniec Polski styles are overshadowed by the Salon style, which becomes³⁵⁰ the general ballroom variant of the latter 19th century and today's. It then becomes only an opening dance. The other styles remain today, more or less, only in the repertoire of performing stage groups. Many of these stage groups consider the difference to be only in the "costumes" worn. They are ignorant of the subtle differences of character.

Be that as it may, it is the Salon version that developed into the most popular variant for the dancing purposes of the general public, which were the same as they are now.

³⁵⁰ This is such a difficult thing to prove, that is, did it "become" or was there merely a "change"? "Become" implies the idea of causation. Should the "Salon Form" be reclassified as, "the Rococo-Polonaise"? This also touches on the phenomena of "fashion" or "fashionableness"—how does something become "fashionable"?

19TH CENTURY OPINIONS AND IDEAS ABOUT THE DANCE

With the coming of the Romantic Age to Poland, romantic-feeling patriots made collections of “ethnographic” material which they used as raw material for their writing. Some writers only turned to “folklore” when their creative powers dried up. In the first half of the 19th century it was writers who turned to Polish folklore. They copied verses from peasant songs and often changed them. In the second half of the 19th century musicians turned to folklore for inspiration. Finally, ethnography began to develop. Sad to say, that during this first and even the second half of the 19th century, no one bothered to record exactly the step-movements of folk dances! This was the beginning of the process of the recognition of “People’s Culture.” Naturally, these collectors had opinions or speculations on Polish Dances. We use the term “opinions” because no one knows whether these people were active dancers, or just what their background was in dance. We cannot tell if they actually witnessed what they described and, if so, under what conditions. We cannot tell how much of their descriptions are made up or imagined.

Their opinions are important in that most of the manuals mentioned above, as well as many earlier writings, rely upon the statements of these few men. We shall deal with their opinions in chronological order in light of what we already know.

The first romantic folklorist was Kazimierz Brodziński (1791-1835). He lived near Kraków and his first writings appear about 1820. In 1829 his remarks on the Polonez appeared under the title, “O Tańcach Narodowych” (“About the National Dances”).³⁵¹ However, this was originally published later, in 1849, his literary essay appeared as part of a larger work. Now Karol Czerniawski contains Mr. Brodziński’s work in another description of dances, which is dated as of 1860. The title of this work is also, “O Tańcach Narodowych” with a section on Polish Dances. In this work Mr. Czerniawski makes reference to Brodziński’s work. What complicates matters more is that in a collection of standard works the present author located Mr. Czerniawski’s essay as early as 1847.³⁵²

³⁵¹ First in *Melitele*, (Warszawa: 1829) and subsequently in *Gazeta Krakowska*, (Kraków: 1831), then in 1842, 1844, 1860.

³⁵² *Biblioteka Warszawska*, Vol. II, 1847, pp 333-335. This reference set is located at the National Library in Warszawa.

There are two questions here. What is authentic about the dance descriptions? What is the time period for these descriptions? The first question seems to favor Mr. Brodziński, since he lived only to 1835, and was a pioneer in a literary “amateur-ethnography.” The descriptions of both men are mainly about the character of the Taniec Polski of the old Szlachta. Mr. Brodziński gives evidence that he spoke to old men about how this dance was. The figures described are the same as from “Pan Tadeusz.” He also includes a passage from “Pan Tadeusz.” To the extent that “Pan Tadeusz” is authentic, then so are they.

Thus they describe the Taniec Polski of the 18th century all the while contrasting it with the Polonez of their time which could be from 1820 to 1845. Now let us turn to their opinions. First, those of Kazimierz Brodziński:

Polski taniec . . . is
a dance for Monarchs
Heros, even for
Elders, . . .

*“Polski taniec . . . jest
on tańcem monarchów,
bohaterów, a nawet
starców . . . ”*³⁵³

Thus he points out the grandness of the Polski Taniec. He was the first to make analogies between the dance figures and Polish political life.

These correspondences are:

The leader or Rej wodzie³⁵⁴

Marshall of the Sejm who
directed the sejm's activities.

Leading the dance freely
from room to room
gathering up more
couples.

“Pospolite ruszenie”
or the mass levy of
the Szlachta for
defense.

Odbijany figure

“Nie pozwalam” or the
individual's right to veto
the entire sitting of
the Sejm.

And the Polonez?

Today's Taniec Polski
is only walking
and resting,
which for
the young has no
attraction,
and for the old
is only an obligation

*“Dzisiejszy taniec polski
jest tylko przechadzka
i spoczynkiem,
który dla
młodzieży nie ma żadnego
powabu,
dla starszych zaś
jest tylko obowiązkiem*

³⁵³ Kazimierz Brodziński, *O Tańcach Narodowych* (1849), pp 103-106 in Karol Czerniawski's work *O Tańcach Narodowych Z Poglądem Historycznym I Estetycznym* of 1860.

³⁵⁴ Marian Gorzkowski writing in 1869 thought that this term for the leader of Polish dances came from conception of a Polish-Latin phrase “rex-wodzi,” literally the, “King leads.” *O Tańcach Historyczna Poszukiwania*. (Warsawa: 1869).

of etiquette.

etykiety."³⁵⁵

As for particular features of the Taniec Polski:

Long ago the Poles
danced it with
a strange deftness
and noble
strength.

*"Dawniej Polacy
tańcowali go z
dziwna zręcznością
obok szlachetnej
powagi."*³⁵⁶

What manifested this power?

Sliding steps
without hops . . .
the shaking swords,
doffing the caps
and gloves, the
twisting of moustaches.

*"Przy krokach posuwistych
bez skoków . . .
poruszeniami szabli,
czapki
i rękawów,
podkręcaniem wąsa.*

Beginning the dance,
the Pole bows to the
Lady taking off his cap
[with a grand motion
swinging it across himself
to the other arm . . .]
twisting his moustache
with one hand,
the second
resting on his sword
he flatters and displays
his manliness
with pomp.

*"Przy zaczeciu tańca,
Polak kładąc czapkę
pod pachę przy ukłonie
przed dama . . .*

*podkręcając wąsa
jedną ręką,
drugą
na szabli opierając
okazuje meżka zalotność
i dumna niejako
wystawność.*³⁵⁷

The woman is flirtatious in the Mazur, but not so in the Taniec Polski, which presents the dignity of the Human Race:

This is not the place
for a Lady to flirt . . .
the expression is only
one of a modest dignity . . .
there is the impression
of some kind of higher
existence.

*"Dama nie ma tu miejsca
do wstwanej zalotności . . .
wyraża tylko skromna
powagę . . .
wyobraża ideał
jakowej wyższej
istoty."*³⁵⁸

³⁵⁵ Brodziński in Czerniawski, *O Tańcach Narodowych*, pp. 103-106.

³⁵⁶ Brodziński, *O Tańcach* . . . , pp. 103-106.

³⁵⁷ Brodziński, *O Tańcach* . . . , pp. 103-106.

³⁵⁸ Brodziński, *O Tańcach* . . . , pp. 103-106.

In 1828 Kazimierz Brodziński published a poem which contains important information about the “weight” of the music for the Taniec-Polski:

When a chap for the
Taniec Polski stands,
[He] twists his moustache,
stamps his feet.

“*Gdy człek w
taniec Polski stanie,
was podkręci
Tupnie noga!*”³⁵⁹

The stamping of feet for the Taniec Polski fits in with our findings of a powerful, boasting dance with a heavy, even stamped rhythm, which is not so much a part of the “Polonez” character.

One might argue that this is only a description of the peasant version, or of only a crude person stamping to the music. This may be so, but this does not negate our case. Recall that in the 18th century it was only the Magnates and Court who were instructed in dances, usually foreign. This type of dancing displayed crudity, for example, stamping, in order to increase the aesthetic elements of dancing. But most of the Szlachta were closely held to the soil, as were their peasants, and had the Staropolska grandeur of lifestyle. A man's perception of the Taniec Polski music would include stamping, just as it does the strong arm movements and sweeping bows. Whereas, during the 19th century, most people who did the Polonez had instruction in the dances of the time along with neat footwork, which in the Polonez of that period *excludes* heavy stamps. The reader will notice that all the writers view the Polonez as a degenerate, weak form of the Taniec polski.

When we turn to Karol Czerniawski's remarks (1860), which were first written in 1847, we have a greater degree of “analysis” about the causes of certain features of the dance. He cites Kazimierz Brodziński's political correspondence, but goes deeper: into the Slavic Consciousness or Psychology:

The large numbers
of dancers
[no limit to
the number of couples]
indicates the many Slavs
with one leader
at the head
or the crowd.

“*Gromadność
w tańcu
nieograniczona
liczba par
to gromada Słowian
Przodkowanie jednego
to głowa
w gromadzie.*”

This is an expression of “Organic-Community” and is not to be understood as a mechanical grouping of “Individuals.”

The Great Circle [figure]
is found only
Community dances
of the Slavs and our
basic figure for the dance

“*Wielkie koło
znajdziesz tylko
w gromadnych tańcach
Słowian i naszych
tańców zasadnicza figura*”

³⁵⁹ Klemens Derc, *Zbiór Wiadomości o Tańcach Polskich*, (Warszawa: 1931), p. 20. This small book was published by the “Society of Polish Dance Lovers,” and is a collection of excerpts of poems and short discussions of Polish Dance during the inter-war period.

is the axis
and circle.

*jest oś
i koło.*”³⁶⁰

Mr. Czerniawski emphasizes the influence of the Szlachta and Polish history upon Polish dances, making a connection between running dances and war. However, this is simply speculation.

In his remarks about the Walking Dance he writes with insight concerning its history:

The Polonez was called
long ago,
taniec wielki [the Great Dance]
pieszym [Walking],
later Polski, finally
Polonez.

*“Poloneza zwano
dawniej
tańcem wielkim
pieszym,
później polskim, wreszcie
Polonezem.”*³⁶¹

As for the terms “Taniec Wielki,” and “Pieszy” we cannot associate them with anything specific. There is the possibility that the term “Tancem Wielki”—used most often at the beginning of the 17th century—represented the Taniec Polski before the need to have the Taniec Polski become a “Polish Dance,” that is, before the need was felt for an early symbol of Nationalism.

As previously stated, the statements of the above two men were used by most Polish authors and teachers thus a common core of beliefs developed about the Polish Walking Dance. This includes the heavy Staropolska character of the Taniec Polski, as well as some of its figures, namely, Circling, Winding, Weaving, and Cutting-in. With the Polonez all that remained is the Promenading in a circle. Often this Polonez would be used to “march” people to their dinner places, or to set up a certain order for the next dance. (In a handbook from 1885 dealing with Contra dancing, the author states that the Polonez is always used to set up the proper positioning of couples for the Contra.³⁶²)

Franz Liszt, a great friend of Chopin, upon the latter’s death in 1849, wrote a book about the musical compositions of Chopin.³⁶³ The book was originally published in 1852. His descriptions are factual³⁶⁴ but highly poetical, highly sentimental: more literature than dance instruction. Liszt had an intimate knowledge of the life and manners of the Hungarian and Polish Noble Class—which had many similarities with each other.³⁶⁵

His descriptions are a good summation statement of the Polonez as of the mid-nineteenth Century and which, in the main, describes the contemporary Polonez (1997). It also indicates the change in form or style of dancing the Polonez:

“According to those who saw the Polish dance performed even as late as the opening of this century, it has degenerated so much that it is now difficult to grasp its original character. How lifeless it has become for them is readily understood upon reflection that most of the national dances are barely able to preserve their initial originality

³⁶⁰ Karol Czerniawski, *O Tańcach Narodowych z Poglądem Historycznym I Estetycznym*, (Warszawa: 1860), pp. 58-59.

³⁶¹ Czerniawski, *O Tańcach Narodowych z Poglądem Historycznym I Estetycznym*, (Warszawa: 1860), pp. 58-59.

³⁶² Władysław Przedpęski, *Kontredans Warszawski* (Warszawa: 1885), p. 7.

³⁶³ Franz Liszt, *Frederic Chopin*, (London, 1963), pp. 45-51.

³⁶⁴ As the private correspondence of Liszt reveals it was mostly from the observations of Princess Saye-Wittgenstein, his life-long companion, who was the source of the factual data for the Dances.

³⁶⁵ At times both Hungarian and Polish Kings reigned as rulers in Poland and Hungary.

*since the costume appropriate to it is no longer in use, and the Polonaise particularly is completely stripped of rapid movements and **steps** (that were truly choreographic) and unvarying, difficult poses. The Polonaise, devised far more for show than for seduction, was quickly forced to drop its pompous importance and proud sufficiency. It became a circulating promenade of slight interest when men were deprived of the accessories essential, for gestures in play and pantomime, in animating its pattern, so simply but today decidedly dull.”*

We note that Liszt states that those who saw the Polonaise danced around 1800 saw a more vigorous, more “authentic” dance. The contemporary Polonaise (1850’s) was, “degenerate”, “lifeless”, “dull.” The reasons for this change in the Polonaise are, according to Liszt: the non-wearing of the National Costumes [they were now out-of-fashion]; the fact that the Polonaise is a slow dance; that it had no steps; that it was just a dance of repeated poses; that it demanded “play”; that it did not involve sexual movements or the sexual arts of seduction; and that it required an attitude of pompousness of the men. The joy of dancing for the sake of dancing was not in demand in Liszt’s time. How different from our time (1997) when simplicity of steps is what recommends a dance!

“The many episodes and the expressive miming that used to be introduced there would be unimaginable were it not for the tales and examples of a few elders who still wear the ancient Polish dress. By a rather rare exception this dance was destined to emphasize men especially, to underline admiringly their handsomeness, their fine bearing, and their martial and courtly mien. In the original form the very name of the dance is of masculine gender, and only through an obvious misunderstanding was it transferred to the feminine.”³⁶⁶

So, it is best to think of it as a men’s dance:

*“Those who have never worn the **kontusz** of former times . . . would find it difficult to appreciate the carriage, the slow bending, the sudden straightening, the subtleties of silent pantomime which the ancients practiced as they filed past in a Polonaise as in a military parade. their fingers, never left idle, played with their long mustaches or with the handles of their swords. These were an integral part of their costumes and constituted an object of vanity regardless of age . . . Since the luxury of materials and jewels and bright colors was as prevalent with the men as with the women, these stones were found in buttons, in the inevitable rings, in neck-clasps, and in the aigrettes on brilliant velvet caps. During the Polonaise the ability to doff, to don, and to manipulate this cap easily and with the meaning attributed to these movements was an art in itself, chiefly noticeable in the knight of the leading couple who, as head of the line, gave the word of command to the whole company.”*

The expected pantomiming done by the men involves their caps, their sword, and their mustaches. Now when swords and caps are not worn how can the pantomiming take place? The man had to remove his cap so that it would be graceful, natural, grand and not clumsily done:

³⁶⁶ What Liszt probably means is that the term “Polonez” is masculine in Polish Grammar but “Polonaise” in French, is feminine.

“The master of the house opened each ball with this dance, not with the most beautiful or the most youthful, but with the most honored of the women present. Youth alone was not called to form the procession whose evolutions initiated every festival as if to offer a happy review as the first pleasure. After the master of the house, the most eminent persons came next. Choosing partners out of friendship or discretion, selecting their preferences or the most influential, they followed the steps of the leader. He had to perform a task less easy than today. He had to guide the band [sic., the dancing couples] organized in his charge in a thousand capricious meanderings through all the apartments where thronged the remaining guests. They would join the brilliant cortege later. They appreciated his reaching the most distant galleries the garden plots, and the shrubbery where the music was heard only as a faint echo; but as if in revenge it welcomed the return to the main hall with a redoubling of fanfares. Arranged in hedgelike rows as he passed, the onlookers, constantly changing, watched him carefully. Never would he fail to lend his bearing and presence that dignity tempered with gaiety which won admiration from the women and jealousy from the men. Both vain and joyous, he would have believed himself lacking to his guests if he did not display, with a certain naive piquancy, the pride he felt in seeing assembled in his home such illustrious friends and such notable followers, the chief concern of the visit being to array themselves richly to render him honor.”

Again we have confirmation that it was danced throughout the house even in the garden. Those not dancing, watched the couples on their way.

*“Guided by the host in this first rotation the dancers encountered sudden turnings the effects of which came sometimes from surprises contrived in advance, sometimes from tricks of architecture or of decoration with embellishments in keeping the pleasures of the day. The host would display them with pride or with some tribute **to the most valiant and the most beautiful** if they offered some topical allusion. The more these short excursions provided of the unexpected, and the more imaginative they were in amusing and happy invention, so the more the younger members of the company applauded, the more noisy were the acclamations, and the more joyous the peals of lovely laughter reaching the ears of the leader. Thus would he gain in reputation, becoming . . . a much-sought-after partner. If he were already of a certain age, he would frequently receive, upon returning from one of these exploring rounds, deputations of girls coming to thank him and to compliment him in the name of all. Through their tales the pretty wanderers nourished the curiosity of guests and increased the zest with which later Polonaises were formed—for those who failed to be in this procession quietly watched its passage as if it were a shining comet.”*

Thus the dance should have unexpected features but this is relative, of course:

“For the persons assembled in the galleries—and in this land of aristocratic democracy it was no less important to astonish them, since they included many dependents of the great seigneurial houses, all noble (sometimes even more noble than the masters) but too poor to join in the festivities from which, however they voluntarily abstained—this sumptuously elegant band, shedding iridescent hues and like along serpent with shimmering rings, would first unreel its full length, then coil up again so that its sinuous contours in scintillant play would give the most varied nuances.”

Yes, that is the correct expression, a dance of the “Aristocratic Democracy.” Liszt then gives us some specific figure actions. The hand clap “cutting-in” figure was done:

“After the master of the house had paid homage to his guests in opening the festival, each of them was entitled to claim his lady and replace him. Clapping his hands in order to halt the procession for a moment, the guest would bow before her as he begged for acceptance, while he who surrendered her would do the same with the couple next in line. This example was followed by all. The women, changing their cavaliers as often as a newcomer demanded the honor of leading the first among them, remained of course in unvarying order; but with the men, constantly replacing each other, it would happen that he who had begun the dance found himself to be the last, if not totally excluded before its close.”

There are figures of columns, of twistings, of turnings. There should not be collisions or confusion.

“The step was rhythmic, measured, and undulating; it gave a harmonious swing to the entire body. There was no hasty rushing, no sudden shifting caused by impulsive motion.”

So the step is smoothly done with risings and fallings:

“The man would offer his lady now one hand, now the other, sometimes scarcely grazing the tips of her fingers, again enclosing them all within his palm. Never leaving her, he would circle to her left or to her right, and as each couple followed suit, these movements rippled through the whole extent of the gigantic serpent. Although preoccupied and apparently absorbed by these multiple maneuvers, the cavalier still found time to bend to his lady and profit from moments favorable for murmuring in her ear-sweet words if she was young, confidences, entreaties, and interesting tidbits if she was no longer so. Then, righting himself proudly, he would clang the steel of his weapons, twirl his mustache, and become so expressive in gesture that the woman had to yield an understanding response.”

Note the alternative hand hold—merely touching the women’s finger tips:

“So it was no trite and meaningless promenade that was performed. It was, rather, if we may venture the thought, a procession wherein the entire company displayed its finery and self-admiringly preened itself on being so beautiful, so noble, so sumptuous, and so courtly.”

Of course this rich description by Liszt is only of the most powerful (and usually the most wealthy) Nobles. However the poorest among the Nobles would dance in the same manner.

After the failed revolt of 1863 social life slowly returned to Kraków. To celebrate the opening of the new town Hall in Kraków a Ball was given:

We entered the hall,
just then the Polonez began.

*“Weszliśmy na sale,
gdy rozpocząć miano poloneza.*

It was led by President Dietl
wearing Polish Clothes [Kontusz]
with Countess Potocka;
impressive and beautiful
did she look.
The long moving row
of handsome couples
went through four rooms
to the sounds of the Polonez
of Krupinski.
Joined here were all classes:
Aristocrats, Szlachta,
Civil Servants, Industrialists,
Store-Keepers,
and one must acknowledge,
that the middle-class outshone
in the beauty of its Women; . . .
Dancing went on to dawn,
but echoes of that nice party
went far.

*Prowadził go prezydent Dietl
w stroju polskim
z hr. Adamowa Potocka;
imponujące i piękne
były to postacie.
Długim szeregiem posunęły się
strojne pary
przez cztery sale
przy dźwiękach poloneza
Kurpińskiego.
Złączyły się tu wszystkie stany:
arystokracja, szlachta,
honoracjory miejskie, przymysłowcy,
kupcy,
i trzeba przyznać,
ze burżuazja jaśniała
uroda dam; . . .
Tańczono do świtu,
a echa pięknej zabawy
odbiły się daleko.”³⁶⁷*

This citation indicates the rising middle-class due to the rapid industrialization of Poland. Note again, that the President of Kraków in Kontusz led the Polonez. (Prominently mentioned by the author was also the Mazur Dance.)

Not far from Kraków is the city of Rzeszów. It was large enough to have a social life of its own. From a recent study dealing with Rzeszów based upon contemporary newspaper stories, etc., some of the changes that took place in dance were noted:

At the Carnival dancing parties,
particularly if among the guests
there are many important
Gentlemen and Ladies,
[then] it begins with the Polonez,
to which the first couple stands
the most important persons
of those in the hall.
If most are of the younger generation,
[then] the Polski was danced
noly to go to supper.
In the 80's, and even yet
in the 90's years
of the 19th century the Polonez
was danced in Polish clothes,
although the Przegląd Rzeszowski
[a newspaper]
already in 1884, related about the

*“Karnawałowe zabawy taneczne,
zwłaszcza gdy pośród gości
znajdowało się wielu poważnych
panów i matron,
rozpoczęły się polonezem,
do którego w pierwsza parę stawali
najgodniejsi
z obecnych na sali.
Gdy przeważała młodsza generacja,
polskiego tańczyło się
tylko do kolacji.
W osiemdziesiątych, a nawet jeszcze
w dziewięćdziesiątych latach
dziewiętnastego stulecia poloneza
tańczono w stroju polskim,
choć Przegląd Rzeszowski
już w 1884 roku, zdając relacje z*

³⁶⁷ Maria z Mohrow Kietlińska, *Wspomnienia*, (Kraków: 1986), p.252.

past recent Carnival, complained,
that “Polish Clothes are already
somewhat rarely seen in
the Ballroom.”

*minionego właśnie karnawału, ubolewał,
ze ‘strój polski już coraz
rzadziej widziany jest
na salach balowych’.*” ³⁶⁸

So Youth seems to have been interested in food! Also in faster dances. But what about the following?

If the party opens with a Polonez,
couples go to the tables
to the sounds of the march.

*“Jeżeli zabawę otwierał polonez,
pary udawały się do stołów
przy dźwiękach marsza.”* ³⁶⁹

This implies that after the Polonez is finished a march is then played and with this march the people go to eat. Marches are in 2/4 or 4/4 time whereas the Polonez is in 3/4 time. We do know however that the Polonez did degenerate into such a “march-to-eat” among the vulgar. Of course if the music is played in a pedestrian way or as a march then people will simply march and not dance.

Over time an Aesthetic development or appreciation has taken place of the Beauty of the Movements of the Polonez **in and for itself** and not its past Political significance. The reading of its past executions helps us to obtain its Aesthetical Pleasures.

The movements of the feet change little from form to form, with the exception of the amount of sliding. In the Taniec Polski there is a great deal of sliding as conceived by composers and dance teachers living after 1830. They then mentally transferred the music of their time and its manner of dancing to earlier times, namely, to the 17th and 18th centuries. And thus they believed they were doing the same dance as the Old Szlachta did in the past. The dance teachers also transferred their heavy sliding step (learned in dance schools) to the past. However, as stated previously, the music of the 17th-18th centuries was not at all like the music after 1830. Thus neither could the movements be the same.

Contemporary stage choreographers still confuse variant forms and music out of ignorance, and in an attempt to give the dance what is known as, “Character.”

In the year 1865, the composer Alojzy Lipinski, published a Polonez entitled “Posuwisty,” or “Sliding.”³⁷⁰ This word choice obviously points out that some people are aware of the difference in both the music and the characters of the dancing. This use of the term is a conscious Historicism. The composer could just as well have known that the Staropolska character was intended, even if they could not dance it.

i Some German Dance Manuals

The German-Saxon manuals are important to the History of the Polonez before 1846 because, based upon the present author’s research, there are **no existing Polish manuals**

³⁶⁸ Jadwiga Szymczak-Hoff, *Życie towarzyskie i kulturalne Rzeszowa w dobie autonomii Galicji*, (Rzeszów: 1993), p.127.

³⁶⁹ Szymczak-Hoff, *Życie towarzyskie ...*, p.128.

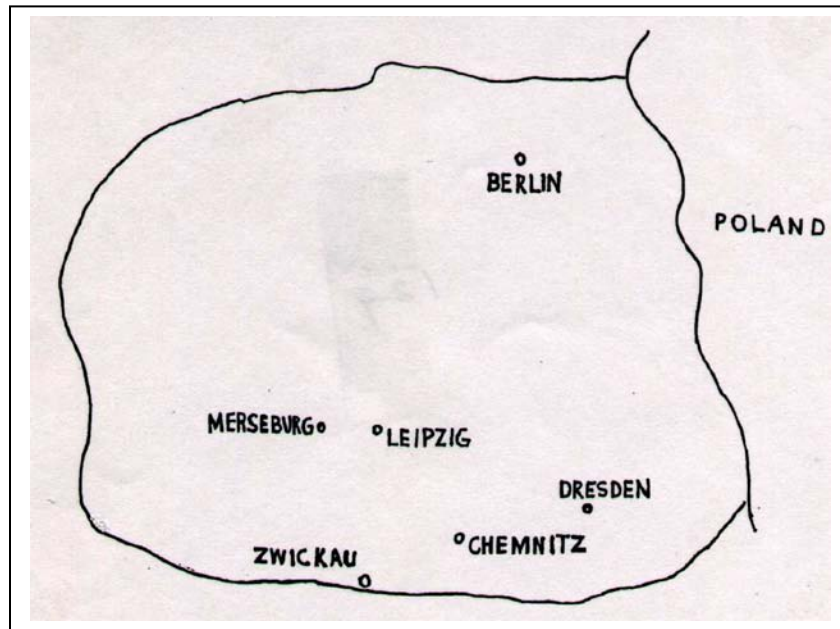
³⁷⁰ The dedication of this Polonez is “Poswiecony staremu wiarusowi Pan Janowi Pawulskiemu,” or “dedicated to an Old Campaigner, Pan Jan Pawulski.” This was only one of three pieces of music published in Lwów collectively entitled “National Dances.” Included are a Mazur, Dumka, and Kolomeyka. The “Ukrainian” people in the Steppes considered these dances as also their National dances. They often found it difficult to conceive of a “Ukrainism” separate from “Polishism.”

written **before** 1846.³⁷¹ Therefore the German manuals are important and may help to shed some light upon the Polonez in the first half of the 19th century. (We also do have the important 1825 Russian manual of Petrovski.). This is not an exhaustive treatment or survey of all the German Manuals in existence.

As mentioned previously, various foreign dance teachers from Mr. Taubert on, wrote descriptions of the Polish Walking Dance for a non-Polish readership. Throughout the 19th century the city of Leipzig continually produced dance manuals. J. H. Kattfuss³⁷² in his manual stated that the Polonaise was a majestic Dance of the Poles.

The capital of Saxony, Dresden, already had a long historical connection with the Polonez.³⁷³ An indication of this was the publication of a dance manual in Dresden in 1828 by G. Tschetter³⁷⁴ who described both the Polonaise and Mazur Dances and their steps. Actually there are quite a number of German dance manuals with this Saxon connection: Taubert (1717), Feldenstein (1771), Kattfuss (1800), Tschetter (1828), Helmke (1829), and Häcker (1835). This stream of German manuals has some importance for the understanding of aspects of the Polonez.

Examination of the map below shows how physically close were the places of publication of these German manuals, namely, Dresden, Zwickau, Leipzig, Merseburg, Chemnitz. As early as 1839 a rail line already joined Dresden and Leipzig, 70 miles apart. (The distance from Berlin to Dresden is only about 100 miles.) The location of Braunschweig for Feldenstein is the furthest from Poland.



THE DANCE-MANUAL CITIES OF SAXONY

³⁷¹ Of course this does not mean that they were never written. After all, the War Losses of 1914-1918 and 1939-1945 may have something to do with this. Let us consider just a single instance. "In October 1944 all the collections of one of the greatest Warsaw libraries, including 60,000 old manuscripts, 200,000 old prints and music, . . . more than 1,000,000 engravings, all of inestimable value, were burned." This from W. Kulski, *Germany And Poland*, (Syracuse: 1976), p. 41.

³⁷² J. H. Kattfuss, *Taschenbuch für Freunde und Freundinnen des Tanzes*, (Leipzig: 1800).

³⁷³ Symbolic of this connection was the conscious decision made by the German Government to hold political talks between Germany and Poland in Dresden in 1922. H. von Riekhoff, *German-Polish Relations, 1918-1933*, (Baltimore: 1971), p. 54.

³⁷⁴ G. Tschetter, *Terpsichore*, (Dresden: 1828), p. 45.

i Some German Dance Manuals

Then, as now, we can be sure that they knew of the existing manuals. We would expect, therefore, similar descriptions. Below are some examples of 19th century manuals which describe the general character of the dance. Some of these descriptions do not add anything new. However, these manuals are worthy in themselves to be translated here, if only partially at least, for our immediate research purposes and for the benefit of posterity.³⁷⁵

J. H. Kattfuss' manual begins the 19th century for us as it appeared in 1800. It has some features in common with Hänsel's 1755 manual also from the city of Leipzig. These will be discussed in the Workbook Section of the present book.

1800

J. H. Kattfuss

Polonaise

“Die Polonaise ist wegen ihrer ungewöhnlich schönen Touren und Pas ein wirklich majestätischer Tanz. Der Pas desselben hat mit dem jetzigen Englischen eine sehr grosse Aehnlichkeit, ja er ist eigentlich eine Abkürzung desselben; nur findet dieser Unterschied dabei Statt, dass derselbe viere zählt, die ersten zwei gebogen und geschlissen, die andern hingegen kurz abgetreten, auch wieder geschwinder gemacht als der eigentlichs Menuet-Pas, ob die Musik gleich auch $\frac{3}{4}$ Takt ist, weshalb er auch schwerer zu machen ist, weil er viel Gleichgewicht fordert. Um die eigentliche Schönheit der Polonaise bewundern zu können, muss man sie von einem Pohlen tanzen sehen; denn hier erblickt man so viel Grace in den Wendungen, dass man dadurch bezaubert wird. Der Pohle hat überdiess im Zusammenschlagen der Fersen eine bewundernswürdige Fertigkeit, ob er gleich gewöhnlich mit kleinen Stiefeln und Sporen tanzt, und demohngeachtet bemerkt man nie, dass er stolpert oder der Dame zu nahe kommt. Wenn er sie auch allein tanzt, so besitzt er doch darin so viel Geschicklichkeit, dass er die Zuschauer eine lange Zeit mit Variationen unterhalten kann. Soll dieser Tanz von mehreren getanzt werden, so verlangt er einen eben so geschickten Vortänzer, als der englische.

Dierser fängt erst allein an; macht einige Varitionen und ladet dann die übrigen Tänzer, welche schon alle in einem halben Zirkel darzu bereit stehen, durch eine Verbeugung ein. Diese müssen sich nun nach ihm richten und alles, was er vortanzt, nachmachen.

Es ist sehr Schade, dass dieser Tanz bei uns Deutschen fast ganz in Misskredit gerathen ist. Er gewährt dem Auge durch die grosse Mannigfaltigkeit in seinen schönen Abwechselungen der Touren ein schönes Schauspiel.

*Freilich hat jeder Tanz seiner eigne Schönheit, wenn er von guten Tänzern vorgestellt wird. . . .”*³⁷⁶

Polonaise

³⁷⁵ The present author, to the best of his German translation ability, has tried to maintain the sentence order of the original work in his English translation. Sometimes this leads to non-fluid English. Hänsel and Kattfuss are the more difficult works to have been translated. We welcome better and more precise translations.

³⁷⁶ J. H. Kattfuss, *Neu Taschenbuch für Freunde und Freundinnen des Tanzes*, (Leipzig: 1800), pp. 190-192.

The Polonaise is, because of its unusually beautiful Figures and Step, a really majestic dance. The Step of the Polonaise is very similar to the current English [dance], it is essentially a shorter [form] of the English; there are several differences; there are four counts [per measure], the first two [counts] have bending and [foot] closings, the others are short steps, done more quickly than the Menuet Step, the music is in $\frac{3}{4}$ time; it is difficult to do because it requires a good sense of harmony. To admire the real beauty of the Polonaise, one must see it danced by a Pole; then one sees the grace in the turning-actions, that one is amazed. The Pole has, moreover, in the beating together of the heels an admirable skill, [especially] since he usually is wearing small boots and spurs, and one notices how skillful [he is], not to stumble or to collide with the Lady. Even if he should dance it alone, he possesses so much skill that he can hold the attention of spectators for a long time with his variations. Should it be danced by more [couples], then it requires a more skillful leader than as for the English.

This one [the dance leader] begins alone; does some variation and then leads the remaining dancers, who are already standing in a half circle, with a Bow. These now depend on him [his leading], they now copy what he does.

It is very unfortunate, that we Germans have nearly ruined this dance. Its variety and its alternating Figures gives to the eyes a beautiful spectacle.

Certainly each dance has its own beauty, if it is presented by good dancers. . .

1829

C. C. Weiner

Polonaise

*“Dieser Tanz hat unbestimmte Touren nach $\frac{3}{4}$ Takt; der Antritt geschieht in einem halbzirkel, der durch die grössere Anzahl der Tanzenden sich mehr und mehr dem Kreise nähert. Der langsame Takt gestattet, wie in den meisten Tänzen, so auch hier, um so eher eine richtige Ausführung der Figuren, Touren und Gruppierungen, als ein nachlässiges Schleppen der Füsse, Gehen ohne Takt und nöthigen Anstand, die Polonaise aus dem Kreise künstlicher Tänze bringt. Sie sollte daher, da sie ein Ehrentanz ist, mit mehr Aufmerksamkeit, als es oft geschieht, getanzt werden. Jüngere Personen müssen sich nie zum Vortanzen vordrängen, da sich immer Aeltere finden, denen diess Vorrecht um so lieber gestattet sein muss, da ihnen die jetzt so beliebten rascheren Tänze weniger zusagen. Uebereinstimmend mit dem Takte bleibt die Tourenangabe ganz dem Vortanzenden überlassen. Es sind hier eine hinlängliche Anzahl Touren bemerkt, um eine leichte Auswahl zu treffen, oder sie auch mit andern zusammensetzen. Der vortanzende Herr ladet seine Tänzerin durch ein Compliment zur Theilnahme ein, führt diese vor den nebenstehenden Paaren vorbei, die ihm nach und nach folgen; alle Paare tanzen in einer geraden Linie vor; oben angekommen, fallen die Herren links, die Damen rechts ab, und tanzen nun Chaîne; beim Zusammentreffen gehen zwei Parre neben einander vor, die Parre theilen sich, fallen wieder paarweise rechts and links ab; dadurch nun bilden sich zwei Kolonnen, wovon be idem Zusammenkommen am andern Ende des Saales eine Kolonne unter den hochgehaltenen Armen der Andern durchgeht. Beide Kolonnen tanzen hierauf Doppel-Chaîne, sodann Ronde mit Durchgehen. Es gehen wieder 2 Paare neben einander vor; Alle bilden eine grosse Ronde, Schlangenlinie, wo das vortanzende Paar sich unter den Armen der Andern hindurch zieht; . . ”*³⁷⁷

³⁷⁷ C. W. Wiener, *Gründliche Anweisung zu allen gesellschaftlichen Tänzen*, (Zwickau; 1829), pp. 77-79.

Polonaise

This Dance has an undefined [number] of Circular-Movements and is done in 3/4 time; it begins in a half-circle [formation], with a large number of dancers this becomes a [complete] circle. The slow tempo, allows as in most other dances, so also here, the correct execution of Figures, Circular-Movements and Group arrangements. All [of this done] with a careless dragging of the feet, going without the measure and [yet] a necessary Decorum, the Polonaise stands out from the circle of artificial [artistic] Dances. One is obliged to say that this is a Noble Dance, with more Politeness, compared to [the other dances] which are done. Young Persons must not ignore the Leader [of the Dance], who is always an Elder, [to whom] this Privilege must be given, so that there is little that need be said to them. In harmony with the music they all give [themselves] up to the Leaders [commands]. It is here that a sufficient number of turnings are done, and an easy choice to step, or with other common actions. The Leader invites his partner to dance with a bow to her and leads her to the front of the nearby standing couples, they follow him; all couples dance in a straight line; as they dance [forward], the Gentlemen go left; the Ladies right, and dance then a Chaine; at their meeting they form two couples next to each other and dance, the couples then divide so that one couple goes left then the other right; thereby building two Columns, where from they reach the end of the Room one Column goes through under the upraised arms of the Other [Column]. Both Columns then dance the Double-Chaine, then a Circle. It continues again to form two couples abreast [dancing forward]; all make a large Circle, the Serpent-Curve, wherein the first couple goes under the [joined] arms of the other couples who are behind the first couple [pulling all the others along], . . . ³⁷⁸

The chief features of Weiner's description are the same as that of other previous authors and need not be commented upon. However we do note that he described the passing of one Column under the upraised arms of the second Column. This figure was criticized by one of the Russian sources, Petrovski in 1825. This indicates that this figure-action was probably common, at least, in Germany and Russia.

1832

G. D. Helmke

In 1832 Helmke published a dance manual for that year.³⁷⁹ There is a long figure-sequence for the Polonaise of twenty-one figures. It starts:

Fig. 1. The Great
Serpentine Promenade.
After this will [be],
without interruption, . . .

“Fig. 1. Gross
Schlangen-Promenade
Nach dieser wird,
ohne anzuhalten, . . . ” ³⁸⁰

It then continues on through the twenty-one figures. There is nothing unusual about this long sequence. Just as with Weiner there are many couple arching actions and Arcades of couples

³⁷⁸ C.C. Wiener, *Grundliche Anweisung zu allen gesellschaftlichen Tanzen*, (Zwickau: 1829), pp. 77-80. Mam is to the left of the woman in the couple.

³⁷⁹ And not only for that year as he also published manuals for 1828 and 1829. These all have the same descriptions for the Polonaise Step.

³⁸⁰ E. D. Helmke, *Almanach der neuesten Modetanze fur das Jahr 1832*, (Merseburg: 1832), p. 90.

are formed. This shows a highly developed choreography but at the expense of the powerful expressiveness of the *Taniec Polski*—this lost of character was compensated for devising more complicated figure-sequences. It is becoming more of a “spectators” dance as well. But it does contain one unique figure, which we include for the Historical Record.

Fig. 20. All the Gentlemen go simultaneously [to] and in front of their Lady, makes a Compliment to her and offers to her his right hand. The Lady places her right hand in the right hand of the Gentleman and returns the Compliment. Then [still] holding the hand of his Lady [he kneels] down upon one knee and [the] Lady goes [still holding] the Gentleman’s right hand [dances] around him, [then] giving him also the left hand, raising [helping]the Gentleman to stand up and retake [their positions] with him as before.

“Fig. 20. *Alle Herren gehen gleichzeitig und jeder vor seine Dame, macht ihr ein Compliment und bietet ihr die rechte Hand. Die Dame lasst ihre rechte Hand in die rechte des Herren und wiedert das Compliment. Dann lasst jeder Hand sich vor seiner Dame auf ein Knie nieder und Dame geht an der rechten Hand des Herrn ihm herum, giebt ihm auch die linke Hand, hebt den Herrn auf und schwenkt sich mit ihm herum.*”³⁸¹

Men on their knees in the Polonaise? This was not done in Poland in the days of the *Taniec Polski*. This action may strike some people as being artificial, as being “staged.” We do know that on occasions informal “performances” were given by household or family members, for example, by children or young adults as a conclusion to dance lessons. This in the Social Ballroom; however, can certainly be Aesthetically satisfying, if the partners are in Harmony with this feeling. This feature, not originally Polish illustrates the different perceptions of Poles and non-Poles. For any number of non-Poles it was not really a “Dance” but just a walking to music; therefore, they felt the need to embellish it, with long figure-sequences and inventions. In time this same tendency developed in Poland. As the power and significance of the 18th century Gentry-class faded so to did the expressiveness of the “*Taniec Polski*” disappear to be replaced by the lack-luster variants 19th and 20th century “Polonaise.”³⁸²

Of course the utility of the “merely-walking-Polonaise” is that even people with neither dance skills nor experience can immediately dance it. This is valuable.

1835

G. Häcker

³⁸¹ Helmke, p. 103.

³⁸² One does see this kneeling figure with the addition of a Polish hand kiss or even a kissing of the Ladies’ hem done by Stage Groups today. But of course, men kneeling for the women is definitely in the character of the Dance!

Häcker, a dance teacher in the city of Chemnitz,³⁸³ has the usual complicated figure-sequence for the Polonoise [sic] contained in the previously mentioned German authors' books with the circling of couples, Serpentine (Schlingen-Tour), weavings, arches and arcades. Where he differs from the others is in his description of the Step (See the Historical Workbook Section).

1838

P.B. Bartholoman

P.B. Bartholoman, a dance teacher in Giessen, gives us a warning about dancing the Polonoise; that knowing the step of the dance is not enough. This is because of its character:

...namely: a type of
Grand Seriousness, which its
Character of the highest Court Ton
represents; because of its Sublimness
and Majesty, is also the Dance
which, in today's world,
has become crowned as,
The Dance.

*“...nämlich: le genre
de grand sérieux, welcher in seinem
Character den höchsten Hofton
repräsentirt; wegen seiner Erhabenheit
und Majestät ist auch dieser Tanz
in der heutigen Welt der Tanz
der gekrönten Häupter geworden.”*³⁸⁴

In 1843 a large dance manual was published in the city of Weimar³⁸⁵ (in the former East “Germany”). The author was F. A. Roller. His manual included descriptions of the contemporary forms of two Polish Dances: the Polonez and the Mazur. Here is how Roller describes the Polonez:

The leader takes
his Lady around
with bows,
leading
her to the right and
going before all the
others who wish
of these,
the first Pair
which leads the
way,
with light,
but friendly bows
inviting the others to
to follow
but [they] do
remain in place,
until the lead Pair
went all the
way around and

*“Der Vortanzende fuhr
seine Dame aus dem Kreise
mit einer Berbeugung,
wendet
sich mit ihr rechts und
fuhr sie an allen den
Paaren voruber, welche
von diesem,
dem ersten Paare,
welche die Zuge des
Tanzes leiten,
durch leichte,
ober freundlich Berbeugungen
zur Nachfolge
eingeladen werden,
aber dennoch so
lange stehen bleiben,
bis das einladende Paar
ganz herumgekommen ist
und den Kreis zum*

³⁸³ G. Häcker, *Der selbstlehrende Tanzmeister*, (Chemitz:1835).

³⁸⁴ P. B. Bartholoman, *Die Tanzkunst*, (Giessen: 1838), p.203. Giessen is in Hessen, West Germany.

³⁸⁵ The museum in Weimar houses an enormous collection of Slavic antiquities, all of which were uncovered in the former, so-called, East “Germany.” This area could have been equally justifiably called, “Western Poland”.

[now] can begin.

Zweiten Male beginnt." ³⁸⁶

We see that the leading guests of the affair start off the general dancing. To answer the question as to whether or not the men still carried their hats in the 19th century Ballroom, Roller tells us: that:

This custom,
wherein the Pole
in his National Dress danced,
comes from,
which also the now the
German men do, originates from
[the Poles] holding his hat
in his hand.

*“Von dieser Sitte,
Wo der Pole
in voller Nationaltracht tanzte,
ruhrt der Gebrauch
her dass auch bei den
Deutscher der Herr während
des Tanzes seinen Hut
in der Hand behalt.”* ³⁸⁷

This seems to imply that the holding of the hats while dancing was a conscious Historicism of the 19th century. What holding the hat, which was usually a fur trimmed hat with feathers, allows one to do is to wave it about as one danced and bowed: flourishing it. Further research ³⁸⁸ reveals that this was not uncommon in Europe at this time.

The men, according to Roller, wore spurs ³⁸⁹ and thus the ringing of the spurs gave the old Polonez, that is, the Taniec Polski—its strength. However we know that for the Taniec Polski spurs weren't worn for Social Occasions—the strength of the Dance comes from the Attitude and Dignity of the Dancers and Company. Roller, from his investigations in old northeastern Poland, considered stamping and accents to be characteristic parts of Slavic and Polish dancing.

1887

Bernhard Klemm

Attesting to the popularity of Social Ballroom Dancing in Germany may be the fate of Bernhard Klemm's dance manual ³⁹⁰, which was reprinted eight times, the first in 1855, the last in 1910. He also was published in Saxon-Germany, namely, in Leipzig. He has a short description of the Polonez along with six figures, which are mostly of winding columns, etc.

The above German language manuals from the region closest to Poland show a continuity in their figure-sequences which is not very important, Helmke's kneeling-figure being the exception. However their step descriptions are important and are discussed in greater detail in the Workbook Section.

From a German language dance-card of 1880 the Polonaise is also called “Ballmarsch.” ³⁹¹ This indicates that the dance has a march-like character for Germans. The rising tide of 19th and 20th century Nationalism spread to the area of linguistics. In a 1916 publication of a German language society the term “Polonaise” with “Grussreiger.” This means merely a “Greeting-dance.

³⁸⁶ F.A. Roller, *Systematisches Lehrbuch der bildenden Tanzkunst*, (Weimar: 1843), p. 268.

³⁸⁷ Roller, p. 268.

³⁸⁸ See present author's research on the *Mazur*.

³⁸⁹ Roller, p. 269.

³⁹⁰ Bernhard Klemm, *Handbuch der Tanzkunst*, (Leipzig: 1870).

³⁹¹ See Ch. Fels, *Die deutsche Tanzkarte*, (1888).

. . . but to offer a Lady
a dance a hand
ungloved. . .
that isn't Democracy
Gentleman!-that is Nihilism
of the worst kind.

“ . . . *ale podać damie
do tańca rękę
nie ubrana w rękawiczkę. . .
to już nie demokracja,
panowie-to nihilizm,
w najgorszym gatunku.*”³⁹⁵

Obviously, the notion of a democracy of the lowest values, of popular-political-movements, led to the World Wars of the 20th century, especially of the First World War. The reader is aware that it is not a question of fashion, but rather that one is showing special regard toward the creative function of womanhood, of the femininity of womanhood.

Pan Kłęczewski gives a description of what he calls the “Ceremonjalny,” or “Dwórski” variant of the Walking Dance. This, he wrote, is only a circling march. It is the present author's feeling that this characterization of the Walking Dance in its Court variation was also intended to describe the Polonez of 1879. The author states:

. . . long ago,
when the Polonez
really yet
was a dance,
and not a ceremonial
march-it was danced
with many variations,
of which today
only a weak tradition,
remains.

“ . . . *dawniej jednak,
kiedy polonez
rzeczywistym jeszcze
był tańcem,
a nie ceremonialnym
tylko marszem-tanczonogo
z różlicznymi odmianami,
o których dziś
słabe tylko z tradycji,
pozostało wspomnienie.*”³⁹⁶

After decrying this sad situation, he then only mentions the figure already described, the “Odbijany,” from “Pan Tadeusz.” However, the present work shows that the “Taniec Polski” was not a dance of complicated figures. Its difficulty lies in its Staropolska character. This term “Dwórski,” which reappears in the 20th century, can signify either the “Rococo Polonaise,” or perhaps the Walking Dance, as done only in the Polish Court of the 16th century up through 1700, by which time we have the “Taniec Polski.”

Pan Kłęczewski uses the term “Dwórski” in a derisive sense. It is only a march—boring, and lacking interest. This speculation leads one to infer that the older variant—the Taniec Polski—would have musical characteristics, which made it a livelier dance than the “Dwórski” type. This only confirms our findings that the Taniec Polski is virile in its attitudes and execution.

The remaining possibility mentioned above is that the Polonez of the time (1870-1880), was a rather dull affair. This is most probably the case, and is another example of the phenomena of, “Positive-cultural-value-loss.” As the dance itself spread among all classes, the original character that gave it its taste, its life, was lost in the hands of the general populace. We do not maintain the idea that the following generation lost a way for expressing themselves through dance. In this particular case, the situation is not so bad because these generations worked out the Mazur dance form to new heights.

³⁹⁵ Kłęczewski, *Tańce*..., p. 9.

³⁹⁶ Kłęczewski, *Tańce*..., p. 12.

Hegel notwithstanding, everything which, *is*, is not necessarily good. Having stated that the Polonez form was danced by the urban lower and middle class, this does not say that the Polonez was not on occasion danced with the *Taniec Polski* character by some individual, especially among the rural *Szlachta* of the 19th century.

1888

Karol Mestenhauser

Karol Mestenhauser was the most prolific Polish Dancing Master, whose published works span the most important periods (1878-1900) for the development of figured dances, or general ballroom dancing. He concentrated on figure-sequences. Here are his comments about the Polonez:

Polonez, as the dance,
of the *Szlachta* and Knights,
was characterized by sliding steps,
strong motions and usually danced
slowly and slidingly.

The man leads the woman
with his right hand,
elbow somewhat bent,
at a proper distance,
showing her respect,
as though he is presenting
her to the assembled company;
guiding her not according
rules used in some other dance,
but according to his will,
with an easy dignity and pleasure.

The woman does not here
act like a flirt,
enchanteing the on-lookers;[men];
rather [her] expression is one of
gentle dignity,
and at the head of this sliding
procession of silent[dancers],
whom she leads,
is like an Ideal not of this earth.

The Polonez is in this way
like a developing conversation,
of feeling and pleasure,
among the sexes, inspiring each other.

All this and beautiful music,
the rhythm of marching,
is something to show.

*“Polonez, jako taniec
starszszlachecki i rycerski,
odznaczał się posuwistymi krokami,
zamaszystymi ruchami i zwykle tańczył się
powolnie i posuwicie.*

*Mężczyzna prowadząc kobietę
prawą ręką,
nieco tylko w łokciu zgiętą,
w przyzwoitem oddaleniu,
i uszanowaniem ku niej z dumą wewnętrzną,
zdaje się jakby przedstawi-
ją zgromadzeniu;
kierując nią nie według
przepisów w innych tańcach używanych,
lecz według własnej woli,
łagodzonej powagą i uprzejmością.*

*Kobieta nie ma tu miejsca
do wystawnej ,zalożności,
zachwycających przemian kibici;
wyraża tylko
skromną powagę,
a przy posuwistym
pochodzie na czele milczącego grona,
który za sobą prowadzi,
wyobraża ideał jakowejsz nie ziemskiej istoty.*

*Polonez jest także
polem do rozwinięcia wymowy,
jaką uczucie lub uprzejmość
jednej płci do drugiej natchnąć może.*

*Niemniej też i piękna muzyka,
obok rytmu marszowego,
ma wiele okaza okazałości.*

At one time it was a dance of Knights,
later however,
when women came to take part,
it became not just a march,
but also of love and gallantry.
However with the passage of time
it greatly changed.

*Kiedyś był on tańcem rycerskim,
później jednak,
kiedy płeć niewieścia przyjęła w nim udział,
stał się tańcem nie tylko marsowym,
ale zarazem miłosnym i pełnym galanterii.
Jednakże z postępowaniem czasu
uległ on wielkiemu przekształceniu.*

Presently the Polonez is a dead dance,
Nothing like the old one;
[it is] just a loiteringly moving of
couples and a meaningless tangle,
erasing completely the traces
of this splendid dance.

*Obecnie polonez jest już martwym tańcem,
w niczym niepodobnym do dawniejszego;
beźmyślne łażenie przesuujących się
par i płątanina bez znaczenia,
zatarła zupełnie ślady
tego wspaniałego tańca.*

Today we do not know it well,
how it should be danced – and only
now on the stage can we see,
how it was probably danced.

*Dzisiaj już niewiemy nawet dobrze,
jak go tańczyć należy – i tylko
jeszcze na scenach teatru widzieć możemy,
jak go prawdopodobnie dawniej tańczono.”*³⁹⁷

We see his view clearly: that the Polonez of his time is rather weak. However, he doesn't really do anything to remedy the situation. This lament of the Polonez was common. We can appreciate Mestenhauser's sorrow since he was a dancer at the Great Theater of Warszawa. As a dancer, he would have danced the Polonez in Operas and Ballets in the costume of the Szlachta, using all the old-style gestulations of this Dance. So he was acutely aware of the differences between the stage Dance and the Polonez as danced in the Social Ballroom of his day. But for us the answer is to dance it as it is, or was danced on the Great Stages of Poland. Of course an alternative is to simply assimilate everything that is written about the old form of the Dance in this book!

His description of the basic step is different from that of the beginning of the 18th century and from other Polish manual authors of the 19th century: in fact, it is quite different. (See Part II, in the Historical Section, of the present work for the details.) He does write out six long figure sequences for it.

1897

J.H.

In 1897 someone with the initials J.H. published an short essay-like work entitled, “*Taniec Polski według dawnego zwyczaju*”,³⁹⁸ which is, “The Taniec Polski [Polonez] according to the old Customs.”

The unknown author or authoress makes a point of contrasting the old dance form with the contemporary dances of his time (1890's) or the manner of dancing. His time he characterized as one of Nervousness, Energy, and especially, of a lack of order. This he saw in the dances wherein each couple does not dance in mutual figures but just dance in any and all directions irrespective of what the other couples are doing: bumping into each other, digging elbows, hitting knees, etc. He is complaining about free-form couple dancing-some

³⁹⁷ Karol Mestenhauser, *Szkola tańca w 3-ch częściach: Cz. 2: Tańce kołowe i figurowe*, (Warszawa: 1884), p.175-177.

³⁹⁸ J.H., *Taniec Polski według dawnego zwyczaju*, (Lwów: 1897).

folk dances are like this, such as raucous Waltzing or the Polka. (J.H. does not mention any of these dances.) This complain takes up one page of this work, then follows choreological remarks for six pages with instructions on how to do the dance properly. The actual basic step as described by J.H. is unusual but understandable. (These instructions will be in the Workbook Section or Part II. of this book.)

IN THE 20TH CENTURY

It is fitting that we start the 20th century with the following illustration entitled “Karnawał” by Stanislaw Rejchan.³⁹⁹



³⁹⁹ In a recent English publication this illustration is entitled “Polonaise.” It very well may be or it could be the figure for some other dance. Rejchan was active in the Austria-Hungarian Empire at the turn of the centuries, in particular, in the cities of Lwów and Kraków.

See how happy the people are! The joy of the Dance is most evident on the face of the Ladies. This is what the Social Ballroom Polonez should be and not a dance of gymnastical-figure execution.

At the turn of the century the Ballet theater in Warszawa was in a state of crises. It was one of the largest theaters in Europe with 150 dancers, which the theater could not support. (Most dancers supported themselves by teaching Social Dances.) The situation became so bad that a leading critic was called in to make recommendations. His report of 1901 throws some light on how Polish Dances fared on the Stage at this time.

The critic was Antoni Sygietyński. He stated that all the dancers should know not only the Salon Dances of the day, but that they should also know the styles of such dances as the Polka, Waltz, Quadrille, Mazur and Polonez. Only the Czardasz was properly done, according to Mr. Sygietyński. He was not a dancer but his remarks reveal that the public must have had some definite notion about how these dances were to be done.

Specifically concerning the execution of the Polonez Mr. Sygietyński wrote:

. . . the executions are
terrible, without feeling
the rhythm,
without character.
. . . in the Polonez
they drag the leg
as though [they had]
an attack
of Arteritis.

“ . . . *te wykonywane są
okropnie, bez poczucia
rytmu,
Bez poczucia character.
. . . w polonezie
drygają podkolankiem,
jak gdyby
w napadzie
artretyzmu.*”⁴⁰⁰

The years immediately after the end of WW I were full of whirlwind events for Eastern Europe: in fact, for this part of the world, the war was not over. However people still could pursue cultural activities. From the city of Lwów (which is close to Kraków) we have some details of the dances done by the different social or occupational classes of the city during the period from 1914 to the 1930's. The laboring classes, mostly former peasants, of the city did the Polka, Kujawiak and Oberek-peasant dances. The Intellectuals and Professional people did dances, which they learned as city or International fad-dances. Over time these were the Foxtrot, Tango, English Waltz, Two-Step, Java, Charleston and Lambeth Walk.⁴⁰¹ These were done in local cafes and at Social Balls. At Balls, however:

The Ball begins
with the Polonez and Waltz,
after which , next,
new dances[were done]
changing every.
one or two years

“*Bale zaczynały się
polonezem i walcami,
po których następowały
tańce nowoczesne,
zmieniające się co
rok lub dwa.*”⁴⁰²

⁴⁰⁰ Antoni Sygietyński, *Balet Warszawski na przełomie XIX I XX wieku.* (Kraków: 1971), p. 50.

⁴⁰¹ One other fad-dance that was mentioned at this time was the Shimmy. This dance from America is reputed to be the invention of a Polish-American chorus girl of the Ziegfield Follies. Jan Erdman, *Drogu Do Ostrej Bramy*, (London: 1984), p. 23.

⁴⁰² Marian Tyrowicz, *Wspomnienia o życiu kulturalnym i obyczajowym Lwowa 1918-1939*, (Warszawa: 1991), 196. Somehow the custom arose of choosing a “*Królowa Bal*” or Queen of the Ball. The criteria for this honor was dancing skill-the best dancer was chosen by the Ball participants. Isn't this a far cry from our contemporary custom of Beauty Contests?

This combination of a walking dance followed by a whirling, turning couple dance was and is a general rule for the opening of a Ball in Europe and America in the 19th and 20th centuries. Outside of Poland and Russia the walking dance which is used is the Grand March (a 2/4-tempo walk instead of the 3/4 tempo Polonez). One would have the same partner for both dances.

However, according to Waclaw Lednicki⁴⁰³ who has described the Carnival Seasons of 1911-1913 in great detail, the Polonez did not start the Balls of Kraków or Warszawa! The Waltz did. He mentions Waltz's, Quadrilles, Cotillions, and splendid Mazurs. It could be that he simply forgot to explicitly mention the Polonez—that he took it for granted in Poland. We state this because he did describe it as done by the Poles living in St. Petersburg. All of our other sources do state the existence of the Polonez in Poland at this time.

One such written by an English Professor, who lived for many years in pre-war Poland, noted that among the rural Gentry:

*“All the Poles amuse themselves with music and the national dances...and the national dances are to be seen at every village function, especially the Mazurka and the Krakowiak.”*⁴⁰⁴

During the present century, a number of Polish Dance manuals were published with a description of the Polonez. The descriptions are usually short.

From this one cannot tell very much, except to say that foot dragging was not appreciated. So much for the stage. Let us now turn to Social Ballroom Dancing.

1905

Bolesław Londyński

The Polonez or ‘Polski’
is not a dance,
in the strict sense,
but rather a
triumphal walk
as an introduction
to a party.

*“Polonez czyli ‘Polski’
nie jest tańcem
w scislem znaczeniu
i stanowi niejako
pochód tryumfalny,
wstęp do
właściwej zabawy.”*⁴⁰⁵

So we see that we are back in the 17th century with this description. Both Karol Mestenhauer and Bolesław Londyński described the step as the bend-slide-walk movement of old. He also includes several simple figures.

The dance manuals of the 19th century use the terms “Salonowego,” “salonowe” which literally means, “of the Salon.” This conjures up images of small intimate French parties, which did exist in some circles at the beginning of the 19th century. However, in reality, the conditions of dancing which were done in the latter half of the 19th century are the same as today's—at large halls with many people. So we must translate the term “Salon

In the past Polish context the “*Królowa Bal*” would have to be skillful at not only the Polonez but especially so at the Mazur Dance. Isn't it time to revive this custom?

⁴⁰³ Waclaw Lednicki, *Pamiętniki*, Vol. II, (London: 1967), pp. 58-59.

⁴⁰⁴ A. Boswell, *Poland And The Poles*, (New York: 1919), pp. 113,120. As we know the National Dances include the Polonez.

⁴⁰⁵ Bolesław Londyński, pseud. Mieczysław Rosciszewski, *Tańce Salonowe*, (Warszawa: 1905), p. 42.

Dances” into “General Ballroom Dancing.” What did exist of the Salon in the late 19th and 20th centuries was the cultured atmosphere of the Salon: the emphasis upon respect, taste and good manners. In Poland, up to 1939, the Salon atmosphere was maintained by many of the Gentry and by the intellectual elite of the cities.

In spite of the smash-up of Europe and Russia in 1914-1918 on November 11, 1918 the new Polish Republic was reborn. Thankfully, some of the highly Polish cultural ways remained. This was attested to by the many foreign observers in Poland during these early years of independence:

*“The Polish officer is the politest creature in the world. He salutes the company when he enters a café or a room with a graceful and comprehensive bow; he kisses the hand of his hostess, of every lady with whom he is acquainted, or to whom he is introduced; he presents himself to you, announces his name, salutes, bows, and gives you his hand. He does the same when he leaves the company. His manners are courteous, elegant, refined even to exaggeration, . . . ”*⁴⁰⁶

The reader should keep in mind that this “exaggeration” is not the same as the Baroque forms of behavior of the Staropolska Gentry. This does not involve bowing to the floor, etc. In fact this “Polish Politeness”, this Value, when one thinks about it, is exactly what the World went to War for! Politeness is the manifestation of Human Regard and Respect. One is mistaken to confuse “Berlin-Prussianism” with Polish Politeness.

Notice that this is not a stiff, autocratic, mechanical way of behaving. The above observer points out the “graceful” nature of the bow. He Polish Officer is “courteous”, he is “refined.” (Of course some persons will never learn this way of behaving.) We have not mentioned the behavior of woman very much. They **equally** have their responsibilities in this realm. For they must by their behavior demand this Politeness from the men and reciprocate it. They are to shun men who do not have this Politeness. This is how men and women maintain High Culture.

As stated before in this work knowing how to behave for the Polonez is more than half the Dance. The proper introduction of one’s partner for the Dance, the attitude of the body, the expression of the face, the step-movements, all this, makes the Dance.

The German Empire was also destroyed in the Great War. Silesia (Ślask) was one of the “Alsace-Lorraine” regions of Poland and was inhabited by Poles, Germans and Poles. One of the former German Noble families held a Ball at their estate in Kriebowitz, Silesia. It had an cosmopolitan character since members of the Allied Powers were in attendance. From a diary entry about the costume Ball from 1920:

“Last night the great fancy-dress ball took place. The house was beautifully decorated, fir trees all up the big marble staircase . . . After half an hour the pages toured the room beating a large gong which was the signal to unmask, and the cotillion then began. The partners walked round the room in procession and it was

⁴⁰⁶ J. Roy, *Pole And Czech In Silesia*, (London: 1921), p. 115. Perhaps the most loved example of this exaggerated manner was exemplified by the Cavalary leader Boleslaw Wieniewa-Długoszowski. His way of behavior and manner percolated throughout the entire Polish Officer Corps. The bitter fate of both Poland and himself led him to commit suicide in New York City during WW II.

really a gorgeous sight:..They ended up by making a long chain and tearing all round the house, and one did not know where they were going to appear from next, as the chain continually became longer and longer and more involved and confused.”⁴⁰⁷

From this description we see that this “cotillion” was misnamed—it’s the degenerate form of the Polonez.

Let an officer from the 1920’s describe the Polish Ball of his time and circle for us. It gives us an insight into the social responsibilities (as obligations) as well as opportunities for pleasure of Polish military officers. He is relating the Carnival season of 1920:

Well do I remember the
‘craziness’, which after [daily] duty
befell upon the young
officer, particularly with
arrival of Carnival.
Warszawa embraced then
a whirlwind of Balls after the long
abstinence of the war years.

To [attend] a Ball
it was [absolutely] necessary
for Gentlemen
to [be wearing] evening dress [tails]
as well as white gloves
while dancing.
I readily when to Balls
in civilian dress, in tails.
Always I had prepared,
reserved in the cloakroom,
a white, stiff collar with rouge,
because by three o’clock
in the morning
it was necessary to change [collars].

The most brilliant
of the yearly parties of Carnival
were of those years
the Press Ball [given]
in the Hotel Europejski,
the [charity] Ball of the Red Cross,
at the Kasynie Garnizonowym
by Alley Szucha,
[the Ball given] in the Salon of
the Ministry of Foreign Affairs,
[that of] the Masquerade [Ball]
at the Warszawski Opera,

*“Natomiast dobrze zapamiętałem
‘szaleństwa’, które po służbie
musiały przytrafić się młodemu
oficerowi, zwłaszcza kiedy
nadszedł karnawał.
Warszawę ogarniał wtedy
istny szal balów po dłuższej
abstynencji okresu wojennego.*

*Na balach
obowiązywał
panów
frak
oraz białe rękawiczki
podczas tańca.
Najchętniej szedłem na bal
po cywilnemu, również we fraku.
Zawsze miałem w pogotowiu,
rezerwowany w szatni,
biały, sztywny kołnierzyk z różkami,
bo już około trzeciej
nad ranem
trzeba go było wymienić.*

*Do najwspanialszych
corocznych zabaw karnawałowych
zaliczał się w owych latach
bal prasy
w Hotelu Europejskim,
bale na dochód Czerwonego Krzyża,
w Kasynie Garnizonowym
przy Alei Szucha,
w salonach
Ministerstwa Spraw Zagranicznych,
maskarada w
salach Opery Warszawskiej,*

⁴⁰⁷ Evelyn Blücher, *Memoirs Of Prince Blücher*, (London: 1932), pp. 289-290.

and the ingenious Ball of the School Of Fine Arts held at Wybrzeżu Kościuszkowski. Students of that school with unusual ingeniousness arranged the hall with decorations in a manner most fancifully . . .

The Balls began with the customary Polonez with the first pair, in the lead, of Honored guests.

Rarely for a young Officer was it sufficient to spend an evening and night at one place. Often I wandered from one party to another, so that I could experience the expressions of different social circles, [their] feeling and climate. When I had chosen a partner, whom I liked and danced well, then I did not leave the Ball, [I] assisted her to the end of the party, which finished with the Biały Mazur at the hour of five or six in the morning.

The choice of a [female] partner was very emotional. Young persons of the fairer sex always came to the Ball with their Mothers, these formed a pretty wreath along the walls and [the Mothers] nervously observed, whether or not, their offspring had success.

The custom was that, each Ball was directed always by a leader, upon whose left shoulder of his dress [jacket] was pinned a long, colorful ribbons signifying to his ruling position [responsibilities]. He directed, in particular, the dance figures, he was also responsible for preparing

no i bardzo pomyslowe bale w Szkole Sztuk Pięknych na Wybrzeżu Kościuszkowskim. Studenci tej szkoły z wyjątkową pomyslowością urządzali sale zabaw przyozdobione w sposób najbardziej wyszukany . . .

Bale rozpoczynały się zazwyczaj polonezem i w pierwszych parach rej wiedli najznakomitsi goście.

Rzadko kiedy młodemu oficerowi wystarczyło spędzenie tego wieczoru i nocy w jednym miejscu. Najczęściej wędrowałem z jednej zabawy na drugą, ażeby doznać jak największych wrażeń w różnym towarzystwie, nastroju i klimacie. Kiedy jednak dobrałem sobie partnerkę, która spodobała mi się i dobrze tańczyła, wówczas nie opuszczałem już balu, asystując jej do końca zabawy, którą kończył biały mazur o godzinie piątej lub szóstej rano.

Wybór partnerki dostarczał zawsze dużych emocji. Młode osoby płci pięknej zawsze przychodziły na bale z mamusiami, które tworzyły piękny wianuszek pod ścianą i z treścią obserwowały, czy aby ich pociechy mają powodzenie.

Zwyczaj nakazywał, by każdy bal prowadził zawsze wodzirej, który na lewym ramieniu fraka nosił przypięte długie, barwne wstążki świadczące o piastowaniu tej wysokiej godności. Prowadził on zwłaszcza tańce figurowe, był również odpowiedzialny za przygotowanie

different attractions, which formed
a nice atmosphere.
He was careful,
that the Young Women
sitting along the wall
with their Mothers,
who were not having
too much success,
were at least, from time to time,
went to dance.
Besides this a large role was
had by the sponsors of the Ball. . .
They wore on the lapels
of their dress [tails]
large colorful roses.
They also watched over
the running of the party.

Upon entering the Ball —
the Ladies received a dance-card,
in which, later was written
by the Gentlemen, particular requests
for a Dance . . .

Besides Balls held
in public, there were organized
also [Balls] given in wealthy
private homes.

*różnych atrakcji, tworzenie
miłego nastroju.
Dbał,
żeby panienki
siedzące pod ścianą
z mamusiami,
a nie mające
zbytniego powodzenia,
też przynajmniej od czasu do czasu
poszły w pląsy.
Poza tym dużą rolę do spełnienia
mieli gospodarze balu. . .
Wyróżniały ich noszone w klapach
fraków
duże barwne rozety.
Oni również czuwali nad
przebiegiem zabawy.*

*Przy wejściu na bal —
panie otrzymywały karneciki,
do których wpisywali się później
panowie zamawiający poszczególne
tańce . . .*

*Prócz balów w lokalach
publicznych, organizowano je
również w zamożnych
domach prywatnych.”⁴⁰⁸*

We reproduce here a photograph from H. Comte's book which illustrates some of the features of the Polonez. It is probably for the 1924/25 season. Once again the man, M. Rataj, leader of the Polish Parliament, is holding the woman's left hand with his left hand. Notice the ribbons on the leader's shoulder.

⁴⁰⁸ Henryk Comte, *Zwierzenia adiutanta W Belwederze i na Zamku*, (Warszawa: 1976), pp. 55-57. We also learn from this book that Polish Officers were not allowed to dance in uniform in public nightclubs or dancehalls, that is to say, in places of low reputation.



Again we see that the Winter Carnival Season in Poland was one lovely Social Season. People knew how to enjoy themselves in an atmosphere of High Culture. They were a more active people than we are now.

Wacław Lednicki gives a revealing description of the Social Life of the early 20th century.⁴⁰⁹ He was interested in the Social Ways of the upper classes of Poland and Russia, where he lived, and noted the differences. He was a very social person who enjoyed dancing. He has left us a lengthy description of the Mazur—a shorter one of the Polonez. Let us turn to that Polonez now.

After my stay in Kraków the Polish Balls in Moscow did not tempt me much. I was by then a snob—a Krakowian snob, not a St. Petersburg snob. But now, when I think back of those Balls, I am very much moved. There, as in all Polish society, one could see [or experience] *Pan Tadeusz* with its basic stable hierarchy, that same order of sliding in the Polonez, that same modest Dignity and authority of the first couple leading the chaines of the Polonez, the temperate joy of the last couple, wherein the young patiently were waiting for the less ceremonial, more active dances.

Invariably my mother opened the Balls, dancing in the first couple—at the Charity Ball for the orphanage always with Pan Wroblewski. And she was so attractive, as she moved slowly, smiling graceful in full respect for the man, who now had every opportunity to do all sorts ceremonial expressions, doing Bows to her at each turning in the walking of the Polonez. They were followed by . . . -and pairs of couples of such dear people, honest and feeling, caring people who in their many, many years have been giving their best will, their most valuable energy to those nearest to them, for the cause of Polish community, giving to matters which helped to adorn lives. And these lives, however modest, and sometimes even drab, have not been common lives, because each of them have the sparkle given to them by [their exercise] of Virtue and Tradition.

⁴⁰⁹ Wacław Lednicki, *Pamiętniki*, pp. 287-288.

Every year these Polonezes moved on, always toward the same aim. Then there came a time, when this procession of noble-minded and good people stopped. Those couples, those servants for the common good-vanished, leaving traces [of their goodness] only in the hearts of those still living, for whom they stand Dear and who know and remember their quiet, but great service.

We can see what the Polonez, a Dance, can or has become. Everything is involved here: Humanity, Charity, Love and Family.

A Polish book of Etiquette ⁴¹⁰ from 1926 reminds us of the social function of the Polonez:

The Quadrille on the otherhand has a privileged place as a dance of conversation, and even the Polonez places on the man the responsibility to entertain his Lady with gay conversation.

“Kadryl uważany jest natomaist jako uprzywilejowany taniec konwersacyjny, a polonez nakłada nawet na dansera obowiązek zabawiana swej damy wesolą rozmową.” ⁴¹¹

Of course for persons who do not dance the Polonez well, conversation while moving, can be one of its other pleasures.

From the same decade we have an observation of a fifteen year old Polish high school student describing his school days:

I do not remember a single class,... But director Ostromęcki was noted in my memory in that moment, when at a school party he led the Polonez. At the time I thought, that he danced [it] splendidly and in the Staropolska manner, but there came a time, when I came to know, that the director was making only exaggerations even contortions, to which the real Polonez has little in common.

“Nie pamiętam żadnej lekcji,... A dyrektora Ostromęckiego zanotowała moja pamięć jedynie w jednym momencie, gdy na zabawie szkolnej prowadził poloneza. Wówczas zresztą wydawało mi się, że tańczył świetnie i po staropolsku, ale przyszedł czas, kiedy wiedziałem, że dyrektor robił tylko szarmanckie wprawdzie wygibasy, ale z prawdziwym polonezem niewiele mające wspólnego.” ⁴¹²

This may just be a case of a school boy's dislike of an adult. We do not know to what form of the Polonez he compared the director's dancing. He may have seen the Polonez as done by Opera stage dancers. Probably he compared it with the Social Ballroom form of the 1920s and 1930s which was and is a much calmer Dance. Certainly the times and taste had changed. Of course he may have been correct: that the director did contort the Dance.

⁴¹⁰ A survey of Etiquette books published in Poland from 1822 to 1929 only has mentioned the Polonez once. The dances most often mentioned are the Waltz, Cotillon, Quadrille, Contradance, Polka, Mazur, Oberek, Kujawiak and Tango. Most of these books are translations of Western European manuals. Besides the books were not about dance but behavior.

⁴¹¹ Alfons Kościelecki, *Sztuka życia*, (Łwów: 1926), p. 139.

⁴¹² Wiesław Mirecki, *Malowane dzieci*, (Warszawa: 1986), p. 126.

With the smash-up of the Russian Empire surviving members of the Imperial Romanov family were scattered throughout the world. One of these, who was a Princess of Great Britain as well, known as “Ducky” to her friends. She and her husband led the émigré Court in Paris during the 1920s and 1930s:

*“For her friends Ducky would demonstrate the steps of the polonaise as it had been danced in the Winter Palace.”*⁴¹³

We see by this how much the Dance was identified with Russian high culture. It is a shame that at this time that the French did not adopt this splendid Dance.

The interwar period was one of a clash of dance cultures. From Poland one eyewitness wrote:

*“Modern western dances are not culture, or at least so it appears to the eye; but the old Polish dances are. The stately Polonaise, the dashing Mazurka,..., these are all Polish and, I believe they are truly culture. Such surely is the march-like Polonaise. Modern dances are replacing them, more is the pity: yet only last night I saw the mazurka danced by young people with excited dash and enthusiasm.”*⁴¹⁴

As the world knows, in 1933 the National Socialist Party of Germany began the first national experiment to reintegrate “modern” alienated man with his natural earth environment. This is the very often forgotten “ideology” of the so-called, “Fascist” political movement.

The violence and war of the Nazi period soon got in the way of this attempt to reintegrate man and his natural earth environment.

One facet of National Socialist sponsored Culture was to reinvigorate Urban Man by putting him into closer contact with the German peasant class—their culture, their Earth-Rooted Life. This was not a heavily funded program. This program could not be done in Wartime. But the tendencies and ideas are the same as those of contemporary thinkers concerned with the problems of modern life.

Folk dances had a function to perform in the “new” National Socialist Culture. It was a way of reasserting our continuity and being with the earth and the past. It was also a healthier and more natural way of self-expression that could be achieved by urban “African-Jazz-Swing” dance (which are essentially lascivious in their movements).

In this “revival” of Germanic folk dances, the Polish Polonaise had its place: obviously unknown to the Nazi authorities:

*“Other innovations included programmes stringing together purely German items of ballroom dancing; one such programme included the following: a polonaise as a greeting dance.”*⁴¹⁵

⁴¹³ J. Curtis, *The Flight Of The Romanovs*, (London: 1999), p. 308.

⁴¹⁴ Paul Super, *Elements Of Polish Culture...*, p.29.

⁴¹⁵ Richard Grunberger, *The 12-Year Reich* (New York: 1971), p. 419. However as the reader now knows the Polonaise entered Germany via Saxony in the 18th century thus the eastern Germanies could assimilate the dance to themselves. Perhaps it wasn't obvious to the Nazis. We recall that a variant of the Polonaise the “Torch Dance” had a long history in Germany. This was identified as a German Dance.

Among the various contenting political parties and social classes in inter-war Germany were the “Royalists.” These were people who were still loyal to the Noble families of Germany, in particular, to the Hohenzollerns heirs. Their hope was that the extreme political parties in Germany would be destroyed and that the Hohenzollerns would be restored to rule Germany.

While the Kaiser abdicated and lived Holland members of his family lived in Germany. This circle of people still retained the social customs of the deposed Monarchy. Among the rich, among the upper Civil Servants, and the Royalists there still was a Social Season.

Martha Dodd, the daughter of the American Ambassador to Germany, attended the Ball which opened the Social Season of 1933:

*“I was invited to the palace of his parents in Potsdam for their annual balls, their birthday parties and family celebrations. I was as thrilled as a school girl when he opened one formal ball at his parents’ palace by choosing me- . . . ”*⁴¹⁶

What was this “opening dance”? We can infer that this probably was the Polonez.

The 20th century was the beginning of the modern physical education programs of public education. In Poland, this could only be thought about during the period from 1919-1939, when the Physical Schools of Education used dance manuals that were first printed in 1937. Both went through several printings (as also did the manuals of the 19th century), and were reprinted also after WWII for social dance purposes. In these manuals the Mazur received precedence over the Polonez. Private dance teachers still published dance manuals also.

1937

Czesław Kwiatkowski

. . . and were
here and there
it is yet danced,
besides the melody
there is little
in common with
the old Polonez.

*“ . . . a jeżeli
gdzieniegdzie
tańczą go jeszcze
to prócz melodii
mało w nim
podobieństwa
do dawnego poloneza.”*⁴¹⁷

Of course, dance masters were always thinking of the “Taniec Polski” and bemoaned its fate. Simply reading the passage above would lead one to think that the Polonez was not danced at all during the 20th century. That is an absolute error, as the reader will recall, from the previous passages about the dance. It was done in the present century. (It is still done.) Personal interviews conducted by the present author show that the Polonez was done with the same character as that of the latter 19th century Polonez: primarily as an opening dance to a “dress-up” ball or party. In this context it was done by the lower, middle and upper classes of

⁴¹⁶ Martha Dodd, *Through Embassy Eyes*, (New York: 1939), p.70. The “he” referres to Louis Fredinand Hohenzollern.

⁴¹⁷ Czesław Kwiatkowski, *Szkola Tańców Polskich* (Warszawa: 1937), p. 10.

the cities. Of course, the peasants of 20th century Poland did their own Chodzony. They were the “masses” who, numbed by the sense of loss of identity and with little sense of aesthetic form or values, were constantly in search of novelty to give them solace—some of which were the political mass means of entertainments. They, and modern civilization, gave up their human potential self-entertainment into the hands of professionals in the media, thus self-participation in activities decreased. This has increased alarmingly in contemporary times.

1938

Zofia Kwaśnicowa ⁴¹⁸

The above date marks the first work, which pointed out, specifically, the different styles of the Polish Walking Dance. The authoress was the head of the program of Polish Dance at the Warszawa College of Physical Education before and after World War II. With her work it may be said that a new tradition of Polish dancing arose. It was, and is, the aim of the Physical Education Departments to maintain Polish folk dances among young people in Poland. This has largely failed, due primarily to the lack of financial and intelligent support. The physical educational approach has produced a type of dancing which is used by amateur stage groups, that is, a mixture of stylized “authentic” dancing, and the pretensions of “professionalism,” which has little in common with the professed aim of training people to spread Polish dances among the general population.

Few of the people connected with the Physical Educational Departments had done any serious academic work in the field of researching Polish Dance. They are uncritical and unthinking in their approach, ultimately depending upon stage forms and teaching these.

Zofia Kwaśnicowa divides the Polish Walking Dance into three main types. We have made correspondences between them with the forms contained in the present Work.

Kwaśnicowa

Polonez ludowy or Korowody	Chodzony
Polonez “Dwórski”	Taniec Polski
Polonez towarzyski	Polonez

The Korowody is a simple marching in 3/4 time in the most simple figures. The “Dwórski,” recalling Arkadiusz Klęczewski’s use of this term, is marked by its bending-sliding step, elegant couple position holding upraised hands side by side, with the male constantly attending upon his partner, and bow. As for the “Towarzyski” form, which means merely the “social form” of the dance, it is devoid of the Dwórski character, but uses more figures.

Leaving the manuals we turn to the last days of peace. Maria Ginter, a Polish equestrianess of some fame before the War, has left us a description of a Ball given for her when she was just seventeen years old. It was held in the country in the summer of 1939. We include enough of her remarks to sense the atmosphere of the Ball:

Because the traditional Ball
of my nameday was to take place

*“Ponieważ tradycyjny już bal
na moje imieniny miał się odbyć*

⁴¹⁸ Zofia Kwaśnicowa, *Zbiór Płasów*, Vol. II, (Warszawa: 1938), pp. 219-227.

in a couple of days, many guests from far away came to us directly from Kutna.
 Our home was all excitement, . . .
 We needed another cook.
 We needed to hire an orchestra.
 To prepare a new dress.
 The young helped with the decorations.
 We prepared a hundred [Chinese] lanterns, which the gardner with helpers were to light at midnight.
 The tennis court, wherein which was to be done the figured Waltz, was dressed with girlrands and lit with hidden reflector lights . . .
 The Orchestra in the Salon sounded its instruments.
 Servants ran from the kitchen to the dining room, setting the table.
 The cooks furiously do their work,
 Helpers are turning the ice and whipping the cream.
 Father is repareing the cork [flooring], which with apparent malice always becomes undone at inconvient times.
 The guests meanwhile are dressing in tails and Ball gowns, ringing bells for the servants.
 They run from room to room, not knowing for whom first[to help] to press or sew.
 Finally, the sound of the gong, with which the Leader begins the Ball, all go to the Salon.
 The dance opens with the Polonez. . .
 After the cotillon, without any doubts I gave to Andrew, the figured Waltz done on the court with the lights.
 The Leader returned us to the Salon [by] winding throughout the park between rows of colored lanterns.
 The party lasted to the morning.
 The last dance was the Biały Mazur and [then it was] farewell.

*za parę dni, sporo gości z dalszych okolic przyjechało do nas prosto z Kutna.
 Zawrzało w domu jak w ulu, . . .
 A to drugiego kucharza zamówić.
 A to wynająć orkiestrę.
 Obstalować nowe suknie.
 Młodzież pomagała przy dekoracjach.
 Przygotowaliśmy setkę lampionów, które ogrodnik z pomocnikami mieli zapalić o północy.
 Kort tenisowy, na którym odbędzie się walc figurowy, ubrano girlandami i oświetlono ukrytymi w krzewach reflektorami . . .
 Orkiestra w salonie stroi instrumenty.
 Lokaje biegają od kuchni do jadalnego, zastawiając stoły.
 Kucharze na gwałt coś wykańczają, a pomocnice kręcą lody i biją śmietaną.
 Tatuś reperuje korki, które ze złośliwością przedmiotów martych zawsze nawalają w najmniej odpowiednich chwilach.
 Goście tymczasem przebijają się we fraki i suknie balowe, urywając dzwonki na służbę.
 Pokój wki biegają od pokoju do pokoju, nie wiedząc komu napierw coś odprasować czy przyszyć.
 I wreszcie na dźwięk gongu, którym wodzirej oznajmia rozpocz cie balu, wszyscy schodzą do salonu.
 Tańce otwiera polonez...
 Po kotylionie, który bez wahania dałam Andrzejowi, był walc figurowy na korce i puszczanie sztucznych ogni.
 Powrót do salonu wodzirej poprowadził węzem po parku między szpalerem kolorowych lampionów.
 Zabawa trwała do rana.
 Ostatni taniec biały mazur i pożegnania. ”⁴¹⁹*

Within days the War began and a number of her partners were dead.

⁴¹⁹ Maria Ginter, *Galopem Na Przełaj*, (Warszawa: 1983), p. 54-55.

In the last summer before the beginning of WW II hopes were high for peace. These hopes were based upon the newly signed treaties between Poland, England and France. At last there would be a united front against Germany (but at Poland's expense):

*“Paris in July was the scene of two glittering occasions which outwardly demonstrated the unity of France and her two allies, Britain and Poland. On July 4th the Polish Ambassador gave a ball, during which in the early hours of the morning he and members of his staff danced a barefoot polonaise on the Embassy lawn. It was not altogether a happy occasion and there were some present who were able to see in it melancholy portents of what was to come. ‘It was a beautiful summer night. In the gardens of the Embassy the white marble sphinxes gleamed beneath the stars, an orchestra was playing Chopin waltzes and pots of red fire threw on the scene the glow of a conflagration. On the lawn beautiful women in crinolines (among them the two lovely daughters of the German Ambassador) were dancing with Polish and French officers. We all thought that the war was near, that Poland would be the first to be attacked and that this ball resembled the one given (for) Wellington in Brussels on the eve of Waterloo.’ ”*⁴²⁰

In 1944 fifty years of Communist Rule began in Poland.⁴²¹ Under Communist Rule the dances and culture of the industrial proletariat and peasant peoples were officially exalted and the culture and customs of the Szlachta-Gentry denigrated, condemned and not encouraged. However, one of the heaviest blows to the continuance of this National Polish Culture, was the massive depopulation of the Eastern territories of the Polish population. This was done by the various allies⁴²² of Nazi-Germany while the War was being fought and even after the War was over. The most common means was savage terror and murder. Basically somewhere between 1,500,000-2,000,000 Poles were eliminated from the Eastern lands. Many of those Poles who were not murdered fled the Eastern lands. *“Their flight ended five hundred years of continuous Polish settlement of these lands, and brought to post-war Poland a million first- or second-hand personal memories of atrocities committed in the name of Ukraine.”*⁴²³ The loss of Vilna and Lwów, which were centers of a mixed Eastern-

⁴²⁰ The original quotation is by Andre Maurois contained here in Nicholas Fleming's, *August 1939*, (London: 1979, p. 60-61. However in the English translation of Andre Maurois', *Why France Fell*, the Polonaise is not mentioned. For an interesting anecdote about dancing, Poles, Paris, diplomacy and politics see the Polish Review, Vol. XXX, No. 3, p. 251, footnote 63.

⁴²¹ One result of this rule was a civil war in Poland which lasted from 1939 to 1948. This led to the deaths of 40,000 National, non-Communist Poles. So Poland's part in WWII started in 1939 and only 'ended' in 1948.

⁴²² The allies of Nazi-Germany who carried out anti-Polish acts were the Lithuanians, Belo-Russians, and Ukrainians. The anti-Polish allies of the Russians were the Lithuanians, Belo-Russians, Ukrainians, and Jews. See Taduesz Piotrowski, *Poland's Holocaust*, (Jefferson, North Carolina: 1998). Actually the Partitioning Powers began the conscious de-Polonization of all of Poland in the late 18th century. As punishment for National Revolts during the 19th century over 800 large estates and working farms were confiscated between 1773-1867! The most extreme was Russia. At Katyn the Soviet Russians murdered alone 4000 owners of estates in Eastern Poland in 1940. See Maciej Ruzinski, *Dziedzictwo, Ziemiańscy polscy i udział ich w życiu narodu*, (Kraków: 1995), pp. 259,260.

⁴²³ Jan-Werner Müller, *Memory and Power in Post-War Europe*, (Cambridge: 2002), p. 43.

Polish Culture and Consciousness, was extensive.⁴²⁴ The extent of this loss may be gauged by the loss of Vilna, which only had a Lithuanian population of 2% in 1917!⁴²⁵

The result of all this bloody murder in Eastern Poland was the concomitant decline of the Polonez Dance [and Mazur] since among these 1,500,000-2,000,000 people the caste of the Gentry were the natural users, supporters and “objectifiers” of this dance—they had a consciousness about these Dances and they did them.

The re-settlement of the German population of Poland, which was done under the auspices of the Allied Governments after the War, was also a human tragedy. However there the similarity with the Polish de-population ends.⁴²⁶ Not only was the means different but also the effect on the dance culture was different. In the German case no dances were lost (they are part of the repertoire of Polish Folk Dance Groups today), in particular, there was not the wholesale “lost” of one of Polish-Europe’s most beautiful dances—the Polonez (and Mazur) from real life in the Eastern borderlands.

After World War II, scientific methods of dance research in the fields of folk dance led to the publication of numerous works on folk dances. As for the traditional National Dances of Poland, only two works were published which had the character of social dance manuals, which mentioned the Polonez. One was a reprint (4th edition) of the manual mentioned previously. The second is a reprint (originally published in 1937), again for the purposes of the physical education program at the University of Poznań.

A new manual appeared in 1972 by one of Poland’s most famous stage choreographers, Jadwiga Hryniewicka. The Second World War brought great damage to Poland, one example of which was the loss of the Polonez in ordinary Social Life.

Now⁴²⁷ in Poland, the Polonez is “done” very infrequently and when done, poorly executed. It is done once a year for each secondary school graduation. The students do not receive any detailed lessons in the Polonez. It functions as a grand march to begin the festivity. This is primarily due to the lack of dance schools and the feeling of inferiority, which modern Poles have for their culture. There is a national association for the training of Social dance teachers, which gives a perfunctory course in the Polonez. However, it is very weak.

Outside of Poland in Polish émigré circles, it is quite a different story. On all special occasions and Grand Balls the Polonez is done, usually by a stage group or by the guests: again, rather poorly. This is due to the fact that the people actively engaged in the retention of Polish dances do so only in the context of stage performances for the consumption and applause of the public.

In post-war Austria, and by Austrians resident in other countries, a type of “Polonaise” is very much alive. It is done as the opening or first dance for their annual “Viennese Balls.” (In Vienna alone, as of the year 2002, there were over 300 Balls.) One of the most popular Balls is that given by the Vienna State Opera.

⁴²⁴ Anywhere from 300,000 to 400,000 murders were done by some Ukrainian Nationalists. See M. Terles, *Ethnic Cleaning Of Poles In Volhynia And Eastern Galicia, 1942-1946*, (Toronto: 1993). The number of murdered persons of the Polish “elite” from this part of Poland is known to be 21,857. This was done by the Soviet NKVD. See Anna Cienciala, “The Polish Government’s Policy on the Polish-Soviet Frontier in World War II as Viewed by American, British and Canadian Historians,” *The Polish Review*, 2001, #1, p. 8.

⁴²⁵ A. Srebrabowski, *Sejm Wileński 1922 Roku*, (Wrocław: 1993), p. 12. An incidental fact: in 1922/23 there were 6 dance teachers listed in the Vilna telephone book.

⁴²⁶ There were several waves of Polish de-population: 1939-1941, done under the German-Soviet agreement, the aforementioned murderings of Poles by Ukrainians, especially 1942-1945, then expulsions done by the Soviets and Polish Communists, 1944-1947. See F. Ozarowski, *Wolyn Aflame*, (Chicago: 1997).

⁴²⁷ This also includes the present 21st century.

Is this opening dance actually a Polonaise? The answer to that is plainly evident as there are video pictures on the Internet.⁴²⁸ The Vienna Philharmonic Ball of 2003 shows enough of their opening dance called by them “Cotillion Polonaise”. It consists of couple figure-actions done in a square formation. This included the taking of different hand holds, slow running steps and balancing—nothing of the Polonaise—not a single Basic Step—and all of this done to the Flik-Flack Polka! I do not know if this the general practice in today’s Vienna. By not actually doing the real Polonaise Vienna is losing the opportunity to Beautify their affairs.

Here the debutantes and their escorts go through the opening Polonaise which they have rehearsed. For Austrians living outside of Austria Balls are given with the cooperation of the Austria Embassy. The Dance is done with a set choreography by selected guests who have been previously rehearsed. So it is a performance.

A recent instant of the Polonez done outside of Poland by non-Poles occurred in St. Petersburg itself—Imperial Russian History rising from its ashes—when on New Year’s Eve, 1992, a Ball was held at the Yusupov Palace:

*“Playing period parts, actors conjured up the Romanov era for an audience of wealthy foreigners by parading to a polonaise . . .”*⁴²⁹

Another, but less savory instance took place in Latvia in 1993. The occasion was the Press Ball held in Riga. This is the highlight of Riga’s social life.

*“It would be hard to call this a pretty sight. To the strains of a pompous polonaise, independent Latvia’s new elite’s paraded around the former Communist Party’s congress hall, shiny suits on their backs and in many cases, almost equally shiny new wives and girl friends on their arms. Almost without exception the politicians were Latvians, and the leading intellectuals and cultural figures likewise; but the businessmen, many looking as if they had just climbed out of their tracksuits and knuckledusters, were overwhelmingly Russian and Russian-Jewish.”*⁴³⁰

We see that the Polonez was “used” in order to give Dignity and Respect to the participants.

In New York City the Russian Community gives an annual charity “Petrushka Ball.” But it has other purposes as well. Here is a description of their 1999 Ball:

“The ball is one of the major social events that both preserves and strengthens the Russian the Russian cultural identity . . . The dancing officially began as over 510 dancing and dinner guests were invited to join in the traditional opening dance – the Polonaise. The couples slid across the dance floor to the glorious sounds of Tchaikovsky, choreographed by Leonid Kozlov . . . Each year the ball’s organizers find new ways to evoke the tradition and atmosphere of the magnificent balls of pre-Revolutionary Russia. Along with creating a connection between generations and

⁴²⁸ See <http://www.vienneseball.org/video.htm>. This is available for 2004.

⁴²⁹ Steve Raymer, “St. Petersburg, Capital Of The Tsars,” *National Geographic*, Vol. 184, December, 1993, p.106.

⁴³⁰ Anatol Lieven, *The Baltic Revolution*, (New Haven: 1993), p. xxviii.

*reviving traditions, the ball preserves the spirit of generosity in helping the less fortunate.”*⁴³¹

The 52th meeting of Nobel Laureates in 2002 included a social Polonaise which is a type of folk-Polonaise.⁴³² How long this has been part of the Nobel Laureates program is not known to the present author. It is a weak variant of the Polonez.

In Poland, at the New Year's and Millennium celebrations for the year 2000, the Polonez was danced.

Thus in summary we may say that the predominate form of the Polish Walking Dance from, say, 1830 up to the present, is the Polonez—a large group social dance, with an emphasis on figure-sequences, used only to open special affairs. It is not as strong in expressive power as the *Taniec Polski*: when done at its best, it uses many figures and is elegantly done: at its worst, just a clumsy marching around the room. In any case, because of its Simplicity and the easy entrance the Polonez provides to the realm of Aesthetic-Pleasure-Participation it is the **Best Dance** for all people, in all times, to dance together, in all Social Gatherings.

⁴³¹ *RCWS NEWS*, Vol. 4, No. 3, p. 2,3.

⁴³² *Lindau 2002*, p. 5.

IN THE RUSSIAN EMPIRE

The Polonez has almost as long a History in the Russian Empire as it had in the Polish Commonwealth. However, this is unknown to most people as is knowledge of Russia in general. Therefore we have made this a separate chapter. Generally speaking, some Polish Cultural practices entered Russia toward the end of the 16th century.

What distinguishes the Russian's use of this dance was the association with the seemingly fabulous wealth and power of the Russian Tsar's Court and his Nobility⁴³³ and the political and cultural symbolism made of the dance—in addition to its pure Beauty.

The need to mention the Russian adoption of the Polonez (as well as of the Mazur Dance) is that Russia actually helped to spread these dances to the world via its apparent preponderant political power from 1800 to 1914. Even afterwards in exile, the Russians danced the Polish Polonez and Mazur(ka). Non-Poles often thought that these were native Russian Dances.

Recall that the Tsar and Russian officials often danced the Polonez in Poland, before the times of the partitions and afterwards.

Let us turn to citations⁴³⁴ from Russian Sources from outside of the borders of the Polish Commonwealth.

From the reign of Peter the Great we cite from a foreigner's diary a description of Moscovite customs from 1722.

*“ . . . the host, hostess, or one of the household opens the dancing after which one or two couples may dance the minuet, the ‘anglaise,’ or the ‘polonaise.’ ”*⁴³⁵

And another from the very same year:

*“The gaiety of the Court reached perhaps its height at Moscow during the autumn of 1722, when Peter himself was absent on the Persian campaign, when there was less danger of being compelled to drink too much, and people could give themselves up to dancing and other amusements...The merry Duchess of Mecklenburg (**die wilde Herzogin**), who had*

⁴³³ As has been pointed out by others the Polonaise among the Russians came to represent loyalty to Tsarism and Russian Imperialism. See Francis Maes', *A History of Russian Music*, (Berkeley: 2002), pp. 78-79.

⁴³⁴ Russian dates prior to 1918 are 13 days behind those of Western Europe.

⁴³⁵ Martha Blinoff, *Life and...*, p. 54. We even read of Peter I of Russia that, *“He acquired a taste, during the stay he made at different times in Poland, for the music of that country, particularly for a large kind of bagpipe, of a very loud and harsh sound. . . and was so attached to this kind of music, that he held the Italian in little estimation, nay banished it from his court, as well as the French, for which he had a real aversion.”* Staehlin, ed., *Original Anecdotes Of Peter The Great*, (London: 1788), p.321.

*recently arrived from Germany, was devoted to dancing, although she appeared badly in a minuet and preferred the **polsky**.*" ⁴³⁶

Again a confirmation of the simple nature or easy accessibility of the Polski compared with the Minuet.

On August 12, 1745, Catherine the Great, the immoral and amoral Germanic ruler of Slavic Russia, was married to Peter II. According to one account, the celebration was climaxed with a ball, which consisted solely of the Taniec Polski, [Polonaise] which were done all evening.

"At last the crown was taken off until all was ready for the ball; then it was put on again. At this ball only Polonaises were danced and it lasted altogether not more than an hour." ⁴³⁷

But there is some dispute about this since another source identifies this dance with the Quadrille.

"The young couple, however, were not enjoying themselves. The endless quadrilles bored them . . ." ⁴³⁸

However, from what Sachs states, *"thus the quadrille of twelve couples in which Catherine II of Russia danced at St. Petersburg in 1741, appears to be closely related to ours."* ⁴³⁹

Most probably, at least an opening Taniec Polski or Polonaise was done, which was then followed by Quadrilles. Later on in life, as a Grandmother, Catherine guided her grandchildren in the learning on the Polonaise. ⁴⁴⁰

In 1757 the French traveler, Messliere, noted that at the Court of Saint Petersburg the dances done were the Minuet, English and the Polonaise: with several Polonaises being done at a Ball. ⁴⁴¹

An English couple, the Harrises, travelling in Russia in 1778 attended the performance of a play in the home of the Vorontson family. After the play they attended a Masquerade Ball which was a public Ball. Katherine Harris described it:

"A tolerable appearance of company, many pretty Women. Round polonaise without end. I danced a few dances a quadrille and came away at half past Eleven." ⁴⁴²

Russian life had two centers around which cultural-life revolved: Saint Petersburg and on the numerous County Estates throughout the Russian Empire. Here is a one description from 1791.

"On St Elizabeth's day I went in to the country, to a small entertainment given by Count Ostermann, who is the Chief Minister here, since Prince Potemkin is away with the army. There I danced some polonaises, that is, I promenaded with a lady who invited me through

⁴³⁶ E. Schuyler, *Peter The Great*, Vol. II, (New York: 1884), p.445.

⁴³⁷ *Memoirs Of Catherine The Great*, (New York: 1935), p.70.

⁴³⁸ Zoe's Oldenburg, *Catherine the Great* (New York: 1965). As the author points out, they were bored because of the partners, which were chosen for them to dance with.

⁴³⁹ Sachs, *Worlds...*, p. 426.

⁴⁴⁰ From the eyewitness account of G. Reinbeck, *Travels From St. Petersburg*, (1805) translated from German to English and published in London in 1807.

⁴⁴¹ M.de la Messeliere, *Voyage A Petersbourg*, (Paris: 1803), p. 123.

⁴⁴² Anthony Cross, *By The Banks Of The Neva*, (Cambridge: 1997), p. 372.

*all the rooms of the house, holding her first by the right hand, then by the left. English dances are the rage and yesterday at the ball the two young Grand Dukes danced a minuet . . . ”*⁴⁴³

The above “*holding her first by the right hand, then by the left*” confirms the couple figure-action of the Lady and Gentleman changing sides.

The Grand Dukes mentioned above were Alexander and his brother Constantine. They received dancing instructions at an early age. One piece of evidence of this is from Countess Golovine of Russia:

“I continued to go to the little gatherings at the Hermitage. The Grand Duke Alexander used to be present; he was then four years old, and his brother, the Grand Duke Constantine, three.

*Two violins were provided; there was dancing; I was the favorite partner of Alexander. One day, when the little ball was more lively than usual, the Grand Duke led the polonaise with me, . . . ”*⁴⁴⁴

So, one is never too young for the Polonaise!

Madame Vigee Lebrun attended one of the last Balls given by Catherine, the mother of the Grand Dukes. She wrote:

*“In that era the Russian court usually included such a large number of beautiful women that a ball at the Empress afforded an exquisite sight. I was present at the most magnificent ball she ever gave . . . The ball consisted of nothing but repetitions of the dance called ‘polonaise,’ in which I had for my first partner young Prince Bariatinski, with whom I went round of the room and afterwards took a seat on the bench to watch all the dancers.”*⁴⁴⁵

Madame Lebrun was directly in Russia after having been in Vienna where the exciting Wallz was being done.

But before Alexander could reign, his father Paul, became the Emperor.

Paul became Emperor in 1796. Known as “Mad Paul”, his reign was an unhappy one. Paul terrified all those people around him.

In 1797, Paul gave a Ball in St. Petersburg which is known to Russian History as the “Police Ball” because the people were forced to attend by order of the police so frightened were they of this Emperor.

*“Those who refused to submit to the order were to have their names written down on a certain list, and would thus be made known to the Emperor. So I went to this wretched entertainment, as did Mme. De Tolstoy. The ball opened with a Polonaise that my ear recognised as one I used to hear in happier times, and the music upset me terribly, my sobs almost stifling me.”*⁴⁴⁶

Here, the Polonaise elicited feelings of sadness from the Countess.

⁴⁴³ *Russia And The World Of The Eighteenth Century*, ed. R. Bartlett, “A Musical Entertainment”, G. Seaman, p. 655.

⁴⁴⁴ Countess Golovine, *Memoirs Of Countess Golovine*, (London: 1910), p. 7.

⁴⁴⁵ Vigee Lebrun, *Memoirs of...*, p. 97-98.

⁴⁴⁶ Golovine, *Memoirs...*, p. 154.

Paul was assassinated in 1801. During his reign a new importance was given to the Imperial Family in order to legitimate the growing power of Autocracy. The birthdays and name days of the Imperial Family were celebrated with greater public notice than in the past. After the church services, after the banquets there were Balls.

*“The balls in the evening were opulent affairs. The grand dukes partnered the grand duchesses to open the dances. The empress generally played cards, and the emperor [Paul] engaged in conversations. They joined only the polonaise, the stately procession through the rooms of the palace.”*⁴⁴⁷

The Polonaise can be “used” for more intimate purposes than those of Social Community and Aesthetic Pleasure. Prince Zoubov and the Grand Duke Alexander were friendly rivals for the favors of Princess Narishkin.⁴⁴⁸ This was an agreed upon competition between the men.

*“The rivals held to the terms of the agreement with the utmost scrupulousness until, in a few weeks, Prince Zoubov showed the Grand Duke notes that had been slipped into his hand during the polonaise”*⁴⁴⁹

So here the Polonaise was used to pass secret notes. Conversations also took place during the Polonaise:

*“Mme. De Tolstoy eagerly undertook this commission, and, as she was dancing a polonaise with the Emperor, said to him:
‘Sire, I have a favour to ask you; Count Golovine is very anxious to have a private interview with you, to thank you, and take leave of you. Will your Majesty permit it?’
‘With pleasure,’ said the Emperor, ‘let him come tomorrow, to my study, at twelve o’clock.’ ”*⁴⁵⁰

Alexander was always noted for his affability, kindness and gentlemanly qualities.

From 1787 to 1821 a Pole, Jozef Kozlowski,⁴⁵¹ was the general director of the Imperial Theaters in Russia as well as of Music. He remained in St. Petersburg. He was also a prolific composer of orchestral and choral music. His chief form was the Polonaise of which he wrote many: for dancing, for singing, for celebrations, for funerals.⁴⁵² One of his Polonaises, “*Grom Pobiedy*”, became the unofficial Anthem of Russia and was played whenever the Tsar was present.

One of the staple observations about life in Eastern Europe was the difference between life in the country and life in the city.

⁴⁴⁷ R. Wortman, *Scenarios Of Power*, Vol. I, (Princeton: Princeton U. Press, 1995), p.188.

⁴⁴⁸ “*Marie Narishkin (1779-1854), daughter of Prince Anton Chetvertinsky, a Polish nobleman. When Maid of Honor to the Empress Catherine II in 1795 she married M. Dmitri Narishkin, one of the richest men in Russia. Her extraordinary beauty attracted the attention of the Czar Alexander I, whose acknowledged mistress she became when he still Grand-Duke . . . She was without political ambition and exercised no influence on affairs, so that Napoleon looked in vain to her to assist in the revival of Polish national aspirations.*” This from, *More Letters from Martha Wilmot*, (London: 1935), p. 14.

⁴⁴⁹ Golovine, *Memoirs...*, p. 222.

⁴⁵⁰ Golovine, *Memoirs...*, p. 246.

⁴⁵¹ Born in 1757 in Warszawa. Taught musical composition to M.K.Ogiński. He was an active soldier in the Russian Army. Up to now, there is no evidence that he wrote a single “Mazur”-strange indeed.

⁴⁵² According to *Słownik muzyków polskich*, Vol. I, (Kraków: 1964), p. 296.

“In 1802 Martha Wilmot, writing of an ‘excessively amusing’ ball given by the governor of Smolensk, observed that the provincial elite differed distinctly from Moscow society:

*The Princess [Dashkova] open’d the ball with a polonaise, after which . . . We had a number of country dances . . .”*⁴⁵³

By 1802 Smolensk was no longer Polish territory.

Martha Wilmot was an Irish woman who was a guest of Princess Dashkova. Happily she has left a number of dance descriptions. From Saint Petersburg in the summer of 1803:

*“We arrived at the Palace at seven o’clock, the rooms of which were all thrown open, and we met such a crowd of people that we cou’d [sic] scarcely advance. At length the Emperor and Empress &c. &c. appeared and a Polish Dance was begun, the Emperor leading out my beautiful acquaintance Madame Adadoroff and (follow’d by, I dare say, sixty couple [sic] literally walk’d the figure of 8 to music. It was simply a Promenade by which I saw again and again every Grandee who pass’d successively as close to me as they cou’d [sic] well do. The Emperess look’d charming, and the affable manners which she and all the Imperial family possess are quite delightful. The Emperess Mother mov’d thro’ the circle, and threw us all into extasys [sic] by her amiable conduct. I do assure you she bow’d most graciously to me.”*⁴⁵⁴

Notice here that a pattern of a figure-eight was done as well as circling by at least sixty couples. The bearing of the dancers is important.

January, 1804

*“Since we have been at Count Orloff’s ball which was superb, and what pleased me more, it was in the Russian fashion. We began with a country dance (that is after the Polonaise which is always danc’d first, or rather walk’d).”*⁴⁵⁵

After dancing and singing was done it was time for supper. And after supper:

*“A Gun was fir’d, or something which had the same effect, military music sounded, Silence proclaim’d, and Princess Daschkaw’s health was toasted round by every creature as the Ball was in compliment to her. A second signal was given and Count Orloff’s health was drunk. At the 3th we rose from the table. He walk’d a Polonasié with the Princess, & we again began to dance.”*⁴⁵⁶

So the Polonez was done more than once. Here it seems that an individual couple danced and then was joined by the others.

During the summer of 1804 Martha Wilmot traveled to Eastern Poland. In Minsk she attended a local Ball:

⁴⁵³ Priscillia Roosevelt, *Life on the Russian Country Estate*, (New Haven: 1995), p. 200.

⁴⁵⁴ *The Russian Journals of Martha and Catherine Wilmot 1803-1808*, (London: 1934), p. 36.

⁴⁵⁵ *The Russian Journals of Martha and . . .*, p. 70.

⁴⁵⁶ *The Russian Journals of Martha and . . .*, p. 72.

*“The Ball which follow’d was extremely animated and agreeable. The Colonel who resembles Bradford was very pleasant and attentive; he flirted with me thro’ the serpentine [sic] Mazes of two Polonaizes [sic] which walk (for ‘tis no more) is the only dilassement one has.”*⁴⁵⁷

She attended a New Year’s Eve Ball for the year 1806:

*“Dancing then was begun & salutations for the New Year &c. &c. We danced some Polonaises & stood up for a country dance . . . ”*⁴⁵⁸

Note again the utility of the Polonez, that is, it was danced more than once.

This give us additional proofs that by the time of Alexander I the Polonez was firmly established in Russia.

January, 1806

*“At eight o’clock the masquerade was filled to suffocation; and about an hour afterwards the imperial family entered, creating a kind of current in the mob, which is elegantly termed a **Polonage** [sic] This is a promenade in couples, with which all the maids of honour, gentlemen of the court, nobles, &c. fall in. Thus they pass through every chamber, to the gratification of the multitude, mingling without reserve amidst the lowest of their subjects. The ladies of the imperial family were all clothed in the ancient style of Muscovy; a habit covered with pearls, and by no means unbecoming.”*⁴⁵⁹

This description is from 1806 and has all the elements of the Polonez as done at the Russian Court: sumptuous riches displayed, promenading couples, dancing through rooms, with an easy commingling of the various ranks of Russian Society. This is in marked contrast to Court Events in England, Austria and Germany where such easy mixing did not occur.

The Treaty of Tilsit between France and Russia was signed in 1807. After the signing of this treaty there were celebrations in Russia, at some of which, were members of the Court of Prussia. Countess von Voss was one of these. From her diary we have two citations:

*“The Queen [Queen Louisa of Prussia] gave a dinner-party the next day at seven o’clock having previously received the entire corps diplomatique. The dinner was followed by a ball ‘which was splendid, but a great crowd. I danced my two polonaises, one with the Emperor and one with the Grand Duke (Constantine), and then I made the acquaintance with the ladies. The supper was at innumerable little tables; the whole thing was most magnificent’.”*⁴⁶⁰

⁴⁵⁷ *The Russian Journals of Martha and . . .*, p. 122. It was during this trip that she saw the Polish Kontusz as worn by a country Noble and his Lady. But the Lady was dressed in the French fashion.

⁴⁵⁸ *The Russian Journals of Martha and . . .*, p. 265.

⁴⁵⁹ Robert Porter, *Travelling Sketches In Russia And Sweden. During The Years, 1805, 1806, 1807, 1808*, (London: R.Phillips, 1809), p. 150.

⁴⁶⁰ E. A. B. Hodgetts, *The Court Of Russia In The Nineteenth Century*, Vol. I, (New York: 1908), p. 33.

*“There was a ball afterwards in an enormously large room, two versts long, in which 22,000 candles and 6000 lamps were burning to light the immense space, and it may be imagined what an imposing sight this brilliantly lighted room offered. Many polonaises were danced, and the entertainment lasted till past three o’clock.”*⁴⁶¹

We see again, that at the Russian Court, the dancing of the Polonaise was an excellent way to introduce people to each other. Naturally, this required that it be danced more than once.

From 1809 to 1814 the future American President, J. Q. Adams was the Ambassador to Russia. In his diary of this period he mentioned the Dance. Here are his remarks listed in chronological order.

November 13, 1809

*“Between eight and nine in the evening we went to a splendid ball, given by Count Romanzoff to the Empress-mother, . . . The crowd in the dancing-rooms was very great. The principal dancing was in what they call Polish dances, consisting simply in a number of couples walking up and down in the room as in a procession.”*⁴⁶²

November 27, 1809

*“I had an invitation, with Mrs. Adams and her sister, to dine at the French Ambassador’s sans ceremonie, . . . Immediately after this a band of music struck up, and a polonaise was walked round the hall. Thence we returned to the hall, and danced two or three hours, after which was a supper, . . . ”*⁴⁶³

January 13, 1810

*“About nine in the evening I went to the masquerade at the palace, with Mrs. Adams;...All the apartments of the palace are crowded with people of every description, and in all of the dresses of the empire . . .The Emperor and the imperial family walked the polonaise through the apartments until eleven o’clock, . . . ”*⁴⁶⁴

May 23, 1810

*“The French Ambassador gave this evening a splendid ball, on occasion of the marriage of the Emperor Napoleon. It was attended by the Emperor and the imperial family...The Emperor was gracious to everybody, even beyond his usual custom, which is remarkable for affability. He asked Mr. Harris to show him where Mrs. Adams sat, and danced a polonaise with her; and afterwards one with Catherine Johnson, . . . ”*⁴⁶⁵

January 13, 1811

⁴⁶¹ E. A. B. Hodgetts, *The Court Of...*, 35.

⁴⁶² J. Q. Adams, *Memoirs Of John Quincy Adams*, (New York: 1970), p.62-63.

⁴⁶³ J. Q. Adams, *Memoirs...*, p. 71.

⁴⁶⁴ J. Q. Adams, *Memoirs...*, p. 96.

⁴⁶⁵ J. Q. Adams, *Memoirs...*, p. 130.

*“The Emperesses after half an hour went away; but the Emperor continued to walk the polonaise.”*⁴⁶⁶

February 8, 1811

*“In the evening we all went to the children’s ball at the French Ambassador’s . . . The children danced the Polish dances, country dances, and French dances.”*⁴⁶⁷

February 22, 1811

*“All the Corps Diplomatique was there, . . . I walked a polonaise with Madame Laval, . . . ”*⁴⁶⁸

August 3, 1811

*“The Emperor and the Grand Duke Constantine first passed through the chamber to the dancing-hall, . . . The imperial family and Court nobility walked a number of Polish dances; there was no room for any others.”*⁴⁶⁹

We see that J. Q. Adams both saw and danced the Polonaise, as did his wife, undoubtedly in a walking manner. The Polonaise was the only Dance that could express the dignity and grandness of the occasion. In addition it allowed everyone to participate, many times over. So why didn’t J. Q. Adams, as President, introduce this dance to America? The young Republic certainly needed symbols to elevate its dignity. The answer lies in his diary. In a conversation with the Tsar J. Q. Mr. Adams stated that he was too old to dance. So he probably did not enjoy dancing. And yet so many people consider it a perfect Dance for older people. (It is noteworthy that he apparently did not see any Mazurka Dancing.)

On June 25, 1812 Nicholas, brother of the then current Tsar, married Princess Charlotte of Prussia at St. Petersburg:

*“This ceremony was followed by a grand dinner and a ball at which the polonaise was the only dance.”*⁴⁷⁰

The Emperor-Tsar, Alexander I, danced the Polonaise often—it probably was his favorite dance.

*“The ladies were invited to take refreshments. Then it was proposed to the emperor that he would open the ball on the square of carpets, that the assembled crowd might enjoy the spectacle. He consented with his accustomed good-nature, and engaged for the Polonaise Madame Bennigsen, who did the honors of the ball. Then he danced with Madame Barclay de Tolly, and afterwards with me; then we ascended to the dancing-hall which was spacious and brilliantly lighted.”*⁴⁷¹

⁴⁶⁶ J. Q. Adams, *Memoirs...*, p. 214.

⁴⁶⁷ J. Q. Adams, *Memoirs...*, p. 222.

⁴⁶⁸ J. Q. Adams, *Memoirs...*, p. 232.

⁴⁶⁹ J. Q. Adams, *Memoirs...*, p. 285-286.

⁴⁷⁰ Princess Charlotte of Prussia, *A Czarina’s Story*, trans. Una Pope-Hennessy, (London: 1948), p. 26.

⁴⁷¹ C. de Choiseul-Gouffier, trans., *Historical Memoirs of Emperor Alexander I*, (London: 1904), pp. 92, 93.

Shortly after Napoleon was defeated at Waterloo the victorious armies with Alexander I, the Tsar, entered France. He and the Russian troops were much feted in France.

May, 1814

*“At the magnificent fete given during this month of May by Prince Schwarzenburg to the allied sovereigns at the Chateau of St. Cloud, where he and his staff were installed, the Emperor Alexander introduced the polonaise. It was not very successful as a dance, but French ladies thought it delightfully suited for veiling an intrigue, or for sentimental conversation. His majesty promenaded with the Duchesse d’Abrantes, whose diamonds and emeralds drew forth on this occasion as much admiration and envy as her fine Oriental pearls had excited at the Opera.”*⁴⁷²

This quotation definitely gives the impression that the Parisians had never seen the Polonaise before: that they had never danced it in spite of the close Polish-French cultural contacts. Perhaps this is not so strange since cultural exchange at this time was mostly from West to East. Notice that the dance was not then successful with the Parisians. It did not seem like much of a dance to non-Poles which observation has been corroborated in many other instances. When one considers just how recently the Minuet, with its difficulty step complications, was in the French memory, then it is easy to understand the under-estimation of the Polonez, with its simplistic choreographic actions, in the eyes of non-Poles (Russians not included).

From a secondary source we do have a quotation which seems to confirm the notion that Alexander I introduced the Dance to Western Europe.

*“It was in this year [1814] that the emperor of Russia brought into fashion a dance-the Polonaise – which had certainly need of his patronage to render it acceptable. But he danced it and that was enough to induce every one to admire it.”*⁴⁷³

From reading a translation⁴⁷⁴ of the memoirs of the Duchess D’Abrantes we know that she had not seen the Polonaise before the Russians entered Paris: the Dance was apparently unknown to the Duchess D’Abrantes. Alexander I realized its Beauty.

From all of this it seems that it was the Russian Tsar who brought the dance to Paris and thereby to the Western-Atlantic World. The remarks of M. K. Ogiński would tend to verify this.⁴⁷⁵ It is a maxim that Cultural Influence follows Political Power. In this case, people identified the dance with Russia instead of Poland. Of course, the two cases of cultural transmission were different. Russia adopted the Polonez from Poland because of its Aesthetic Attractiveness (Poland being politically weak after 1700) whereas the West came to it because of Russia’s Military Power.

Soon after, in 1815, when Alexander I was in Poland:

⁴⁷² Lady Jackson Catherine Charlotte, *The Court Of The Tuileries*, Vol. I, (Boston: [n.d.]), p. 106.

⁴⁷³ Duchess D’Abrantes, “Memoirs”, in *Wit, Wisdom And Foibles Of The Great*, (New York: 1920), p. 5.

⁴⁷⁴ This translation has in its third volume, page 429, Chapter XL, the subtitle “Polonaise.” However there is not mention in the actual chapter of the Polonaise. It does describe the fete given by Prince Schwartzenberg at Saint Cloud with the Tsar present, in 1814. There was much dancing.

⁴⁷⁵ See the present author’s volume on the Mazur-Mazurka Dance or M.K. Ogiński’s, *Listy O Muzyce*.

*“Of all the beautiful entertainments which took place during the stay of the Emperor Alexander at Warsaw, the most delightful and best arranged, I think, was that given by the senator palatine, Count Stanilaus Potocki. As I was dancing the Polonaise with the emperor he made many jokes about an Englishman who was staying at Warsaw on his way north; his Majesty said I had done wonders in making him waltz in time, a thing that had never before happened to an Englishman since the world began.”*⁴⁷⁶

At this time the personal representative of the Russia emperor in Poland was one of his brothers, the Grand Duke Constantine. He commanded the Polish Army and was by any measure a thoroughly despicable person.

He gave up his right to the inheritance to the Russian Throne so that he could marry Joanna Grudzinska. Since she is also important to the history of the Mazur Dance we shall tell her story. She was described by a number of people as:

“ . . . the oldest of the three sisters, being the plainest, was at first not much sought after: well built, though small, she had blond locks and pale-blue eyes bordered with lashes ever fairer than her hair; her face had the washed out look of a pastel, and the same gentleness. She was unspeakably graceful, above all when she danced; you would have said she was a nymph,

‘Grazing the ground, yet touching it not.’

*The wits said she had glided into the grand duke’s heard while dancing a gavotte.”*⁴⁷⁷

However the very day after the wedding Constantine introduced his mistress to his new wife! She was shocked:

*“The duchess stiffened, the grand duke got angry, a misunderstanding arose which only got worse: the public took sided with the legitimate spouse who had been so cruelly deceived in her most rightful hopes. Up till then she had inspired no more than a mild interest, but her sad position evoked profound commiseration. She went into a decline: her deadly pallor, the disorder of her blond locks, once her loveliest adornment, made her look like Ophelia . . . Thus we saw her participate in the festivities, given in honor of her marriage, without taking the least interest in them. Like a machine, submissive to her master’s will, she followed the grand duke without so much as looking at him; she sat down, and kept silent and motionless till the moment when a sharp order from her husband compelled her to give a lifeless hand to the partner bowing before her. She rose from her arm-chair, mechanically kept time to the rhythm of a polonaise without proffering a word, and suffered herself to be taken back to the seat assigned her without an apparent notion of ever having left it.”*⁴⁷⁸

So dancing the Polonaise on this occasion was not a happy event. This also points out that merely walking the Polonaise is not dancing it. On a future visit to Poland, Alexander observed her unhappiness and saw to it that Constantine dropped his mistress. The marriage improved.

⁴⁷⁶ C. de Choiseul-Gouffier, *Historical Memoirs...*, p. 233.

⁴⁷⁷ *Memoirs of the Countess Potocka*, (New York: 1900), p. 248.

⁴⁷⁸ *Memoirs of the Countess...*, p.249.

With the return of Alexander I to Russia the Court Life of St. Petersburg returned to its former glory.⁴⁷⁹

*“At the masked ball at the Peterhof, the Emperor did me the honor of dancing a **polonaise** with me. He spoke a great deal...”*⁴⁸⁰

Once again we note how social the Polonez is. Actually Alexander I and all the Tsars often danced the Polonez and also changed partners so that many women enjoyed the honor of dancing with the Emperor. The same was true of their companions—the Empresses.

The French writer, J.A.F.Ancelot, continued to strengthen the notion that the Polonez was only a walking conversational dance when his book about Russia was published in France in 1827. His description is of the celebration done at the coronation of the new Tsar, Nicholas I, September 3, 1826:

Polonaises were the only dances
done,
the Emperor giving the signal to start.
This Dance,
if the Polonaise merits,
that name,
is only a promenade:
the [man] offers his hand to the Lady,
and the other dancers, two by two, [likewise],
they walk dignifiedly,
to the music,
thoroughout all
the rooms;
the long promenade permits
conversations in particular,
to take place;
also, there is the right
to change partners,
so a man must give up
his partner
and join a new partner,
continuously this interesting changing
brusque interruption takes place; . . .

*“Les polonaise sont les seules danses
qu’on ait executees,
te l’empereur en a donne le signal.
Cette danse,
si toutefois les polonaise meritent
ce nom,
n’est qu’une promenade:
on offre la main a une dame,
et les danseurs, ranges deux a deux,
parcourent ainsi gravement,
au son de la musique,
la salle du bal,
ainsi que les pieces voisines;
cette longue promenade permet
aux conversations particulieres
de s’etablir,
mais, comme on a le droit
de changer de compagne,
et que nul cavalier ne peut se dispenser
de ceder sa danseuse
a celui qui vient reclamer sa main,
souvent un interessant entretien
est brusquement interrompu; . . .”*⁴⁸¹

We note that only Polonaises were done. The accession of Nicholas I was also celebrated with publications throughout Europe. One such was an album of lithographic illustrations that emphasized the extent of the Empire and its Power. Supposedly the Empire untied the peoples of Europe and Asia into one harmonious whole. The artist was Svin’in.

⁴⁷⁹ But it was not complete return because the events of 1812-1815 led to a Nationalistic-folkloric thrend which manifested itself some Ladies of the Russian Court wearing “peasant costume” and doing Russian folk dances at Court. Some men wear swords at Court which indicated that they would not dance. For a full exposition of this see Orlando Figes, *Natasha’s Dance*, (New York: 2002).

⁴⁸⁰ Golovine, *Memoirs...*, p. 373.

⁴⁸¹ J.A.F. Ancelot, *Six Mois En Russie*, (Paris: 1827), p. 378.

*“Svin’in noted both the national and imperial elements of the celebrations following the coronation But Svin’in’s attention was drawn particularly to the Russian national costumesAs they danced the polonaise, their ‘patriotic attire’ transported him back to the times ‘when Russians were not ashamed of their splendid dress’”*⁴⁸²

The above quote illustrates the change away from cosmopolitan values of the Europe of the 18th century to those of native-national-folk Romanticism of the 19th century.

A representative of the English Government to the Russian Court describes a typical Ball in St. Petersburg of the time (1827):

*“The first dance which I saw, I believe they told me, was called ‘la promenade’, and a very convenient mode of opening a ball it is. It seems that any gentleman may propose to a lady to take a tour with him; and I found that the Chaperons themselves, however grave and matronly, were included in this prelude. The promenade takes place first through all the suite of rooms in a sort of sauntering procession, and next round the ballroom; after which, the ladies take their seat, and there is an end to it. Waltzes began soon after,”*⁴⁸³

Note how even the older people could participate in the Dance: that the dance is inter-generational.

In 1828 a celebration for a regiment returning from the Russian-Persian War was described in the English magazine, *The New Monthly Magazine*. Among other things it described the Polonez and the Mazur done at a Ball in Moscow:

*“In the evening a ball was given by the governor. In Russia the dance is opened by a Polonaise, the most silly performance imaginable, in which the old and young alike join. It is merely walking with a lady through the entire suite of apartments, to the great annoyance of the card-players and loiters. After this nonsensical parade is finished, a Majoolka [Mazurka] is generally commenced.”*⁴⁸⁴

As you can see this quotation is very close to that of the previous one. Are they the same? Are their authors the same?

The Polish reviewer of this article writing in the newspaper *Gazeta Polska* of 1830 rightly characterized this observer as someone who would rather play cards than dance.⁴⁸⁵

Russia’s new Tsar, Nicholas I, and his wife were very fond of dancing. When they were crowned in Poland in 1830 again only Polonezes were done.⁴⁸⁶ This gave all the male dignitaries and guests the opportunity to dance with the Empress and likewise for the women with the Tsar.

Now we shall give a picture of just how imposing and brilliant a Social Event could be in Russia which was a feature of Russian Court Life until 1914. From the journal of an Englishwoman who attended an event on January 7, 1837:

⁴⁸² Wortman, *Scenarios...*, p. 393.

⁴⁸³ A. B Granville, *St. Petersburg*, Vol II, (London: 1828), p. 354-355.

⁴⁸⁴ *New Monthly Magazine*, Vol. 26, (London: 1829), p. 416.

⁴⁸⁵ Throughout the 18th and 19th centuries there were many travelers to the Russian Empire. Most were not interested in cultural activities: some were missionaries, many were business people, foreign technical people or diplomats.

⁴⁸⁶ Leon Sapieha, *Wspomnienia*, (Lwów: 1913), p. 94.

“When the company was assembled the doors opened and the Imperial family walked in and rarely does one find united so much grace and beauty. The Empress was dressed in white with colonnes of large single diamonds round her gown from her waist to her feet. She had a couronne du moyen age at the back of her head and a small low one on her forehead, the shape of the whole perfectly classic, not a jewel or colour but these enormous diamonds which she called mes cailloux, and which except on her, must have been taken for the pickings of a great glass lustre. Altogether I never saw such a combination of simplicity and splendour.

. . . The Grand Duchesses Maria and Olga looked lovely, their beautiful skins, fair hair, graceful figures, simple toilettes and amiable high bred manner delighted everyone.

*The polonaises began and continued some time. They are very agreeable for those who do not dance. . . . The ball began at nine. After the polonaises were quadrilles and at twelve o’clock we passed through a Salle des Marechaux and a long gallery with between three and four hundred pictures of Dawe’s to the supper room, an enormous salle with scagliola columns and blue glass lustres and lighted by four thousand candles. This was really fairyland—the endless vista, the quantities of massy plate, the abundance of lovely flowers, and, to crown it all, the whole having the appearance of an orangerie, the supper tables being so constituted as to let the stems of the immense orange trees through so that we literally sat under their shade and perfume. The scene was perfect enchantment and eight hundred and fifty sat down to supper without the slightest confusion or squeeze.”*⁴⁸⁷

The observations of the American Envoy and Minister to Russia, George Dallas, are also from this time. From his diary it is apparent that he was not a dancer. Here is what he tells us about various events that he attended. At a Ball given by Count Nesselrode on January 23, 1838 when Nicholas I was the Emperor of Russia:

*“It was a grand and select ball to the Imperial family, . . . The two sovereigns, with their son the heir, and the Grand Duchess Marie, and the Grand Duke Michel, arrived at about eight, and when the company had, in expectation, collected in the dancing-room. They instantly on entering led off a polonaise, the Emperor with Countess Nesselrode, the Empress with the Austrian Ambassador, and all who could procure walking partners joined the procession, which wound its way through the suite of apartments twice or thrice. I first led Countess Schimmelpenninck and then Countess Laval. The Empress formed a cotillon at the head of the room, and danced repeatedly with much apparent spirit and enjoyment. She participated also in the frolic and waltzing of the mazurka at the end of evening.”*⁴⁸⁸

Note that he danced with different partners, that is, a change of partners took place within this single dance event—it was not two separate Polonaises. He experienced the Polonaise as a “walking.”

George Dallas and his family were well liked by the Court of Saint Petersburg. The last Ball which they attended was on July 23, 1839. It was a masked Ball.

“A more absolute jam of human beings, of all sorts, conditions, grades, forms, physiognomies, gaits, costumes, and tongues, cannot be conceived. The heat in the halls was intense. The polonaise immediately began, led off by the Sovereigns, before whom, as they advanced, turning in every zigzag direction, the compact mass gave way and opened an avenue for the

⁴⁸⁷ Lady Londonderry, *Russian Journal of Lady Londonderry, 1836 -1837*, (London: 1973), p. 111.

⁴⁸⁸ Susan Dallas, *Diary Of George Mifflin Dallas*, (Philadelphia: 1892), p.61. Note that he speaks of “waltzing the mazurka” and not of two separate dances, the Waltz and the Mazurka.

brilliant train of courtiers, officers, and fashionables, almost as if by magic. On one occasion, as the glorious file came forward, I found myself screwed tight and motionless between two Kirghese Khans, some Chinese, and one or more Russian serfs, but, falling back resolutely, I caught the eye of the Emperor, who saw my predicament and effort, and exclaimed aloud in clear English, ‘I beg your pardon, sir!’ to which I had no time for replying except by a bowing of the head and a smile. Shortly afterwards, I perceived him approach Mrs. Dallas, and, with the polite inquiry, ‘Oserais-je vous demander pour une polonaise?’ lead her, repeatedly, by the hand through the apartments.”⁴⁸⁹

This seems to be a highly interactive event with the crowd surrounding and receding before the dancers. In the context of a Masked Ball the Polonaise is less a ceremonial Dance than a pleasure Dance.

Alexander II, the son of Nicholas I, made a tour of the Russian Empire during the years 1837, 1838. He was given a strict regime of behavior to follow by his mother and father. Among his many instructions:

“He could attend balls, but only in provincial towns. He was to dance the polonaise with a few of the distinguished ladies of the province; he could partner young school girls in two or three quadrilles, but ‘no other dances,’ . . . ”⁴⁹⁰

The reference to “other dances” is for the Waltz which was still considered to be too familiar, too erotic a dance. When Alexander visited Smolensk on July 14, 1837 he was greeted with a sung Polonaise, written by Glinka, the words of which celebrate the power and glory of Tsarist rule—in short, political propaganda in Polonaise form.

The French aristocrat, Marquis de Custine, in his travel through Russia in 1839 wrote of the Polonez, which he observed:

*“The kind of dance that is most common at the grand fetes of this country, does not disturb the course of ideas. The company promenade in a solemn step to the sound of music, each gentleman taking his partner by the hand. In the palace, hundreds of couples thus follow in procession, proceeding from one immense hall to another, winding through the galleries crossing the saloons [rooms], and traversing the whole building in such order or direction as the caprice of the individual who leads, may dictate. This is called dancing **la Polonaise**. It is amusing at first, but for those destined to dance it all their lives, balls must, I think, be a species of torture.”⁴⁹¹*

The observations of deCustine about the political and cultural system of Russia had a great impact on European Intellectuals—not his short remarks about dancing. It is important to remember the severe oppression of Polish Life in the Russian occupied territories. For example, out of 410,000 Polish Nobility in the three Kresy of Kiev, Volhynia and Podolia 340,000 were forced to become peasants. The Uniate Religion was forcefully absorbed into the Russian Orthodox Religion (thus depriving it of its Western orientation). Polish religious orders were abolished and their lands

⁴⁸⁹ Dallas, *Diary Of ...*, pp. 210-211.

⁴⁹⁰ Wortman, *Scenarios...*, p. 363.

⁴⁹¹ Marquis de Custine, *Empire of the Czar*, (New York: 1989), p. 162.

confiscated and Polish schools were closed. All this was taking place in the time period which we are describing: 1830-1850.⁴⁹² A recent study sums this up nicely.

*“The Russian reaction to the January uprising [1863] repeated the scenario of 1831. The retention of power and systemic stabilization once again received top priority, and the methods of oppression were considerably more severe under the reformist tsar than under his conservative father. In Congress Poland and in the ‘western provinces’ about four hundred rebels were executed, about 2,500 were sentenced to hard labour, and about 20,000 deported to Russia and Siberia or sent to join penal companies. About 3,500 estates belonging to Polish nobles were confiscated..Even the name Poland was eradicated, . . . ”*⁴⁹³

This enforced de-polonization of these areas still continues to this day. This is an instance of the separation of cultural gifts from politics. But let us return to happier events.

At a Ball given in the open air:

*“The empress, delicate as she is, danced, with her neck bare and her head uncovered, every polonaise at this magnificent ball in the garden of her cousin. In Russia every body pursues his career to the limits of his powers. The duty of an empress is to amuse herself to death.”*⁴⁹⁴

This is another verification that the Polonez when not done by the Polish Szlachta and or not done in Kontusz was primarily just a walking around and about through rooms. Of course in venues like the large palaces of Russia this was possible—the architectural reality influenced the manner of doing the dance. That the dance would be a “species of torture” is due to its continual repetition.

Another English person described the dance at the celebration of Emperor’s Day, St. Nicholas Day in December 1848 for Nicholas I and his wife:

*“The Emperor and Empress, and some of the more important characters open the ball with a polonaise, a measure well suited to the dignity of monarchs, inasmuch as they may move fast or slow, as may appear convenient. The dancing of their majesties is usually confined to a stately march. After the polonaise, the company are at liberty to move about at pleasure.”*⁴⁹⁵

So it is a convenient dance and therein lies one of its advantages, its utility.

Russian composers themselves wrote many orchestral pieces, which included Polonaises and Mazurs. Often they are not suitable for ordinary dancing. The first such came from Glinka’s *The Life of the Tsar*. This was Russia’s first National Opera and included Russian folk melodies and idioms. This was an example of the Russian National Idea in the form of the European Grand Opera. In this opera both the Polonaise and Mazurka soon became favorites at Imperial Balls one such occasion

⁴⁹² Figures from Daniel Beauvois, *The Noble, The Serf and The Revior: The Polish Nobility Between Tsarist Imperialism and the Ukrainian Masses (1831-1963)*, (London:1992).

⁴⁹³ Andreas Kappler, *The Russian Empire: A ...*, p. 253.

⁴⁹⁴ Custine. *Empire of ...*, p. 198. We see that Custine was not fooled by the riches and splendors of Russia. He concluded that it was nothing but a despotic Slave-State. His book was banned in Russia. Maybe he just over-stated the case.

⁴⁹⁵ J. Maxwell, *The Czar, His Court And People*. (New York: 1848), p. 152.

being in 1856.⁴⁹⁶ These dances represented “European” culture in Russia. Whereas the genuine Russian folk elements of the opera were not approved of by the Court and Aristocratic circles.

Ten years later a description highlights the Imperial aspect of the Russian’s Polonaise.

“The Polonaise, of course, opens the ball. Theophile Gautier described in 1866 the manner of this ceremony, for it is nothing less. The spectators in the ball-room [sic] of the Winter Palace separated so as to leave free a pathway of which they formed the hedges. Everyone in position, the orchestra played a majestic air, and with slow steps the promenade began, led by the Emperor giving his hand to some lady whom he wished to honor. They were followed by the rest of the Court, all according to precedence;-

‘The cortage of brilliant uniforms goes on increasing – a nobleman leaves the hedge and takes a lady by the hand, and this new couple take their place in the procession, keeping step by step with the leader. It must be very difficult to walk thus under the fire of a thousand eyes, possibly ironical. Military habits do much for the men, but how different for the women. Most of them walk to perfection, and it is a very rare art, that of walking gracefully and simply while being watched; more than one great actress has never understood it. What adds to the originality of the Russian Court is that from time to time a young Circassian prince in his fastidious Oriental dress, or a Mongolian officer, will join the cortage. Mahomedan prince, or duke-are they not both subjects of the Emperor of all the Russians?’ ”⁴⁹⁷

By the term “military habits” Gautier means “military uniform” which at this time is the tight-fitting uniform of the 19th century and not the Kontusz. These were special Ball Uniforms. The term “ironical” means “critical” as a possible source for gossip. He is correct about the difficulty of dancing slowly-it really is not just walking.

Princess Radziwiłł spent considerable time in Russia during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The following citations from her writings gives us some indication of the life in St. Petersburg and of the high level of Human Culture among the generation of Alexander II (1855-1881).

“Apart from these receptions, all of which were more or less official ones, there was a great deal of dancing in the Russian capital, especially among the young people. The number of balls for girls and debutantes surpassed by far those given in honor of young married ladies. The latter used to console themselves by organising sledge parties, which generally ended with a cotillon in one or other of the numerous restaurants.”⁴⁹⁸

As always it is usually the young people who do most of the dancing. But she has more to say:

“ . . . I cannot help remarking that among the survivors of the times of Alexander II., and especially among the members of his military household, there were many pleasant people, who, in spite of their relatively advanced age, were preferred to younger ones by women, on account of the politeness and amiability with which they treated them.

⁴⁹⁶ August Iwanski, *Pamiętniki (1832-1876)*, (Warszawa: 1968), p. 104.

⁴⁹⁷ Lilly Grove Frazer, *Dancing*, 2nd ed., (London: 1901), 241. For a good description of the atmosphere of the Russian Court ceremony in the mid-19th century see, S. Sitwell, *Valse Des Fleurs*, (London: 1941). It is in English.

⁴⁹⁸ Princess C. Radziwiłł, *Memories of Forty Years*, (London: 1914), p. 278.

*It is sad to have to say so, but the present generation seems to have forgotten that exquisite courtesy which constituted such a particular feature of St. Petersburg society, which at the time I am writing about was without exception the most polished and polite in Europe. Now, as elsewhere, good manners are considered old-fashioned and out of date in the Russian capital, but personally I cannot help regretting the times when slang was unknown, and women were pleased to be honoured with attentions that never compromised them in the least.”*⁴⁹⁹

The Qualities of good manners, of respect, of politeness are a central feature of the Polonez. To dance it without these qualities is to merely walk it and not dance it.

The meaning of the last sentence in the quotation above is that men could speak to women, could be attentive to women without implying a sexual-erotic pursuit of women as “sex-objects”: that men appreciated the Beauty of Womanhood Itself, of the Graciousness of Women. (Assuming that the individual women exhibited these Qualities.)

The wedding celebration of Alexander III (November 9, 1867) naturally included the grandest Ball:

*“ . . . and then the orchestra overhead begins to play a strange, wild sort of march, and the crowd separates on either side so as to leave the passage clear, and the Imperial party enters the rooms. The ball, as it is called, is only so in name. The one dance danced is the Polonaise, in which the members of the Imperial family and their Royal guests alone take part, the music being, I believe, taken from the popular Russian opera of ‘ La Vie pour le Czar.’ But dance even this is not. Three times in succession the Princes and Princesses walk up and down the room, to the sound of the strange barbaric music; and the only feature in which the Polonaise differs from an ordinary walk is that partners are changed after each time, and that the pace is somewhat more rapid and regular than that of common walking. The bride had the three Crown Princes in turn for her escort through the dance, her last partner, I believe, being the Prince of Wales. The other two partners of his Royal highness were the Grand Duchesses Helena Paulovna and Maria Nicholaina. The third time was round the hall instead of straight up and down; and the last glimpse I caught of the scene, as I left the room to get out in time for the procession, was the diamond tiara of the latest and youngest of the Imperial grand duchesses, the bride of the Czarevitch.”*⁵⁰⁰

At the end of this Polonaise the principals retired to their private apartments in the palace to dine. Why does the observer, E. Dicey, call this dance music “barbaric”? (Had he never heard Polonaise music?) Note that here the couples were made up of members of the royal family. The dance tempo was more rapid than that for walking. Also note that in Dicey’s eyes, because the Dance is so much like walking he therefore did not consider it to be a Dance.

*“The winter season of 1882-83 was exceptionally brilliant. On November 26th the Imperial Court moved from Gachina back to the Winter Palace in St. Petersburg. One of the opening functions was a grand reception and, following it, a dinner in honor of the Knights of St. George. It was the first time that I was privileged to take part in the Imperial Polonaise, that is, I was included in the stately march with which the members of the Imperial Court opened the ball.”*⁵⁰¹

⁴⁹⁹ Radziwiłł, *Memories of Forty...*, p. 280-281.

⁵⁰⁰ E. Dicey, *A Month In Russia during the marriage of the Czarevitch*, (London: 1867), p. 59.

⁵⁰¹ Narishkin, *Under Three Tsars, Memoirs*, (New York: 1931), p. 95.

The Tsars came and went but the dance continued. In the spring of 1883 the coronation of Alexander III took place. We have two descriptions of the dancing.

*“The festivities continued and the day after the Coronation presented another fairylike picture. At the Kremlin, the Grand-Dukes, their trains, and the Ambassadors stepped through the ballrooms to the measures of Glinka’s Polonaise from ‘The Life For The Tsar,’ between a file of Court ladies, who were dressed in the ancient Russian court dresses. The windows were thrown open on that wonderful warm evening and, looking out, the contours of the cathedrals and campaniles of Moscow seemed studded with myriad’s of jewels. The Emperor made the first round with the Empress, the next one with the foreign Princesses and with the ladies of the Diplomatic Corps.”*⁵⁰²

So Glinka was used again.⁵⁰³

The second description of the Coronation is by an American Women who was married to a French diplomat who was the French Ambassador to Russia at this time. The Coronation took place on May 28, 1883 in Moscow.

“Almost all our colleagues and some of the swell Russians were already there, and everyone moved about, talking and looking until the welcome strains of the march told us the Empror and Empress were coming...The Court appeared always with the same brilliant suite—the Empress looked charming in a pink velvet train, embroidered in silver. All the Grand Duchesses in drap d’argent, bordered with beautiful black sable.

As soon as the Court arrived the polonaise began; the Emperor making the first with Queen of Greece, the Empress with Schweinitz. It was a charming sight. All the trains were étalées[displaying] their full length. The gentleman takes his partner’s hand, holding it very high, and they make a stately progress through the rooms. I didn’t dance the first one. We had a good view of the whole thing. It was a beautiful sight—the men all in uniform, with orders, and broad ribbons; and the women with their trains down the full length. The Russian trains, of white and silver bordered with fur, made a great effect.

The Emperor danced (which is a façon de parler only, as one walked through the rooms) with the Queen of Greece, Arch Duchess Charles Louis, and the Ambassadors Lady Thornton, Mdme. Juarès, Countess Dudzele, and me—the Empress with the 6 Ambassadors. I danced the second polonaise with the Grand Duke Wladimir, who is handsome and spirited looking. He told me who many of the people were. In one of the rooms were all the Russian women, not in costume, but in ordinary ball dress, all, however, wearing the Kakoshnik studded with jewels, and most becoming it was.

I was much interested (before my turn came) to see how the ladies got back to their places after having been deposited by the Emperor in the middle of the room. He doesn’t conduct his partner back as the others do. He goes back to his own place, the lady makes a curtsy, and gets back to hers across the room backwards as well as she can. They seem to get through all right. I rather enjoyed my polonaise with thr Emperor . . .

The music was always the march from Glinka’s opera; each band in turn taking it up as the cortège passed through the rooms. The last polonaise finished about 11.30, and the

⁵⁰² E. Narishkin, *Under Three Tsars*,..., p. 80.

⁵⁰³ And why not? It is such a good Polonez. We must remember that dancing to a live orchestra is easier than dancing to recorded music because the orchestra plays to accommodate the dancer’s tempo.

Court immediately retired. We had no refreshments of any kind, and made the same rush for the carriages."⁵⁰⁴

This description is significant on several accounts. Note her remarks about the handhold—it is upraised. This is a confirmation of the same high handhold position illustrated in the drawing of S. Rejchan contained in this book. The march from Glinka is the Polonaise. Note that the Polonaise is repeated so that all the people are given the opportunity to dance with the Host and or with the Guest Of Honor, in this case, the Emperor and Empress. Therefore the Polonaise may be done many times. Notice also that one tries not to turn one's back to the Guest. This is insulting. We see that the women back away as they are Bowing. For women in long gowns or dresses this requires some practice beforehand.

Just a week later Mrs. Waddington attended another Ball in Moscow of which she wrote:

"The Palace ball was quite beautiful last night...The rooms are magnificent—very high, and entirely lighted by wax candles—thousands;. . . The Court arrived with the usual ceremony and always the same brilliant suite of officers and foreign Princes. The Emperor and Empress looked very smiling, and not at all tired. She was in white, with splendid diamonds and the broad blue ribbon of St. André. He always in uniform. As soon as they appeared the polonaises began, this time three only, which the Emperor danced with the ladies of the family. I danced the first with the Grand Duke Wladimir. He is charming and amiable, but has a stern face when he isn't smiling. I think if the Russians ever feel his hand it will be a heavy one. I danced the second with the Grand Duke Alexis, and looked on at the third. It was not nearly as fine a sight as the Court ball at the old palace. There the mixture of modern life and dress and half barbaric costumes and ornamentations was so striking; also the trains made such an effect, being all étaléd one was obliged to keep a certain distance, and that gave a stately air to the whole thing which was wanting last night when all the women were in ordinary ball dress, not particularly long, so that the cortége was rather crowded and one saw merely a mass of jewelled heads (the dress was lost). Also they merely walked around the ballroom, not going through all the rooms as we did at the old palace.

When the polonaises were over there were one or two waltzes. The Empress made several turns, but with the Princes only, and we stood and looked on."⁵⁰⁵

Here we note that the Polonaise was done only three times which is the same as E. Dicey's description. It depends upon the number of persons as well as upon how many are to be honored. Notice Mrs. Waddington's appreciation that physical distance of separation has an Aesthetical Quality. From her previous "walking" remark it is certain that knee-bending was not done—this is the basis for describing it as a "march"—the people were just walking in three-quarter time. Of course, some of the people gave the Dance a certain dignity, for others, the Dance itself gave Dignity to these others.

In 1884 a celebration was held to commemorate the religious conversion to Russian Othodoxy of the Tsar's sister-in-law, the sister of the future Tsar's wife. After the congratulations:

". . . then a grand banquet was served in the in the Nicholas' Hall for persons of the first three ranks. In the gallery, an orchestra played, and the chorus of the Imperial opera sang under the banton of the conductor E. Napranik. At nine in the evening, a ball began in the St.

⁵⁰⁴ Mary King Waddington, *Letters Of A Diplomat's Wife*, (New York: 1903), p. 74-75.

⁵⁰⁵ Waddington, *Letters Of...*, p. 86. She does mention that since it was the custom at these Russian events to stand continuously it was very important to wear comfortable slippers.

*George's Hall, where the Emperor and the new born H. I. H. Grand Duchess Elizabeth Feodorovna danced the first polonaise, and the Empress Marie Feodorovna with Sergei Alexandrovich followed next. The second round was performed by the newly-weds, as the leading pair, with the radiant Ella breathing happiness, her hand resting on the hand of her husband.”*⁵⁰⁶

Unfortunately her marriage was a living nightmare. She became a Saint in her life and of the Russian Church.

However her husband has left us a vivid description of the first Court Ball of the New Year.

“The first ball of the season was usually held in the St. Nicholas Hall for 3,000 guests . . . Only one ball a year was held in the Hall, attended exclusively by those who belonged to the top four classes of society . . . Also included on the guest-list were foreign diplomats and their families, the most senior officers in the guards’ regiments with their wives and daughters, some young officers invited as ‘dancers’ and a few others invited specially by their royal highnesses . . . It was like a scene from a fairy-tale: January; a harsh frost. All three buildings of the palace are lit up. The carriages draw up one after the other. Officers, oblivious to the cold, ride up in sleighs, their horses bedecked in blue . . . Silhouetted against the light, ladies tiptoe nervously from their carriage to the entrance. Here a glimpse of the lively and the gracious, there the mighty figures of aged aunts and grandmothers. Fur in abundance — ermine, silver fox . . . Heads are bare, for the married ladies wear tiaras while the young girls wear flowers in their hair.”

*“The immense halls lined with gold-framed mirrors were full to bursting with dignitaries, court officials, foreign diplomats, Guard’s officers and Eastern potentates. Their dazzling uniforms embroidered with gold and silver provided a sumptuous background for the court dresses and jewels of their ladies. The halls were decorated with countless palms and tropical plants from the imperial orangeries. It was an almost magical scene as the blinding light of the massive chandeliers reflected in the mirrors. And as you looked at the teeming St. Nicholas Hall you could almost forget the bustle of the twentieth century and find yourself once more in the golden age of the reign of Catherine the Great. And suddenly the crowd would fall silent and the master of ceremonies would appear. Striking the floor three times with his rod, he would announce the arrival of the royal cortège. The mighty doors of the Heraldic Hall would swing open and the sovereign and his wife would appear standing on the threshold with members of their family and retinue. The emperor always opened the ball with a polonaise, after which the general dancing began.”*⁵⁰⁷

The last Tsar, the future Nicholas II, also had dancing skills. From one of his letters dated October 20, 1889, he wrote:

“In the evening there was a great ball for 3,000 people and it started with the polonaise from ‘Life for the Tsar.’ The crush was terrific and I had to dance en famille, first a contre-danse and then a waltz. In spite of the great heat with everyone in full dress, I had quite a good

⁵⁰⁶ Zoia Belyakova, *The Romanovs*, (St. Petersburg: 2000), p. 58.

⁵⁰⁷ G. Vilinbakhov, ed., *Nicholas and Alexandra*, (New York: 1998), p.67. This is an extract from the memoir of Grand duke A. Mikhailovich. Actually the Winter Social Season in Russia began in November. The actual Court Season began in January.

time. At 12 o'clock we left to the sound of the same polonaise and then had supper by ourselves." ⁵⁰⁸

Outside of Russia , in England, in 1890:

"I can remember that at a Costume ball held at the Portman Rooms as late as the nineties the Committee (some of Russian extractions) decided on a Polonaise before Supper." ⁵⁰⁹

Significant is the fact that the Russians, both in Russia and abroad, regarded what was an assimilation of this Polish Dance, as a Russian Dance.⁵¹⁰ They did make it their own.

We return to Russia. At the Coronation of Tsar Nicholas II in 1896 the tragic accidental deaths of some 2000-3000 people occurred at the Khodynka Field. This cast a shadow over the celebrations. It had a severe affect on the new Imperial Couple.

*"Observers unanimously agreed that the imperial couple were devastated by the tragedy, that their eyes and their faces swollen from the weeping when they led the Polonaise that opened the ball. For the next several weeks the tsar and empress made a sincere display of their grief. . . "*⁵¹¹

At the Winter Palace young military cadets were normally in attendance. One such was to be the leading "White" General who would fight against the Bolsheviks, Anton Denikin. In 1897 he was invited:

"Court officials, swiftly gliding along the parquet floors, with practiced motions cleared a vast circle in the center of the grand hall. They opened the curtains and from an adjoining room, to the strains of a polonaise, the tsar, the tsarina, and members of the tsarist family approached two by two. They traversed the living walls of the circle, affably nodding to the guests. Subsequently the tsar and tsarina were seated in an adjacent room where they observed the dancing and conversed with individuals invited into their parlor. Dancing went on inside the circle. According to court etiquette all stood. There were no chairs in the hall."
⁵¹²

One can not get enough of these descriptions of these Grand Balls. Here is another from a tutor of the Tsar's children:

"Quite early in January the opening ball of the St. Petersburg season was given at the Winter Palace. Over five thousand people were present, and it was a gay scene. The Empress wore white chiffon embroidered with chenille and sparkling sequins, and many diamonds. The Grand Duchness Serge wore mauve. She is sister to the Empress, and the Grand Duke was

⁵⁰⁸ Nicholas II Romanov, *The Secret Letters Of The Last Tsar*, (New York: 1938), p. 38.

⁵⁰⁹ Richardson, *Social Dancing...*, p. 41. If one recalls to mind that Vienna was also a 19th and early 20th century dance capital, one would expect to encounter the Polonaise there. And so one does. One very grand piece of dance music the "Facherpolonaise," by Carl Michael Ziehrer is an excellent example of just how "inspired" the Polonaise could be in its 19th century social form. Johann Strauss, himself, had a sentimental fondness for Poland which is partly explained by the alleged fact that he was beaten by Russian officers when he was in Warszawa in 1870. So the story goes.

⁵¹⁰ The reverse has also occurred. At Polish-American Social events as of 1996 a dance suite, which is done, is called, "Figure Dances." It consists of four melodies-all are from old Russian Dances. But most people think that it's "Polish."

⁵¹¹ P. Kurth, *Tsar: The Lost World Of Nicholas And Alexandra*, (New York: 1999), p 63.

⁵¹² A. Denikin, *The Career of a Tsarist Officer, 1872-1916*, (Minneapolis: 1975), p. 59.

the Emperor's uncle; they have no children. The Grand Duchness Serge is a very beautiful woman; some people, indeed, even consider her handsomer than the Empress. . . .

*The ball was opened by a polonaise. The master of the ceremonies went before the Emperor and Empress, walking backwards, and cleared a way for them through the crowd. After him came Princess Galitzin, the senior lady of the Court, then came the Emperor and empress, grand dukes and duchesses, Royal princes and princesses, the ambassadors and their wives, all moving slowly, in pairs. At the conclusion of the polonaise general dancing began. . . .*⁵¹³

This Grand Duchness Serge, is the same sister previously mentioned, Ella, who became a Saint. Note the mention of Court official who goes before the dancers in order to clear a path. This is necessary in crowded spaces.

Even into the 20th century and up to the 1917 Revolution in Russia this dance was popular with the Russians. Persons who wished to serve in the Russian Civil Service attended Governmental Colleges for this purpose. One such school was the Lycee in St. Petersburg. Besides the academic classes there was both military drill and dance classes, each held twice a week. One author⁵¹⁴ mentioned that the Viennese Waltz, Pas de Quatre, Mazurka and Hongroise were taught. The absence of the Polonaise in this list is probably due to its simplicity—there was hardly any instruction necessary for the Polonaise—so it was not mentioned.

What was life like in St. Petersburg at the turn of the 20th century? Here is one loving description:

*“No one who has not taken part in the life of St. Petersburg, in the old days, can possible imagine the gaiety, the charm, the happiness, the liberty of that marvellously [sic] free existence. Of course, in Court circles and at Court functions, the etiquette was very strict; but in general, during the winter months in St. Petersburg, life was one round of gaieties. People did as they pleased. There was no obligation to go anywhere or to do any special thing, unless one felt inclined to do so.”*⁵¹⁵

At the beginning of the new century an American diplomat described his attendance at the first Ball at the splendid Winter Palace (February 8, 1900). Four thousand guests were crowded into the Salle Nicholas I.

“The crowding was rather bad as all wished to see the royalties at their entrance. This occurred at half past nine to the strains of an imposing polonaise. The orchestra is splendid and as it bursts out into this beautiful music, the great doors open and the Empress blazing with diamonds, appears with the Tsar, one feels that he is witnessing one of the most imposing spectacles of royal pageantry that remains in this practical age.

The polonaise is now nothing but a ‘walk around,’ hand in hand up and down the length of the room once, the Grand Marshall and Grand Master of Ceremonies, then the Emperor, the Empress, Grand Dukes and Duchesses and other notables. When the first walk

⁵¹³ M. Eagar, *Six Years at the Russian Court*, (New York: 1906), pp. 89-90.

⁵¹⁴ Nikolai Gubsky, *Angry Dust*, (London: 1937), p. 71.

⁵¹⁵ Nadine Wonlar-Larsky, *The Russia That I Loved*, (Haywards Heath: 1952), p. 11.

around is finished, they change partners and do it again, the Empress with Husny Pasha, . . .
 ...”⁵¹⁶

In Poland and among Poles living outside of Poland Balls ended with the Mazur(ka) Dance. We have at least one account from Russia that this was not the custom in Russia.

*“At 2 a. m. the ball ended with the playing of a Polonaise when their Majesties retired.”*⁵¹⁷

This merely means not that they danced but rather that the orchestra played the music to signal that their Majesties were leaving. As we already know Polonaise music was also played when the entered the Ballroom.⁵¹⁸

At the 1903 annual Winter Court Ball, Tsar Nicholas II danced it.

*“Nicholas, who loved to dance, opened the ball with a Polonaise.”*⁵¹⁹

And again for corroboration:

“Every ball at the palace was opened by a polonaise, the Emperor leading.

*‘Nicky loved dancing and he was good at it – but unfortunately Alicky hated those occasions. She and Nicky stayed for supper, served rather early in the Malachite Hall, and then they vanished. So far as I was concerned, I would have escaped after the first polonaise but, of course, I could not do so.’*⁵²⁰

The most interesting fact about this Polonaise is that at every single circuit an exchange of partners took place. This allows more people to dance with the Tsarist Couple as well as with other High Dignitaries. This is the same way in which the Waltz was performed in St. Petersburg. The new partner previously may have been a bystander.

The above citations give us some choreographic information. Luckily we do have a slightly fuller description. It is from 1908.

“When all the quest had arrived and been placed, the Grand Chamberlain of the court came and made the announcement. We entered the immense ballroom, carpeted for this occasion entirely in red.

Then began a fete the ceremonial of which had not been modified since the time of Catherine the Great. To the slow notes of an old polonaise the sovereigns, the princely guests, and the imperial family, divided into pairs. Each couple made three turns of the ballroom, at each round changing partners. They held each other by the hand as in a ballet, and each time they separated or began a new round the lady curtsied and the gentleman bowed deeply. Court etiquette had even preserved tradition to the extent of placing at one end

⁵¹⁶ H. Hagerman, *Letters of a Young Diplomat*, (Santa Fe: 1900), p. 145. But how did this American know that what he saw was a watered-down version of the Polonaise? From his memoir we know that he did not serve in Poland.

⁵¹⁷ Wolnar-Larsky, *The Russia...*, p. 81.

⁵¹⁸ There is a Russian manual which gives the Polonez as the last dance to be done, immediately following the Mazurka. This manual does not contain any step descriptions. L. G. Chalif, *Instructions For Directors*, Ὠαἰἔδού, Ἐ. Ἄ., Ἐñéónñòâî Áúòü Äèðèæáðñú, (Odessa: 1895), p. 14. Chalif was a dancer and dance teacher at the Warszawa Imperial Theater but he did not describe any step movements for Polish Dances!

⁵¹⁹ Tamara Rice, *Czars and Czarinas of Russia*, (New York: 1968). Unfortunately for the life of Dance, his wife become morose, suspicious, dominating and was not fond of dancing.

⁵²⁰ Ian Vorres, *The Last Grand Duchess, Olga Alexandrovna*, (New York: 1964). p. 93.

*of the ballroom a card table with lighted candles and packs of cards. This was in memory of the Empress Catherine, who at the ceremony played at cards with guests of note. I made my first round with the Emperor the second with the Grand Duke of Hess and the third with the Crown Prince of Rumania, who later became King Ferdinand. Waves of bowing followed our passage down the tight rows of the guests. My curtsy, in leaving the Emperor, was particularly low, a veritable feat of exact balancing of diadem, lace veil, and dress of silver cloth.”*⁵²¹

So we see that it was once around the room then a change of partners at which each does their appropriate Bow. This was repeated twice more. There was mutual bowing done as the dancers passed the spectators in the room. Note that the woman’s curtsy must be carefully done.

The Polonez was not done solely in the capital cities of Russia but also in the provinces of Russia. From deep in the Ukrainian borderland in 1911:

*“One night, the Davydovs took me to a ball in their neighborhood, given by a Russian Princess Yashvil. The whole atmosphere, the decorations, the guests, reminded me of the ball in Tchaikovski’s Eugene Onegin; the only thing missing was the music of the opera, but the dances were the same-polonaise and a real Polish mazur. It was enchanting, and we didn’t get home until six in the morning”*⁵²²

Less than a year before the War began St. Petersburg Society was still peaceful. The Nobles of St. Petersburg, gave a gala fete for the Emperor in 1913.

*“The entrance of the sovereigns was very impressive. They were met by the ‘Grand Marshal of the Nobility of the Province of St. Petersburg’ at the outside entrance. Prince Soltykoff, who had the dignity and manner as well as the blood of the boyars – aristocrats – of ancient Muscovy, handed Her Majesty, always graceful, through the ‘polonaise’ which ceremoniously opened the ball...The Emperor in full uniform looked uncomfortable and intimidated. He walked as rapidly as possible, in military fashion, as if anxious to get the ceremony over and hating to be stared at. It was somewhat of an effort for the beautiful young Countess Koutousoff in her long robes to keep up with His Majesty’s quick stride, which was not in time with the music. She spoke to him,...then he smiled, made a determined effort to slow down, and did his duty. When he saw the bows and curtseys on each side as he passed down the lines of nobles with this radiant partner at his side, he distributed various shy, small nods...and as the marching neared its end he seemed relieved; then, as the trial ended, he bowed and relinquished the hand of his fair lady partner with a grateful sigh.”*⁵²³

This citation accurately reflects the personality of the Emperor. He never wanted to be Emperor and disliked official functions. He could never feel free and easy with the weight of the Empire on his shoulders. It also shows us how easy it is for the Polonaise to become just a walking, just a marching.

⁵²¹ Maria Alexandrovna, *Education Of A Princess: A Memoir*, trans. R. Lord, (New York: 1931), p. 113.

⁵²² Arthur Rubinstein, *My Young Years*, (New York: Knopf, 1973), p. 366.

⁵²³ Princess Cantacuzene, *My Life, Here And There*, (New York: 1921), p. 316. The authoress, who became a Princess with her marriage to a Russian Noble, was a granddaughter of President Grant.

Another description from this time, of the annual once-a-year event, the opening of the “Social Season in St. Petersburg”, held at the Winter Palace corroborates the above citations.

“The great moment was approaching. Their Majesties were coming, in full procession of state, from the Malachite Room.

The orchestra plunged into a polonaise. The Master of Ceremonies gave three taps with their wands; the ‘Arabs’ opened the doors of the room. Everybody turned toward the procession.

The Court ‘polonaise’ was a regular affair of state. The Tsar began by giving his arm to the wife of the doyen of the diplomatic corps. The Grand Dukes similarly invited the wives of the other members of the diplomatic corps, while the Ambassadors went with the Grand Duchesses. The Grand Marshal, surrounded by Master of Ceremonies, all armed with their wands, preceded the Tsar, with an air of clearing a way for him through the crowd of guests. After once going round the room there was a change of lady partners, with strict observance of their ‘seniority’. The number of turns round the hall depended on the number of ladies whom his Majesty considered it necessary to take as partner in this way. None of the guests, save those whom I have just enumerated, were entitled to the high honour of taking part in this dance.

*Immediately after the polonaise a waltz was started.”*⁵²⁴

Our last description of these Court Balls comes from the pen of a rather controversial person, the Baroness Buxhoevden. She was an intimate of the Tsarina’s circle and was captured by the Bolsheviks but was not executed. She may have collaborated with the Bolsheviks.

“The big Court ball, for which two thousand invitations were issued, was held in January. We were summoned for nine o’clock. The great “Nicholas” Hall and those leading up to it were thronged by the whole of Petersburg society. There was a wonderful display of jewellery, most of which is now broken up, or scattered over Europe in antique shops. All the women wore their best frocks, and all the debutantes wore white. There was a mass of Court officials in gold-laced coats and white trousers; officers of the Chevaliers-gardes and the Gardes-a-cheval, the two crack Guards regiment, in the scarlet tunics which they wore only at Court balls; the Emperor’s own Hussars in scarlet dolmans, with the white fur-trimmed mentik slung over their shoulders; cuirassiers in white uniform; and the Cossacks in red, wide-skirted coats. The resplendent garb of the cavalry made the sober dark-green of the infantry and the black and gold of the navy seem dull beside it. The scarlet uniforms of the Emperor’s private band added one more note of colour to the bright scene. At half-past nine the Masters of the Ceremonies tapped the floor, and a hush fell on the assembly. Two wide lanes had been formed down the middle of the ballroom. Grey-haired Hugh Warlich, the bandmaster, his baton raised in the air, was gazing expectantly at the doors. Three taps: the doors were thrown open, and the tall, imposing form of Prince “Sandy” Dolgourouky stood within them. He was then the head of the imperial household. He led out the Mistress of the Robes, old Princess Galitzin, who seemed to be as tall as he was, thanks to her old-fashioned cap of

⁵²⁴ A. A. Mossolov, *At The Court Of The Last Tsar*, (London: 1935), pp. 198-199. Mossolov’s book is one of the best eye-witness accounts of the Court. Here is an example from p. 195. “All the ladies wore ‘Court’ dresses, cut very low, with the shoulders bare, and with a long train. At that time ladies were more delicate about questions of ‘modesty’ than nowadays, and one had to attend a Palace ball in order to admire the full effect of their necks and shoulders. A that time, too, there were none with the ambition to display backs bronzed by the sun; skins that should be white were white as Carrara marble.” Besides the Etiquette of the Court their was also a rigorous Romanov family Etiquette which gave precedence to the Tsar’s mother over his wife. This was only one reason for the poor relations between these two women.

*white lace and ostrich feathers. The old couple turned, the Princess's heavy, stiff dress of light-grey damask rustled as she curtseyed low in time with her companion's profound, courtly bow, facing the Emperor and Empress, who appeared in the doorway. They turned again. Warlich's baton beat time. The strains of the polonaise from A Life for the Tsar floated down the ballroom. Preceded by Dolgourouky and Princess Galitzin, the Emperor walked in, leading the young Empress, and all the Grand Dukes and Duchesses followed in pairs, ladies and gentlemen of the household in couples ending the procession, treading the stately dance up and down the hall."*⁵²⁵

It was in 1913 that the Tsar's two eldest daughters attended the first and last Ball of their young lives. The Ball was given for them by Tsar's mother in the Anichkov Palace. They thoroughly enjoyed themselves and danced to 4 in the morning.

And on and on it went. Then came World War I and the Russian Revolution. The Bolshevik-Communists murdered not only the Tsar, his family and Russia but they also destroyed the Polonez and the Mazur(ka) Dance in Russia proper-and it has not returned yet to Russia. But the Russian contribution to the History and Life of the Polonez and Mazur(ka) is significant by making them known, for most people, to an unknowing world.

*i The Russian Dance Manuals*⁵²⁶

The extant Russian Dance Manuals **describing** the Polonez which are in our possession as of 1997 are listed below in the order: author, date of publication, place of publication.

Petrovski	1825	Kharkov
Tikhomirov	1901	Moscow
Otto	1902	Moscow
Gavlikovski	1907	St. Petersburg
Sterelni	1911	Warszawa
Salto	1912	Moscow

The first thing that should strike us as strange is that only one manual is from St. Petersburg. We do know that Catherine did the Polonaise and that Alexander I often did the Polonaise. Why aren't there more manuals from St. Petersburg? Probably because of the large number of Aristocratic Russians in St. Petersburg who were taught dancing by dancemasters and therefore did not need books of written instructions. But what about the populations of Moscow and Kharkov? Of course, dancemasters were itinerant and these other cities were less Aristocratic than St. Petersburg so there was a need for dance manuals.

Look at the great difference in dates. One is from the 19th century and the rest from the 20th century. These are probably manuals written for the rising non-Aristocratic middle class of Russia who needed to learn the dances of the upper class and the new dances in fashion. They needed to know how to behave in a refined way—they needed to know the Social Graces.

Because these manuals are practically unknown to non-Russian dance teachers and scholars we shall include their full translations,⁵²⁷ even though there is repetition from one source to another.

⁵²⁵ Baroness Sophie Buxhoeveden, *Before The Storm*. (London: 1938), pp. 209-210.

⁵²⁶ All of our original Russian manuals were written in the pre-revolutionary Cyrillic alphabet usings all capital letters. Because of computer software "upgrades", we now using Microsoft XP, cannot reproduce the original type-faces in their entirety. Some of the letter-characters now are the cursive script and not capitals—they should all be printed capitals.

There are more Russian language sources; however, as of 1997, these are the only ones available to the present author, which contain instructional descriptions of the Polonez.

The first manual is decidedly the most important because of its age (1825) and in the length of its description as well as for the critical remarks made by the author. The author is one, L. Petrovski. The full title (translated) of his manual is, “A Correct Guide For The Gentle Social Dances.” It was written for a secondary school deep in today’s Eastern Ukraine (Slovoba-Ukraina) in the city of Kharkov in 1825.⁵²⁸

Kharkov was a University town. Its University was founded in 1825 and was supported by the local Nobility, of which many were Polish, and the merchant class. This University was the second University to be founded in the Ukraine. The student population of Kharkov would be the natural readership for Petrovski’s manual. Here are the remarks of Petrovski on the Polonez.

1825

Petrovski

Polski, Polonaise

In previous years the Minuet was the first dance, all evening parties were started with it, either public or private. This dance, which was for creating and improvement of figure, lost its value over the time, because of its frequent use. Beside this, there were some changes in European fashions and in the way of thinking; there were some new dances as well; one of which was the Polski, which has more freedom and can be performed by any number of dancing couples, also, and not requiring any extra or strong self-control, as the Minuet has, took the place of the first dance. That is why I am starting with Polski, but not going to miss defects of each dance as it was mentioned in the beginning of this book to the reader.

The Polski consist of figures and of three steps, which are done with the left and right leg (foot) as many times as necessary.

Starting with the right leg, it moves forward to the 4th position, 2.) put left leg next to the first and 3.) place the right leg anew into the fourth position. As the Polski does not accept any jumps, so, do not raise too high nor do not bend too low or squat; but always at the time of the second step in the first position, elevate and go down a little bit, but for the other two steps your legs have to be straight.

It is unknown who was the first, who invented this dance and how many different figures he wanted to have. It is only known that it came from the Polish people, it got its beginning from them, and the name is proof of this and, I think that these figures are not occasional, but were invented in stages. Polish people, who as a rule have respect for women, which is of particular importance for them, when they are dancing with women, performing different couple-figures, for example, turning their partner around, or turning around the partner, leaving them and going to the other side, getting closer and making the distance bigger, performing zigzags and leaving their partner, or being left by the partner in the center (we can see at any Noble Assembly), they always act circumspectly, respectfully, without insulting their partner or other dancers with some incivility, for example, pushing against

⁵²⁷ Throughout our works we have presented side-by-side two column’s translations. Sometimes this works well, sometimes it does not. This is true for Petrovski. Therefore we have presented two translations. The first is in paragraph form, the second in the two-column form.

⁵²⁸ The year 1825 is noteworthy in Russian History for in that year a revolt against Tsarism broke out. It failed. Nicolas I also ascended to the throne in 1825.

others with their elbows, stepping on people's feet, or something like this,-especially without making an apology.

Once I saw people dancing the Polski in a different manner-some of them did not keep the rules, some of them made up their own rules, some of them did not dance at all, but walked around according to the music; they made a lot of noise scraping, made long steps jumping, were impolite with their partners, showing familiarity and free relationships with them; but the biggest mistake was done by those who danced it as they would walk in a double march. I could not understand how some Ladies, especially the mature ones, could take these spastic [movements].

Long ago Polish people used to wear Kontusz and Żupan, and if they danced it fast, they would get all tangled in their clothes or have other unpleasant problems; the fashion is changed but the character of this dance was determined by the ancient fashion, so even if this dance is different from the Minuet, it still requires a free tempo and, because of this, has to be performed not fast, but with dignity.

At places where they dance it fast, walk and perform figure-sequences quickly, without showing any respect to partners, the host or assembly, it seems that there everyone is just concerned with themselves and [are] walking fast to get the dance over with.

I do not know who thought out this Figure wherein all the couples are walking under the hands raised by people who stay in front of them; in Poland they do not use it and it seems to me that this figure is impolite. To raise hands over someone's head, especially of people who are older than you and of more Dignity, to make them bend, this is not a noble and pleasant [action to do]. Also, I do not know who thought out the Round Polski; no one in Poland dances this Figure; but [when it is done] without these actions, except for the fact that they use French figures such as the **rond**, **chaine** and so on, I do not fault this, as, it is appropriate to think of new figures sometimes as long as one stays within the boundaries of Decency [of Courtesy] and the rules [of the dance].

I've heard and seen how the old, clear Polish manners were kept on the solemn dance. When the dancer [the man] of the first couple performed any new figure, everyone followed him with pleasure and if he called: Circle! Everyone joined hands and made a circle as large as the Ballroom allowed. After they performed the circle in both directions, the Leader steps out with his partner into the center of the circle of dancers, thanks his partner for dancing with him and leaves the circle of dancers. Then this lady has to select a man who she likes, and leaves him at her place, and it continues until people see decent people, or until the end [until there aren't any people left].

What will the people have to do when they are not chosen? I saw it, that some dandies or impolite people had to stay patiently in the circle and no one even thought to pick them up; and at the end they had to leave or choose themselves. That is why young people tried to behave, to be modest and respectful to Ladies and older people.

I think the reader will agree with me that there will be only real pleasure, if young people will be respectful to Ladies and older people; and viceversa: you can have fun and pleasure in the assembly if you have watch [yourself] carefully for impoliteness. Therefore, to have a decent pleasure (which I wish you very much), the dance teacher has to keep saying to his students about indecent things and teach them, so that young people especially males, show the proper respect for others and then they will in turn [gain the Respect from others]. Therefore, the male partner in the Polski will not pull his Lady, will not come too close to her or push against her, but follow her with some distance, giving her the first place [of Honor], and the Lady will appreciate it politely and she will show a strong, but easy compliance; both

of them have to keep their hands rounded at the level of their chest, otherwise this will lead to carelessness in the dancer's appearance and reveals also a carelessness in Spiritual Nobility.⁵²⁹

We immediately see that Petrovski uses two terms for this Dance: "Polski" and "Polonaise"—writing "Polski", as "Polskoi", Польской, in the Russian (Cyrillic) alphabet. The step description seems a little puzzling.⁵³⁰ His criticism of people "dancing the Polski in a different manner" includes the loud dragging or sliding of the feet, jumping and being informal with their partners with the greatest fault being the "double marche" by which he probably means, dancing in 2/4 time – remembering that the Polski is in 3/4 time.

Note that Petrovski is fully aware of the relationship between the clothes worn and the type of dance. Hopping, jumping do not fit the Polski because of the heavier, fuller attire. This attire does lend itself to the dignity of the Dance. We can see that Petrovski realizes that showing Respect for one's partner is, perhaps, the entire nature of this Dance.

Aren't his comments on the figure where couples pass beneath the up-raised arms of the other couples interesting? Or is it just fussy? It definitely implies that Petrovski knew the Dance as it was done in Poland.

His manual also shows how the Dance came to be more complicated, not in step-movements, but in its group choreography. Having said this, however, we do note that Petrovski does recognize that new figures can be used "as long as one stays within the boundaries of Decency [of Courtesy] and the rules [of the dance]."

His description of the 'Circle' figure proves the long-life of this type of figure-action, that is, that of choosing a new partner, then leaving the circle, etc. A variant of this still exists in the Żywieckian Polonez (Described in the present work).

Since Petrovski wrote his book for the instruction of young people it is natural that he should direct his remarks toward Young People, especially Young Men. We learn that arms and hands should be held chest high. This implies that arms and hands which are held low or over the head are not "Noble" or not Aesthetically pleasing.

Now we give the two column translation of Petrovski.

Polski, Polonaise

In previous years the Minuet
was the first dance,
which began the cheerful evenings,
either public or private.
This dance [the Minuet],
served to educate and
to refine the [Social Dance] figures,
but with the passage of time
it lost its value [privileged place]
having become over-used.
Besides this,
as a consequence of time,
and in European [clothing] fashions,

ĭîëúñêîé, Polonaise

“Áú ěðáæíëÿ áðáìáíà ìáíóáøú
íðèíÿøú áúëú ìáðáúúú øàíóîúú,
êîèúú ìá+èíéèñú áñáèíñøú áá+áðíëÿ,
íóáèè+íúÿ.
Ñáé øàíáøú,
ñéóæàùèé éú ìáðàçíáàíèð è
óñíááðøáíñøáíáàíèð øèáóðú,
áú ìñèááñøáèè áðáìáíè
ííøáðÿèè ñáíð óáíó
íøú +áñøàáí óííððááèáíëÿ.
Éú øííóæú
ñí áðáìáíè ìáðáìáíú, ìñèááíáàáðèøú
ó Ááðííáéöíáú èàéú áú ìááæáá,

⁵²⁹ L. Petrovski, *Pravila dla Blagorodnizh Obshchestveezh Tantsov*, (Kharkov: 1825), pp. 54-59.

⁵³⁰ For the step see the Historical Section of the Workbook.

and in the way of thinking,
 there appeared as well new dances;
 among them, the Polski,
 which has more freedom [or ease]
 and can be danced by any
 number of couples,
 and since it did not require any
 great or strict self-control,
 as the Minuet did,
 it [the Polski] took the first place,
 as the First Dance.
 Therefore I am starting
 with the Polski,
 however without citing the defects,
 of each dance, as,
 was mentioned at the beginning
 of this book to the reader. –

It [the Polski] consists of figures
 and of three steps,
 which are done with the left
 and right foot,
 as many times as is necessary.

Starting with the right foot,
 move it first
 to the 4th position,
 2.) bring, place the left by the first
 and 3.) place the right anew
 into the 4th position.
 As the Polski does not have any hops,
 so also there are no high risings
 nor bendings,
 too low,
 or squatting;
 but always at the 2nd step
 in the first position, rise
 and fall a little,
 but for the other two steps
 your feet [legs] should be straight. –

Who was the first,
 who invented this dance
 or named it
 or set its figures,
 is not known.
 It is only known,
 that it is the dance of the Poles,
 that with them it began,
 as the name shows us and,
 I think,
 these figures were not haphazard,
 but were invented in stages.
 The Poles, who show

oàêú è áú íáðàçú îũñěáé,
 ŷâèèèñú ííâíñøè è áú øàíóàòú;
 è øíããà ííëúñêíé,
 êíøíðúé èíááøú áíëãã ñâíáíâú
 è øàíóòáøñŷ íáííðãããéáííúíú
 ÷èñěííú ìàðú,
 à ííøííó íñâíáíæããøú íøú
 èçèèøíáé è ñøðíáíé áúããðæèè,
 ñâíéñøãáííé ìáíóáóó,
 çáíŷéú ìáñøí ìáðâííà÷àèúíàãí,
 øàíóà.
 Ííñâíó è ŷ íà÷èíàð
 ñú ííëúñêããí,
 íá ìðííóñêãŷ çàíà÷àøú íáãíñøàøêíáí,
 êãããããí øàíóà, èàêú,
 óíííŷíóéú áú íà÷àèú
 ñí÷èíáíéŷ éú ÷èøàóóèð. –

Ííú ñíñøããéŷáøñŷ èçú òèãóðú
 è èŷú øðáòú øíëúêí øããíáú,
 êíøíðúá áúããéúãàðøñŷ éãáíð
 è ìðããíð ííãíð,
 ñêíëúêí ðàçíáú íííãñáèøñŷ.

Íà÷èíàŷ ñú ìðããíé ííãè,
 ííããèãããøñŷ ííà áíáðáéú
 éú 4-é ííçèòèè,
 2.) ìðèñøããéŷáøñŷ éãããŷ éú ìáðáíé
 è 3) íøñøããéŷáøñŷ ííŷøú ìðãããŷ
 éú 4-é ííçèòáè.
 Êàèú ííëúñêíé íá øáðíèøú ìðúæêíáú,
 øí íí ñâíó è íá áíëãíí
 íè ñèèøêííú ííáíèìàøúñŷ,
 íè ñèèøêííú ñãèããøúñŷ,
 èèè ìðèñãããøú;
 íí ñèããèà íà 2-íú øããó
 áú ìáðáíé ííçèòèè ííáíèìàøúñŷ
 è íèóñêèàøúñŷ,
 áú íñøàèúíúòú æã áãóòú øãããòú
 ííãè áíëãíú áúøú áúøŷíóøú. –

Êøí áúéú ìáðáúé,
 êíøíðúé èçíáðáéú ñãé øàíáòú
 è ñêíëúêí íàçíà÷èú
 ìðããèèúíúòú òèãóðú,
 íáèçããñøíí.
 Èçããñøíí øíëúêí,
 ÷øí ííú øàíáòú Ííëŷêíáú,
 íøú íèøú ííëò÷èú ñâíá íà÷àèí,
 èàèú øí íàçããíèã áíèàçúãããøú è,
 èàèú ìíá èãããøñŷ,
 òèãóðú áãí íá áãðóáú,
 íí ííñøããííí áúãóíúãããíú áúèè.
 Ííëŷèè ó êíøíðúòú êí÷øáíèã

respect toward Ladies,
 this is Rule [of behavior]
 and is very important to them,
 so that as they are dancing,
 as they are doing different figures,
 for example
 turning the Lady around oneself
 or turning around her,
 leaving the partner
 and going to the other side,
 coming and going,
 showing the desire to rejoin
 harmlessly without
 quick extrication,
 doing zigzags,
 and leaving the Lady,
 or leaving
 her [alone]
 in the center
 (as we can see at any
 Noble Assembly),
 they always act circumspectly
 and respectfully,
 without insulting the Lady
 or other dancers
 with some incivility:
 for example:
 not pushing with their elbows,
 or not stepping on people's feet
 of something like this –
 without making
 an apology.

Once I saw people dancing
 the Polski in a different way –
 some did not follow
 the rules;
 some did their own [rules],
 some different
 movements did,
 some did not dance at all,
 but [only] walked to the music;
 [or] made with their feet
 scraping noises,
 [or] made long steps,
 jumpingly,
 [or] were impolite
 with the Lady,
 by showing too much familiarity
 with the Lady,
 as I myself
 have seen:
 but the biggest mistake
 was done by those who danced,

éú ààìàìú,
 ìî÷èøààøñÿ çà ìðààèèî
 è ìðèìààèèæèøú éú íáúéííàáíèÿìú,
 øàìòòÿ ñáé øíðæáñøááííúé äëÿ íèøú
 øàìáòú ñú áúááèúááíèèìú òèáòðú,
 èàèú øí
 ìíáíðà÷èààÿ áíçèá ñááÿ ààìú
 è ñááÿ áíèðóáú íèøú,
 ìñøààèÿÿ èøú
 è èáÿ áú äðóáòð ñøíðííó,
 ñøíáÿñú è ðàñðíáÿñú,
 ìíèàçúááÿ áú æèèáíèè ñíááèíèèøúñÿ
 ááçáèííúé íáìàìú
 ÷ðáçú ñèíðíá èçáíðà÷èàáíèè,
 ááèàÿ çèãçáèè
 è ìñøààèÿÿ ààìú
 èèè íàìðíèèáú
 èìè ìñøààèÿáìú áóáò÷è
 áú ñáðáàèíá
 (èàèú àèááøú ìíæíí áí áñÿèíú
 áèááíðíáííú ñíáðáíèè),
 ìíñøíáòøú ìñííøðèøáèúíí
 è áèááííðèñíèíí,
 íá íáíð÷àÿ ààìú
 èèè øàìòòðùèøú áíçèá ñááÿ
 èàèíð èèáí íáááæèèáíñøèð:
 èàèíáú íà ìð:
 øíè÷è èíèøÿìè,
 èèè æá äðóáèìú íàñøíáíèè íà ííáè
 è øííò ìíáííúÿ –
 áà áúá è ááçú
 èçáèíáíèÿ ìñøààèÿáìúÿ.

Ñèó÷èèíú ìíá àèááøú øàìòòðùèèøú
 Ìíèúñèé ðàçèè÷íúíú íáðàçíú –
 íáíè ñíáñáìú íá
 ìðèááðæèáàèèñú èðáàèèú;
 èðóáèè ìðèáááèÿèè, ñáíá;
 èíúá íè ñáíááí íè
 ÷óæááí íá ááèàèè,
 èíøííò ÷øí íá øàìòíáàèè,
 à òíáèèè áú øàèøú;
 ìðíèçáíáèèè øàðèáíèèìú ííáú
 íáìðèÿøíúé øóíú,
 áúááèúááèèè øááè áí áñð ííáó,
 ñú ìíáñèèèèááíèèìú,
 ááèè íáááæèèáí ààìú
 ñáíèøú ìíáú ðóèè,
 ìíèàçúááÿ çíáèííñøáí è áíèúííá
 íáðáùáíèè ñú íèèè,
 èàèú áóáòí ñáíè
 ñú ñíáíð íáðáùáèèèñú:
 à ñáíèèú íøèáí÷íúíú íáðàçíú
 øàìòíáàèèè ááí øá,

who would do it as if it were,
 a double march to walk to.
 I do not understand,
 why some Ladies,
 especially the mature ones,
 would take these spastic
 movements.

Long ago the Poles, use to wear
 the Kontusz and Żupan,
 and if they were to dance quickly,
 they would get tangled or
 other unpleasantness would
 occur:
 this fashion has changed,
 but the
 dance's character,
 being formed by the old fashion,
 and even if different
 from the Minuet,
 it still requires a slow tempo,
 and because of this,
 it should not be fast,
 but with dignity.

At places where,
 they dance it fast, –
 move and do
 figures quickly,
 without showing
 respect to Ladies,
 or to the Host or Company,
 it seems, that in this case,
 everyone is self-centered and
 are walking quickly
 in order to finish the dance.

I do not know,
 of the figure, where all the couples
 go under the up-raised hands
 [of the couples] standing in front
 of the [approaching] couples:
 in Poland they do not do this
 and it seems [to me],
 that this is impolite.
 To rise hands over
 someone's head,
 especially of one's Elders
 of persons with dignity and
 forcing them to bend,
 [this] is not a noble
 [action] to do.
 I also do not know,
 who thought of the Round Polski;

éíøíðúá áú áú óíðñèðíâáíííú,
 éíè äâíéííú iàðøá òíâèèè.
 Íá ííáú ŷ íííýøú,
 éâèèíú íáðàçííú äàíú,
 à èíáííí ñíéèäíúŷ
 ííãóøú ñííñèøú øâéòþ
 äâðøëŷâíñøú.

Äðááíèä Ííëŷêè, íääáäŷñú
 áú éííøøú è æóíáíú,
 ãñèèáú ñéíðí øàíóíâèè äâí,
 ííãèèáú çàíóøàøúñŷ áú íèàøúá è
 ííääáðãíóøúñŷ äðóäèíú íáíðèŷøíúíú
 ñéó+àŷíú:
 à ñèà è íí èçíáíáíþ íääæú,
 øâéú óñøàííâèèí
 òàðàèøáðú ñááí øàíòà,
 ÷øí ííúé òíøŷ
 è íøèè+ääøñŷ
 íøú íáíóáøà,
 íáíâèí øðááóáøú âíëúíâáí øàííà;
 à ííøíó íá ñéíðí,
 íí äâæíí øàíóíâèøú
 äâí ñèääóáøú.

Òàíú æá,
 äèá øàíóòþøú ñéíðí, –
 òíáŷøú è ääèàþøú
 ôèãóðú ñú ðáçáíñøèþ,
 ááçú áèääííðèñøíéííñøè
 äíèæííé äàíàíú,
 òíçŷèíó è ñíáðàíèþ,
 è èâæáøñŷ, ÷øí øàíú äñŷéíé íè+áíú,
 èâéú øíëúéí ñàíèíú ñíáíþ çàíŷøú è
 òíáŷ áú ñéíðíñøè
 èñíðàäèŷáøú ñáíè ääèà.

Íá çíàþ,
 éøí áúéóíàèú ôèãóðó, äàáú äñá íàðú
 íðíðíâèèè ííáú ðóèèèè
 äíáðáèè
 ñøíŷùèøú:
 áú Ííëúøá ííà íá óííøðááèøáèúíà
 è èâæáøñŷ,
 íàèí èíááøú áèääííðèñøíéííñøè.
 Ííáíèíàøú ðóèè íàáú
 äíèíâèèè äðóäèøú,
 íí áíëúøíé ÷ãñøè ñøàðøèøú ñááŷ
 áíçðàñøíú è áíñøíéííñøáíú è
 çàñøàäèŷøú èøú ñæèáàøúñŷ,
 íá ñèèøéííú áèääíðíáíí
 è íðèŷøíí.
 Íáçíàþ øâèæá,
 éøí áúéóíàèú èðóäèèú ííëúñéíé;

thought to choose them;
 it was proper, finally
 or they had to leave instead
 or choose themselves.
 That is why young people,
 tried to behave,
 to be modest and respectful
 to Ladies and Elders. –

I think, that the reader
 will agree with me
 that it is enough for Youths
 to willingly be
 respectful to Ladies
 and Elders,
 in order for them to expect
 [the Dance] to be pleasurable
 and vice versa,
 you can have fun,
 and pleasure at
 these gatherings,
 if you watch yourself,
 so that you do not
 be impolite to anyone.
 Therefore, to give yourself
 decent pleasures [from the dance]
 (which I wish you very much),
 the teacher of dance must
 as often as it is possible
 tell his beginning students
 about indecent actions
 and teach them so the young,
 especially males,
 will know to others to be respectful,
 then in [their] Social-Life
 in Educated and higher Circles
 so thus by esteeming others
 and they will likewise be
 by others[held] in esteem.
 And therefore, the man in the Polski
 will not pull the Lady,
 will not come to close to her,
 will not push
 up against [her] side,
 but following behind her
 at some distance,
 giving to her the first place,
 this the Lady politely
 will appreciate all courtesies,
 and [because of this] she will allow,
 [herself] to be freely and easily lead:
 both however have to keep
 keep their hands rounded,
 at the level of the chest,

èõú íá äóìàèú;
 ìí÷áìó äìèæíú áúèè íàìîñèääíèú
 èèè íøíéøè íè ñú ÷áíú,
 èèè èçáðàøú ñàìùõú ñááy.
 Íøú øíãí îíèíáúá,
 äääú ñääèèøúñý äîñøíéíúìè áúáíðà,
 ñøàðàèèñú ñèðíííúìèè ìí÷øèøáèúíúìè
 èú äàìàú è ñøàðøèìú ñááy. –

Èàæáøñý, ÷èøàøáèú
 ñíãèèñèøñý ñí ìíìþ áú øííú ìíáíèè,
 ÷øí áñèè þííøáñøáí íá áóááèøú
 ñèèøèíú áíèúíí
 íáðàùàúñý ñú äàìàèè
 è ñøàðøèìè,
 øàìú øíèúèí íæèääøú
 èñøèííááí óáíáíèúñøáèý;
 è íàìðíøèáú,
 áñøúèè ìáñøí ááñáèíøè,
 èèè óáíáíèúñøáèý áú
 øàèíú ñíáðáíèè,
 äää øíãí è ñííøðáøú äìèæíí,
 ÷øí áú íá ñááèáíí
 áúèí èíìó íáó÷øèáñøáà.
 À ìíøíìó, äääú ñú
 áèääííðèñøíéííñøèþ ááñáèèøúñý
 (÷ááí óñáðáíí æáèþ),
 ó÷èøáèú øàíóíáú äìèæáíú
 ñèíèúèí ìíæíí ÷àùá
 øááðàèøú ó÷àùáìóñý
 í áñáøú íáìðèèè÷èýõú áú íáðíæááíèè
 è íáó÷àøú äääú ìíèíáúá èþàè,
 ìñíááííí ìíæáñèèääí
 ìíèà èìáèè èú äðóãèìú óááæáíèà,
 øðááóáííá íáúáæøèáíú,
 íáðàçíááíííñøèþ è èþáèíñøèþ;
 øàèèìú íáðàçííú ìí÷èøáy äðóãèðú,
 ñááy ñääèèþøú
 äîñøíéíúìè ìí÷øáíèý.
 È øàèú, èääáèèáðú áú Ìíèúñèíú
 áááy äàìó,
 íá øýíóèú áú áá çà ñíáíé,
 íá ìðèáèèæáèñý áú èú íáé áí øíãí,
 ÷øíáú ñøàèèèèääøúñý áíèíú,
 à øáèú áú çà íáþ
 áú íáèíøíðííú ðàçñøíýíèè,
 ìñøääèýý áé íáðáíá ìáñøí,
 ÷øí äàìà ìðèíýáú
 çí áñáþ áíçííæííþ ááæèèáíñøèþ,
 íááèþáàøú äìèæíá áçàèííí ñøðíáðþ,
 íí íáìðèíóæááííóþ øí÷ííñøú:
 íáà æá äáðæèè
 áú ðóèè çàèðóãèáííúìè
 ìðíøèèú äðóãè,

otherwise this will lead
to carelessness in the dancer's look
and will reveal a lack of
of [their] Nobility of Spirit.

îîóùáíèá êîøîðúòú áääáòú
éú íááðáæíîñè áú íàðóæííú áèèá
è îîèàçúääòú îîæáòú íááðáæáíèá
î áèèáîðîñèá ñàìàáî áóà.”⁵³¹

Our second manual takes us all the way to 1901. It was written by A. D. Tikhomirov.

Polonez (Polonaise).

The Polonaise is always
an introduction to the Ball
and serves as a beginning for any Ball.
This Dance doesn't require a special
choreographic knowledge and
can be done by anyone.
It is done with a simple
and [has] a beautiful step (pas marche)
done according to the music.
Because the Dance is
made of figures sequences,
the Polonaise requires guidance by
a participating Leader.

When the music
plays the first measures,
the Leader announces the Polonez.
Next, the Leader,
stands at the end of the Ballroom
and gives his right hand to his partner [Lady]
and thus creates with her
the first couple (drawing 8).
Behind them, [all the other couples]
stand either in a
special order,
which has been previously arranged
as is customarily done
for Official Balls,
or [couples] form
in a random order.
In either case,
couples dance so as
keep their spacing [as they
dance] one behind the other,
trying to preserve,

ĪĪĪĪŸĆÚ (Polonaise).

“ĪĪĪĪŸĆÚ ŸâÿâðñŸ êàèú
áú áääááíáíú áú áàèú
è ñéóæèòú íà÷àèíú áñŸèääî áèèá.
Ÿòîòú òàíáòú íá òðááóáòú îñíáúòú
òîðáíáðàðè÷áñèèòú èîçíáíáé è
îîæáòú áúòú áúèîèŸáíú áñŸèèú.
ÈñîèŸáðñŸ íú îðîñðíé
è éðàñèèíé îîðîèéíé (pas marche),
ñíáèàñíáàííé ñú îóçúèíé.
Èàèú òàíáòú ñú
îðáíáè÷áñèèèè òèèóðàèè,
ĪĪĪĪŸĆÚ òðááóáòú íáíðáíáíááî
ó÷áñðáŸ àèðèæáðà.

Éíááà îóçúèà
îðîèèðááòú íáðáúá òàèòú,
àèðèæáðú íáúŸáèŸáòú ĪĪĪĪŸĆÚ.
Áñèááú çàðáíú íú,
áñðàáú ó éííòà çàèú,
ĪĪááòú Īðááóð òóéó ñáíáé ààìá
è íáðàçóáòú ñú íáé
Īáðáóð Īàðó (ðèñ. 8).
Çà íèèè
ñèááóðòú ĪñðàèúíúŸ Īàðú
èèè ĪĪ ĪĪðŸáèó,
çàðáíáá íàçíá÷áíííó,
éàèú Ÿòí áúáááòú íáúéíááííí
íà íðèòáàèúíúòú áàèèòú,
èèè æá áú ĪĪðŸáèá
ñéó÷áéííé Īñèááíáàðáèúííñèè.
Áú òíú è áðóáíú
ñéó÷áŸòú Īàðú èáóòú
íà ĪĪðáááèáíííú ðàçñòíŸíáè
áðóáú íòú áðóáá,
ñðàðàŸñú ñíððáíèòú

⁵³¹ L. Petrovski, *Pravila dla Blagorodnizh Obshchevtveezh Tantsov*, (Kharkov: 1825), pp. 54-59.

the orderly line.
It is the Leader's responsibility
to maintain this.

öäëîñòú ëîñòú ëèíáè.
Ñěääèòú çà ýðèìú éåæèòú
íà íáÿçàííîñòè äèðèæáðà.

When all the couples
come to their starting places,
the Leader,
usually announces
without interruption:
Valse (Waltz),
at which all couples start
to Waltz from the places
where they stopped
at the last sounds of the Polonaise.
Having been invited
for the Polonaise,
the [Lady] is [automatically] invited
for the next Dance after it.

Êíâää àñá ìàðú
çàéìòòú ìðáæíèÿ ìáñðà,
äèðèæáðú,
íáúéíâáííí ááñú
íáðáðúââ, íáúÿâèÿáòú:
Valse (âàèüñú),
éìòíðúé íà÷èíááðñÿ áñáìè ìàðàìè
ñú òáòú ìáñòú,
à éìòíðúòú ííá ìñðàííâèèèñü
ìðè ìîñèääíèòú çâóéàòú ìèèèèÿçà.
Âðíðè÷èââí ìðèâèèðáíèàÿ
íà ìèèííÿçú,
ñ÷èðàððñÿ òàèèæá ìðèâèèðáííé
è ìà áèèæáèèèè òàíáòú.”⁵³²

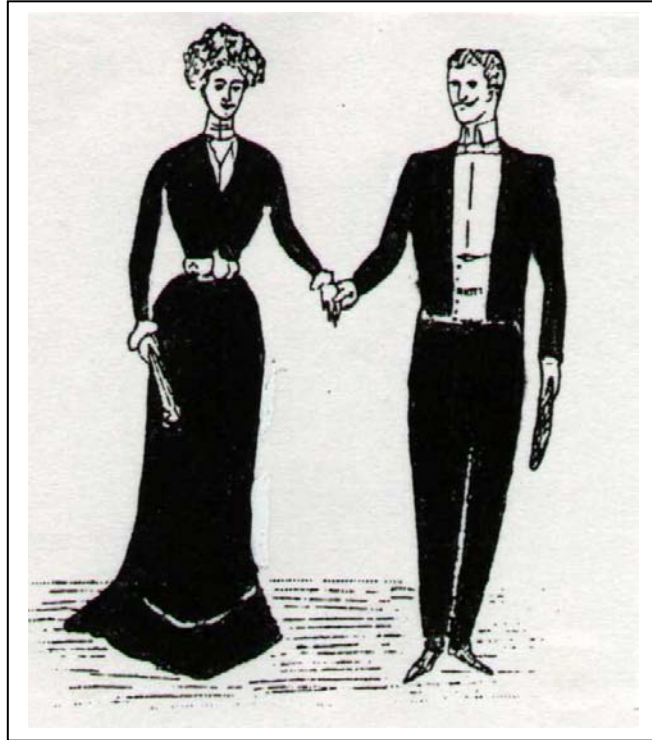
Tikhomirov was a dancer as well as a dance teacher. His short description is not a copy of Petrovski—but it does have the flavor of someone who danced it or was present when it was danced. He used the term “Polonez”, “İëîíáçú” in the Russian alphabet, and the term “Polonaise.” Contrast this with Petrovski who used the old Polish term “Polski.” Thus Tikhomirov illustrates the name change which took place over time.

Tikhomirov definitely tells us that the step is the “Pas Marche”—the marching step. This step can have risings and lowerings and knee-bending. The dancing is led by the “leader” who is the male partner of the first couple. There are several drawings which show this. He gives no complicated figure-sequences. He does give some simple figures actions through which the leader conducts the column of couples. These simple actions the leader calls out—either in the Russian or French languages.

The leader must see to it that the couples keep an even spacing between themselves. A Waltz immediately follows the Polonez with no need to re-ask the woman to dance the Waltz.

The following drawing, from Tikhomirov, shows the starting position for the Polonez.

⁵³² A.D.Tikhomirov, *Samouchitel Modnizh Balnizh*, (Moscow: 1901), pp. 22-23,26.



Note that the partners are not close together. Their elbows are not in contact. Their hands are lower than chest high. The woman is carrying a fan and the man his collapsed top-hat. The style of the clothes is that of the early 1900s.

From the same city of Moscow, just one year later (1902) A.K. Otto published his manual. His description is short.

Polonez

The Polonez starts in the following manner: couples stand one behind another, creating [thereby] a column of couples. and then [the leader] takes this entire column once around the ballroom, and then walks [leads] them to the center of the ballroom. Then he gives a command: Ladies to the right, Gentlemen to the left, so that, after this action there are two columns, that is the Gentlemen on one side

Īīēīāçú

“Īīēīāçú ĩà +èĭāāðñÿ
 ñēāāðpùèiú ĩáðàçĭiú:
 ñðàĭĭâÿðñÿ ĩàðà çà ĩàðĭé
 áú ĩāĭó ēĭēĭĭíó
 è āñp ýðó
 ēĭēĭĭíó ðāñĭĭðÿæèðáēú āāāáú
 ĩāèèú ðàçú ēðóāĭiú çāĭú,
 à çàðāiú āāāāðú āñp ýðó ēĭēĭèèó
 áú ñāðāāèĭó çāēú.
 Çàðāiú ēĭĭāĭāóāðú:
 āāiú ĩāĭðāāĭ,
 ēāāāèāðú ĩāèāāĭ;
 òāēú, +òĭ ĩĭñēā ýðĭāĭ
 āāèæāĭÿ ĩĭēó+àpðñÿ
 āāā ēĭēĭĭíú, ò. á.
 ĩà ĩāĭĭé ñðĭðĭĭā èāāāèāðú,

and the Ladies on the other;
 after this he gives the command:
 “make a bow to your Lady”,
 and after which, the command:
 Gentlemen go to your partners,
 that is, the first Gentlemen goes
 to his partner and
 takes with his right hand
 her left hand
 and then goes with her
 to the middle of the ballroom
 [and then they dance]
 to the end of the room.
 Likewise the same is done
 by the other
 Gentlemen ,so [thereby]
 they create one column [of couples].
 Then the leader gives a command:
 couple to the left, couple to the right,
 so that there are
 two columns[of couples].
 After this he commands:
 “gate”, this means that one
 of the column [of couples],
 raise [their joined] hands up,
 and let the other column go under,
 after which the command given is:
 by two couples, so that, . . .

à íà äðóãîé äàìù;
 ïîñéå ýðîíâî éîîàíáóáðú:
 `íîééííú ñâíâé äàìá' ,
 ïîðîíú éîîàíáóáðú:
 éääàéåðú éú ñâíèù äàìàíú,
 ò. á. ïâðâúé éääàéåðú ïîäðîäèðú
 éú ñâíâé äàìá è ,
 ááðáðú ñâíâé ïðââîé
 éääóð ðóéó äàìù
 è íà÷èíàáðú ñú íâé èäðè
 ïîñðââéíâ çàèú

 äî éíîòà,
 òí æâ ñâíâá ïðîâíèèæàððòú
 ñéääóðùää
 éääàéåðú, òàèú, ÷ðî
 ïîéó÷èðñý íâíâ éíèíííâ.
 Çàðâíú ðàñíîðýäèðâéú éîîàíáóáðú:
 ïàðà íàéääâí, ïàðà íâíðââí,
 òàèú ÷ðî
 ïîéó÷èðñý äää éíèíííú.
 ïîñéå ýðîíâî éâèæâíâý éîîàíáóáðú
 `âíðîðà', ò. á. íâíâ
 éíèíííó,
 ïîâíèèèàáðú ñâíèè ðóéè äääððú,
 ïðîíîñèèâý äðóãóð éíèíííó,
 çàðâíú éíüâíáóáðú áú äää ïàðú,
 òàèú ÷ðî . . . ”⁵³³

Otto uses only the term, Polonez, or “ïèñíâçú” in Russian. Note that beside calling the command to bow that Otto has one column of couples pass under the joined upraised hands of the other column of couples, Petrovski’s objections notwithstanding. This is still a popular figure today (1997) and Petrovski’s criticism of it is still valid.

Note that Otto does not describe the step.

At last a manual published in 1907 represents St.Petersburg. H.L.Gavlikowski who was both a dancer and teacher at the Imperial Theater School of St. Petersburg wrote it. This 1907 manual is the third edition. The forward of the book assures us that this does contain all the contemporary dances of its time.

He does have a series of simple figures. (The symbols used in his manual are the same as in Mestenhauer’s Polish Language manual and were used by others also.) Gavlikovski does include a drawing—a rather poor one—but it does show all the men leading with their left foot, except for the third man. (You can see the reflection of their feet on the polished floor.)

⁵³³ A. K. Otto, *Samouchitel Noveyeshizh Balnizh Tantsov*, (Moscow: 1902), p. 8.

Polonez (Polonaise)

Polski

The name of this Dance shows its origin from Poland.

This old, majestic Dance or to be specific, ceremonial march is done before dances [Balls] begin.

The Polonez is always the beginning for dances at important Balls and ceremonial parties; thereby showing its significance as an introduction to any Ball. and its goal is to prepare people to dance, to make their steps and manners [of dancing] more elegant and refined.

The Dance is not complicated; it is nothing else but slow and elegant, requiring a strong rhythm, [a] walking to the music.

Īīēīāçú (Polonaise)

Īīēúñēāép

“Īāīī óæā íàçāāíēā Īīēàçúāāāòú,
+òī ðīāēíà ýòīāī òāíòā
āñòú Īīēúøà.

Ýòī ñòàðèííúé
āāēē+āñòāāííúé òāíāòú,
èíè, āāðíāā, òíðæāñòāāííúé ìàðøú
īāðāāú íà+āēīíú òāíòāāú.

Īīēīāçííú ìðèðúāāþòú āñāāā
òāíòú íà áíēúøèòú áāēàòú
è òíðæāñòāāííúòú Īēðøāñòāāòú;
ííú òāēú ñēàçàòú āñòú
'āāāāāíēā' āñýēāāī áāēà,
èìāþùāā òāēúþ Īīāāíðíāèòú
éú òāíòāíú
è ñāāēàòú Īīðíāēó
è ìāíāòú òāíòóþùòú
āíēāā èçýúííúè è òíí+āííúè.

Òāíāòú ýòíòú íā ñēíæāíú,
ííú íè+òí èííā, èāēú
ìāðíāý, èçýúíāý,
òðāāóþùāý ñòðíāāāī ðèòìà,
īðíāóēēā Īīāú íóçúēó.



In the Polski the step has to be free, in accordance

øāāú āú Īīēúñēīíú
āíēæāíú āúòú āíēíā
ñāíāíāāíú è ñīāēāñíāàòúñý

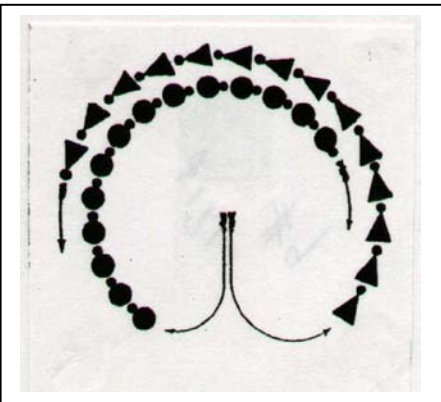
with the musical tempo,
with a light bending
of the right and then the left leg
(alternately, marking the first
quarter of time).

The "Polonez" is done by
all dancers
in various figures.
After the Gentlemen invite the Ladies,
they all promenade in couples: that is,
one couple behind the other couple,
all being conducted by the Leader.
After [this] promenade all the dancers
form one column
[of couples]
after which they (partager) [divide],
that is, the Gentlemen go to the left,
Ladies go to the right,
to the other end of the Ballroom
where they do (passe)
[the passing figure],
that is, the Gentlemen pass by
their partner,
(drawing No 9)

ñú òàìíííú íòçúèè,
ñú äääèèíú íðèñääáíèàíú
òí íà íðääíé, òí íà äääíé ííää
(íííáðáíáíí íáíçíà+äÿ
íäðáúÿ +äðääðòè òàèòà).

'Ííéííáçú' èñííéíÿáðñÿ áñáìè
òàíóòpùèèè áú
ðàçíííáðàçíúóú òèäóðáóú.
Ííñèá íðèäèäðáíèÿ äääèäðàìè äàíú,
ääèääðñÿ íáùèé íðííáíàáú, ò. á.
Íðíáóèèè àðàìè: íàðà çà íàðíé,
íðääáíäèðáéúñðáóáíúÿ äèðèæáðííú.
Ííñèá íðííáíàää áñá òàíóòpùèè
ñòàííáÿðñÿ áú íáíó éíèéííó
(a une colonne)
çàðáíú ääèääðñÿ (partager),
ò. á. äääèäðáú èäóóú íà äääí,
ääíú íà íðääí,
ääí äðóáíí éííòà çàèú;
ääá ääèääðñÿ (passe),

ò. á. äääèäðáú íðíóíáÿòú ìèìí
ñáíèòú äàíú;
(ñí. ðèñ. No 9)



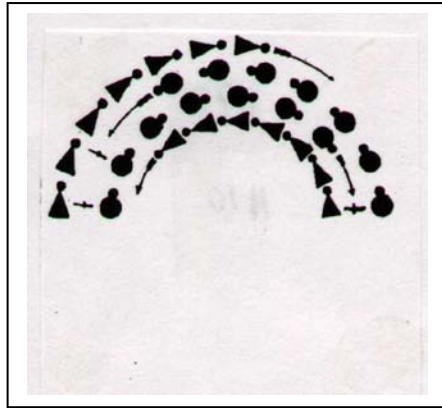
(Dèñ. 9)

and again at the other
end of the Ballroom when they come
next to each, one to another,
they rejoin hands and do the promenade,
then again they form one column
and then they separate
the next going to the left

è ííÿòú íà äðóáííú
éííòá çàèú ííääòú
ðóáú äðóó
ðóèè è ääèàòú íáùèé íðííáíàáú;
ííÿòú ñòàííáÿðñÿ áú íáíó éííííó
íà íðääí,
äðóääÿ íà äääí è ðàñóíáÿðñÿ

one couple going to the right,
 (une paire a droite,
 une paire a gauche)
 and at the end of the Ballroom,
 when they meet,
 they again are standing
 one behind the other,
 so that,
 the Ladies are in the
 middle of the Ballroom,
 (see drawing No 10).

îăîâ îàðà
 (une paire a droite,
 une paire a gauche)
 è áú êííóă çàèà,
 îðè âñòðă÷ă,
 òâíóóþùèÿ îàðú ñíîââ îðííóñêèàþòú
 äðóâú äðóââ òàèú,
 ÷òíáú
 äâîú äõîäèèè
 áú ñðăäèíó,
 (ñî. ðèñ. No 10).



(Ðèñ. 10)

This figure has to be done twice.

Ýòà òèäóðà èñííèíÿððñÿ äââ ðàçà.

After this they repeat
 the general promenade and
 the “Polonez” continues
 with various figures
 done [chosen] under the gaze
 of the director.

Çàðâîú îîâðíðÿððñÿ
 îáúèè îðííáíâú è
 ‘Îíèííáçú’ îðíîèèæâðòú
 ðàçíííáðçèðòúñÿ ðàçíííè òèäóðàèè
 îí óñííòðáíèþ
 Äèðèæðà. ”⁵³⁴

We see that Gavlikovski uses three terms, “Polonez”, “Polonaise”, and “Polski.” Note that one of the functions of the Polonez is to elevate the spirit of the Ball or occasion. It does this by causing the dancers “to make their steps and manners more elegant and refined.”

The importance of Gavlikovski’s manual lies in his very succinct description of the step. It must be done with the tempo, 3/4,—so it is three steps and on the first quarter of the measure there is done a “legkim prisadaniem” or “ëääèèú ïðèñââèèèú” in Russian.

⁵³⁴ N. Gavlikovski, *Rukovodstvo Dla Izucheniya Tantssev*, (St. Petersburg: 1907), pp. 14-16. This Gavlikovski should not be confused with P. Galikowski who taught dance in Paris in the mid-19th century and wrote a dance manual which contains a description of the Mazurka but not of the Polonez.

This phrase means to do a “light squatting or curtseying.” In fact, it is just a slight bending of the supporting knee.

The next Russian language dance manual was published in Poland’s capitol city, Warszawa, in the year 1911. One would expect this to have the fullest and most complete description of Polish Dances but it does **not!** This manual was written by R. Sterelni.

His description of the Polonez is just a general summary. There is nothing new here.

POLONEZ

ĭĭĕĭĭĀçŭ

The most important Balls begin with the Polonez.

This festal procession, which one can easily do,

is done with pleasure by any amount of couples.

The people stand in couples, one behind the other.

The music plays 2-4 measures, adding an accent always on the first quarter beat.

After bowing [to each other] the company begins to dance.

Slowly they go round and round

the room, after which

the Leader chooses figures to be done, or [he] makes as he wishes. suitable changes.

At the end of the Polonez there is usually a short intermission.

“Áĭĕŭøĕĭĭñðāĭ āāĕĭāŭ ĭā÷ĕĭāāðñŷ ĭĭĕĭĭĀçĭĭŭ.

Ŷðĭ òĭðĵāñðāāĭĭĭā øāñðāĕā, āŭ ĕĭðĭðĭĭŭ ĭĭĵāðŭ

ĭðĕĭĕĭāðŭ ó÷āñðĕó, ĕāĕĭā óāĭāĭĭ

÷ĕñĕĭ ĭāðŭ.

ĭāŭāñðāĭ ñðāĭĭāĕðñŷ āŭ ĭāðŭ, ĭāĭā çā āðóāĭĕ.

ĭóçŭĕā ĕāðāāðŭ āŭ 2-4 ðāĕðā, ĭðĕ÷āĭŭ óāāðāĭĕā āñāāāā

ĕāĵĕðŭ ĭā ĭāðāĭŭ ðāĕðā. ĭĭñĕā òĭðĵāñðāāĭĭāāĭ ĭĭĕĕĭĭā

ĭā÷ĕĭāāðñŷ øāñðāĕā. ĭĭðĭāŭ ĕāāðŭ ĭāĕĭŭ

ĕĕĕ ĭāñĕĭĕŭĕĭ ðāçŭ ĕðóāĭĭŭ ĭĭ çāĕó, ĭĭñĕā ÷āāĭ

āðāĭĵāðó ĭðāāĭñðāāĕŷāðñŷ ñāĭāĭāā ĕçāðāðŭ óĕāóðŭ,

ĕĕĕ ñĭçāāðŭ ñĭĭðāāðñðāāĭĭŭŷ ĕçĭāĭāĭĕŷ.

Āŭ ĕĭĭōā ĭĭĕĭĭĀçā ñĕāāóāðŭ ĭāŭĕĭĭāāĭĭĭ ĕĭðĭðĕĕĕ ĭāðāðŭāŭ.”⁵³⁵

The last Russian manual (which we have) was published in Moscow in 1912 by one A. Salto⁵³⁶—a pseudonym of someone. The Polonez description contained in Salto is a word for word copy of Gavlikovski’s (1907) manual except that it neither includes Gavlikovski’s remarks about the origins nor are there any figure drawings. Since Salto is just a repetition of Gavlikovski we do not include his description.

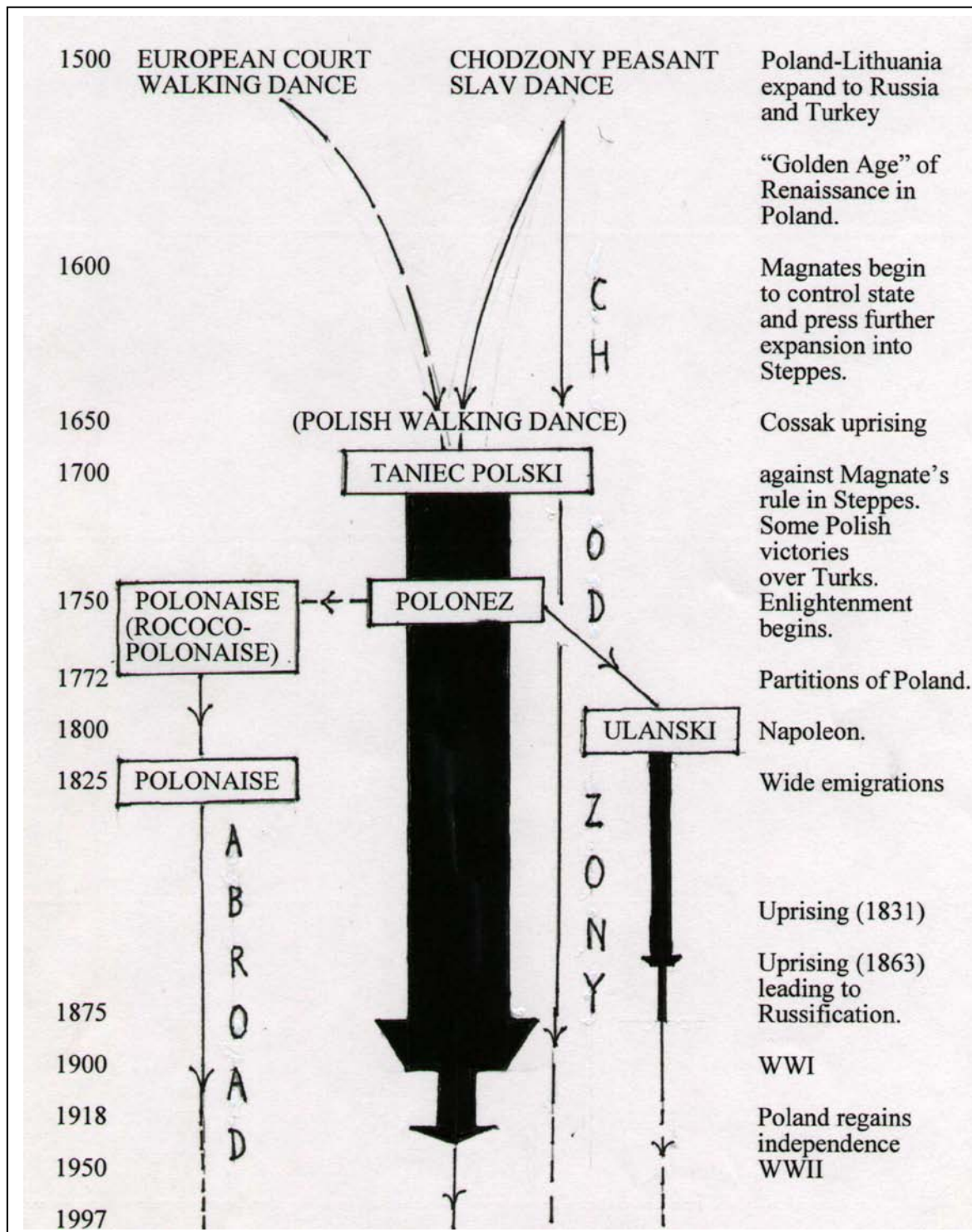
⁵³⁵ R. Sterelni, *Umyeyete-li Vi Tantsyebat?*, (Warszawa: 1911), p. 8.

⁵³⁶ A. Salto, *Novyeyshii Prakticheskii Samouchitel Balnizh*, (Moscow: 1912).

Thus our survey of Russian Dance Manuals for the Polonez finishes with 1912. The most important ones are Petrovski (1825), Tikhomirov (1901) and Gavlikovski (1907) each for different reasons. Petrovski is the only author whom actually spelled-out a step description for a measure of music. Tikhomirov (1901) for his illustration of the couple position and Gavlikovski (1907) for his all too succinct but nevertheless, useful remark about the step.

CONCLUSION

We shall now present the results of our survey in a historical chart form indicating *probable* lines of succession among variant forms of the Polish Walking Dance and the features/character of each.



The heavier lines are the main stages of development and also indicate greater popularity than the thinner or dotted lines. As we can see, there are three main variants of the Polish Walking Dance: Chodzony, Taniec Polski, and Polonez. Two forms which may have had at least a hypothetical existence as the Rococo-Polonaise and Ułański. This Ułański form had the same patriotic symbolism of the Taniec Polski. The "Rococo-Polonaise" may be thought of as the source for the "Polonaise." The reader will keep in mind that we are only speculating on the existence of these forms, and that they can only be given with a certain degree of validity. The date of origin for the Chodzony cannot be exactly established. Variants live at least in the many Stage Polish Dance Groups in and outside of Poland. Up to World War II both a Ułański Mazur and a Polonez may be said to have existed simply on the basis of the dress uniform which included spurs.

Now let us list the differences among these real and speculative variants.

TANIEC POLSKI

Heavy sliding, grand music, pompous attitude for men, strong, vigorous movements, stamping, deep Staropolska bows, men's step heavy more than once. Women a more than once. Women a lighter step. Clothes: Żupan and Kontusz, boots without spurs.

POLONAISE

Same as Polonez, but indicating a "Frenchified" atmosphere. Also the dance as done in foreign countries as an opening dance.

ROCOCO-POLONAISE

Like Polonez, but in French frocks and also in Kontusz, about 1780. Danced with brittle Minuetic style: *not* Staropolska.

UŁAŃSKI

Same as Polonez. Knee bend, but with greater military bearing by the men, clicking of spurs perhaps, but no heavy stamps. Women very delicate, "Empire-style-gowns," women "float." Lasts to about 1830.

POLONEZ

Not Staropolska style, subdued. Clothes ordinary dress-up civilian of the period. General Ballroom dance to open a function. Head bow. More complicated figures.

CHODZONY

Most widely used form usually as part of some ritual with singing, simply a march. Respectful but not elegant. See the following section for the Chodzony.

CHODZONY

The Chodzony is the peasant variant of the Polish Walking Dance. How far back in time it goes cannot be stated.

The term “Chodzony” itself is first encountered in the collections of peasant music and dance descriptions of the 19th century. However, the persons engaged in this activity were educated city people who, knowing the terms “Polonez” and “Polski,” used these terms whenever they saw the Chodzony. Occasionally the terms, “poloneza ludu,” “poloneza chlopskiego,” meaning “Folk Polonez” and “Peasant Polonez” are used.

The Chodzony was not purely a social dance as is the Polonez, but rather a part of some larger ceremonial ritual, for example, a wedding or consecration.

It is an ordinary marching to 3/4-time music. Often this is done in the open air, around a house, or in the fields, or a procession. Its features are:

- a. A great deal of singing
- b. Only one real figure-circling couples
- c. Music may be irregular
- d. Step resembles just plain marching
- e. There is a leader of the procession
- f. Highly regionalized

This last feature is a very interesting one. In the different parts of Poland, or even going from one village to the next village, there might be some distinguishing marks. Around Kraków the walk is springingly done, with heel clicks and stamps. In Kujawy it is danced more softly and is generally done as part of a suite of couple-round dances. In Śląsk, the Chodzony is a quiet march, with many head bows, and is usually the first part of a specific regional dance. Also, in certain districts and on certain occasions, some objects of special significance would be carried in the dance—for instance in Śląsk, a coal mining area, a miner’s lamp may be carried.

Numerous research works done in our century and the present author's personal observations reveal that the basic step, *usually*, is done without a noticeable bend and without a heavy slide. This makes it significantly different from the Polonez and the Taniec Polski.

Having said that we must remind the reader of the close bond, which existed between Poland's Szlachta and the peasants. The large numbers of poor Szlachta who lived side by side with the peasants (and often in the same way as they), led to mutual cultural influences upon both classes.

While the peasants might be marching to their Chodzony, the Szlachta would dance it with a Taniec Polski style. This might lead to some peasants doing a slight knee bend and slide. Although the Chodzony is done today, the people are often “instructed” in the step by city people whose profession is that of dance-teacher. They invariably teach the Taniec Polski variant as the Chodzony. One often sees dance groups dressed in peasant costume dancing to Chodzony music, but with an elegant styling, which is more suitable for the Rococo-Polonaise.

The overall thrust of this Study is not to simply to tell the truth of the Polonez

but to illustrate the AESTHETIC BEAUTY and PLEASURE that the Polonez

holds for its participants. This Beauty places us in the Eternal Present—thus, this

Dance is not of the Past but of the Future: for all times which require Human Dignity.

IT IS THE PREFECT DANCE FOR THE NEW MILLENIUM.

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RCWS NEWS, Vol. 4, No. 3.

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<http://www.vienneseball.org/video.htm>

PART II

THE WORKBOOK

THE DANCE MOVEMENTS

This section is a record and description of the steps and body movements for the various variant forms of the Polish Walking Dance, covering the period roughly from 1650 to the present. There is very little about the steps, etc., that may be said with certainty. In most cases there are only one or two *facts*. The interaction of stage dancing and dance masters of the 19th and 20th centuries with the original forms produced many figures, steps, and attitudes which themselves can be said to belong to the stage.

They may be enjoyable and beautiful, but this interaction makes the job of the researcher very difficult, because these developed forms of the dance have practically erased the original structure of the earlier forms. This, in connection with the lack of written records, makes it even more difficult.

One must remember that by the 20th century Polish Dancing was in the hands of Ballet Schools, Schools of Physical Education, and many amateur stage groups. This even increased after WWII as the government sponsored those activities. But the result of all this dancing is that it is a learned uniform style for the stage of “stylized dancing.”

Some stylized elements are easily detected, others not so, because the *stylization* is accepted as basic. The researcher must rely upon his or her own dance experiences and have sympathetic feelings for a dance variant in order to sort out the different types. In our case, we must “reconstruct” a dance form, or era. One must intuitively construct a dance form. But how can one judge intuitions? Which is better? Intuition must be guided by correct information about the dance, its dancers, their history and time. That is just the aim of the present work.

All this is not to say that styles of dancing should not be mixed. But rather that the intelligent person must know the differences between the variant forms: what was good for one variant and why, in order to use it in our lives and contemporary times.

The reader should pay heed to the fact that dance is an activity. One cannot know it without doing it. Learning is doing. The following section is written so that one may learn about the dance by doing it. It is a manual, a workbook of aesthetic delights. The manual is complete within itself, and contains not only the steps and movements, but also preparatory exercises in order to insure a good foundation.

The source materials are old books, dance manuals, interviews with people who did the dances in their real-life context, the living tradition of the State Ballet Schools in Poland, the Physical Education Schools, the many dance groups in Poland—both professional and amateur—Polish folk dance teacher training programs in Poland, and émigré circles outside of Poland.

The present author had to make certain judgments about steps, movements, etc., in order to classify the material. Only a knowledgeable dancing person can decide if those judgments are correct. Another difficulty in this process is that it is hard to judge how good a certain dancer is, or was, and just how hard a certain dance is. One person may do something which would be ill-suited for a particular dance, but convincingly so, so that it does “fit.” How do we reason that it should not have been done, even though it was good?

The easiest way out is to simply accept what some people have done or said. To posit themselves as “authorities.” Merely lump everything together and invent reasons to support their “facts,” or state, “that is what my dance teacher said.” Obviously, this is unsuitable for serious consideration. We need, at least, a search for truth.

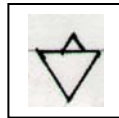
In order to present the following material as concisely as possible, abbreviations shall be used. Also many Polish terms will be used. It is not intended that the reader would have to look these up in a dictionary. They are to be learned by doing the step movements that they represent.

ABBREVIATIONS

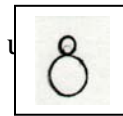
M	man	hd(s)	hand(s)
W	woman	ft	foot, feet
ptr(s)	partner(s)	frt	front
cpl(s)	couple(s)	ins	inside
L	left, go left	out	outside
R	right, go right	ftw	footwork
fwd	forward	pos	position
bwd	backward	d	direction
twd	toward	org	original
cts	center	wt	weight
diag	diagonal	ct(s)	count(s)
frt	front	m	measure
LOD	in the line of direction		
RLOD	reverse line of direction	CW	clockwise
		CCW	counter clockwise

page.

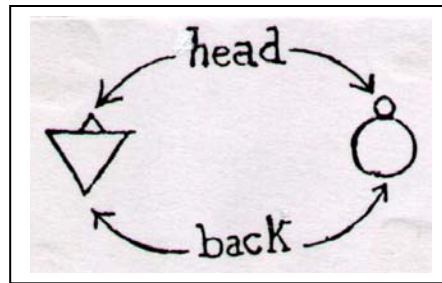
The symbol for a man is,



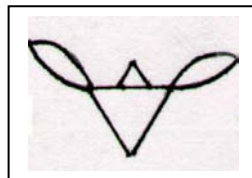
and for a woman is, facing



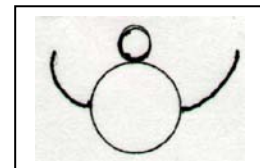
the



Arms on hips

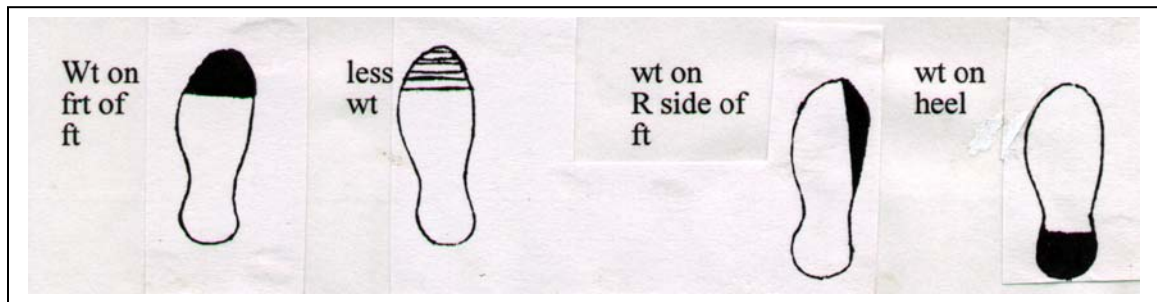


Arms out to side, rounded,



- | | |
|--------|---------------------|
| oppftw | opposite footwork |
| oppd | opposite direction |
| orgpos | original position |
| insft | inside foot (feet) |
| outsft | outside foot (feet) |
| st | so that |
| fst | finishing so that |
| ast | at the same time |
| rep | repeat |
| rad | repeat as desired |

Some step movements require diagrams which show the distribution of the weight upon the foot. The “weighted part” is indicated by the darker area. Here are several examples.



POLISH VOCABULARY

A more complete list is contained in the figure section. The terms contained herein are not grammatically correct in order not to complicate matters. The reader will be able to recognize the variations.

Prawa(pw)	R	Zmiana	change
lewa(lw)	L	Pozycja	pos
Pan	gentleman, sir	Strona	to the side
Pani	lady, madame	w Bok	on the side
Panowie	sirs	Kleć	kneel
Panie	ladies	w Około	circle
ukłon(y)	bow(s)	krok(i)	step(s)
Przód	fwd	Kółko	cpl
circle			
Tył	bwd	Koło	circle
Para	cpl	Miejsc	place
Obrót(y)	turn(s)		

INTRODUCTORY MOVEMENT NOTES

There are four elements to any dance; the foot-leg, upper body, arm-hand, and head movements. The hardest of these to teach, communication, and learn are the arms and upper body. Ordinary persons of the past learned the proper movements for a dance by living consistently within their styles as used in other areas of life-in our case, the dance. People who wear heaving clothing usually take smaller, slower steps. The weight of the clothes on their arms limits the amount of weight they would have on outstretched arms.

Whenever an individual tries to learn something which is for a different lifestyle than their own, they must be instructed either consciously (through lessons), or by sheer repetition until it is familiar to them-until they assimilate it. With simple dances, this may be a matter of minutes, with others it may be months or years.

The arm and body motions are difficult because no one in the past ever wrote about these in concrete terms for social and folk dances, except for 20th century descriptions. The only real way we have for learning these movements is to watch the best dancers and copy them, as well as trying to behave within the behavioral codes of the period. Thus arm and body movements are more speculative than foot-leg movements.

THE GENERALIZED TANIEC POLSKI

BODY POSITION, ARMS, AND HANDS

The body positioning, or posture, is upright but not rigid—both for men, and women. The same is true for the head. The head is free to turn to either side in order to see the assembled company and to greet them. Although the head is free, the eyes are used with restraint, in keeping with their power.

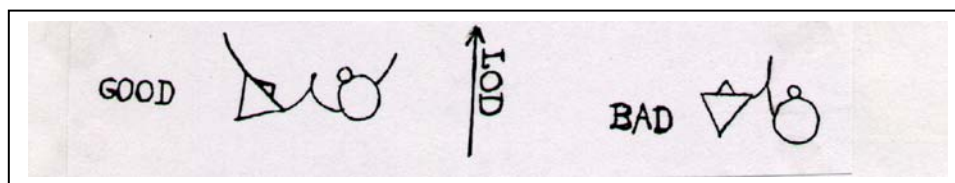
The eyes of a man may “look” directly at a person but not harshly. The women’s eyes “gaze.” Her eyes are more downcast than upraised. Both the man and woman are conscious of their elevated social status and importance. However, this is tempered by the equality among the Staropolska Szlachta Brotherhood.

As men dance past each other they do not examine each other, but their expression is a smile of greeting with a nod of the head; they are happy to see one another. But never do they forget their woman partner.

They always accompany her, they constantly make way for her: giving to her undivided attention and comfort. She does not flirt; she knows her worth. Virtue is her worth. Never masculine, never very over delicate, she is a substantial freedom.

Just as in the Mazur, the man turns to his partner often showing respect for her as a “thing” of Womanhood and Motherhood, as represented by the Ideal of the Catholic Church and the Nobility of the Szlachta community. Although the expression is happy, it is not silly minded giddiness. It is one of contentment and pride that they have the Honor to dance the Taniec Polski: the symbol of their (and human) cultural continuity.

There is really only one basic couple position for the Taniec Polski. Partners are side by side, inside hands joined, held about chest high. The distance between partners for the Taniec Polski is as far apart as is comfortable so that forward motion is maintained. Couples do not stand shoulder to shoulder.



In this “open” position, that is, at a certain distance from the woman, the man must lead his partner more with gestures than by tugging her as usually happens in the shoulder-to-shoulder position. However, in the “open” position, the woman must be alert to the hand pressures, and to the man’s gestures.

The woman is always slightly ahead of the man! She never gets behind because this leads to the woman being dragged. Whenever the couples dance in a circular direction, the person on the outside maintains a relative position ahead of the inside person.

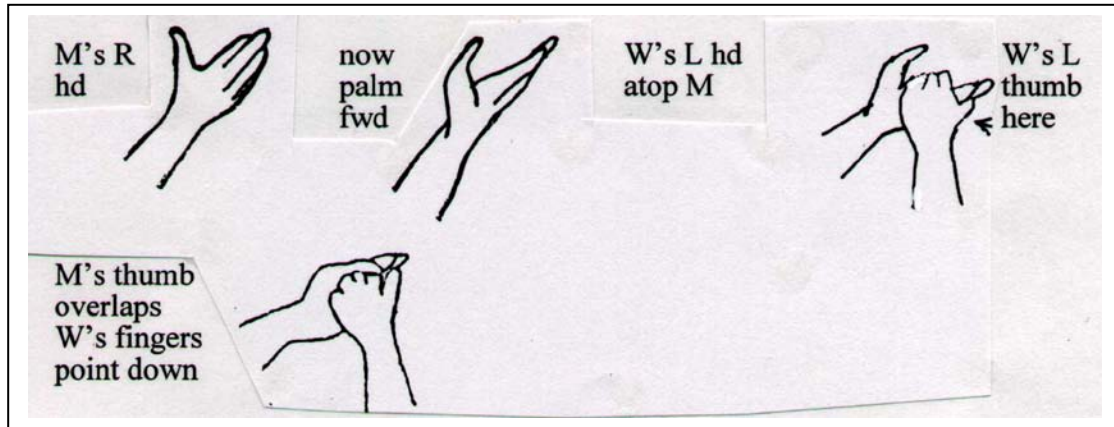
The open position may range from very open, to medium. In the very open position, the man’s body is always turned toward that of the woman.



In the medium position, the partners may turn slightly away from each other. This is a position that gets further developed by the Mazur dance form.

This wide open position can be very much of a posing position, with the partner more or less standing in place, either at the beginning of the dance, or at some holding point in the dance.

The handhold may be with the man's palm up, forming a cup, into which the lady places hers. A "stronger" handhold for the man is shown below. The view is from above.

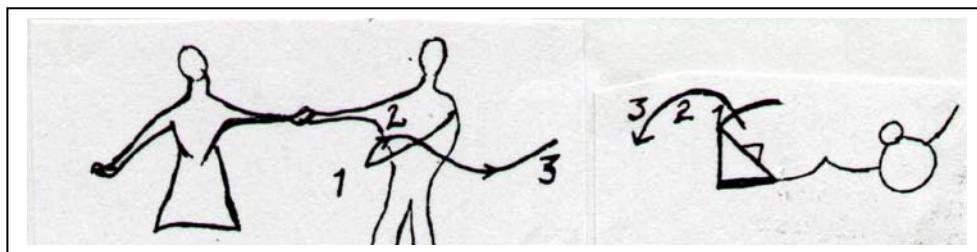


Now for the arms. The man's free hand, that is his left was usually placed on the hilt of his sword, which was on his left side, or placed inside his "Sluckie Pasy" (the wide brocade sash), at times he merely carried his hat in his free hand.

Neither the man nor the woman wave their arms or hands continuously. The woman's free arm stays below her hip level. The man's free arm may go chest high. There is no evidence that men used their arms above their heads during the dance. One may infer that when stamping the rhythm to a particularly heavy or grand part of the music, the man might strongly swing one's arms about.

The difficulty is with the meaning of "strong." How does one teach such a movement? Arm strength comes from keeping the upper arm relatively rigid, that is relatively locked and sweeping the entire as one piece with the elbow and wrist "leading" arm movement. The arm is not straight. There is a bend at the elbow, but practically none at the wrist for the man.

The man shows the way, according to the following scheme.



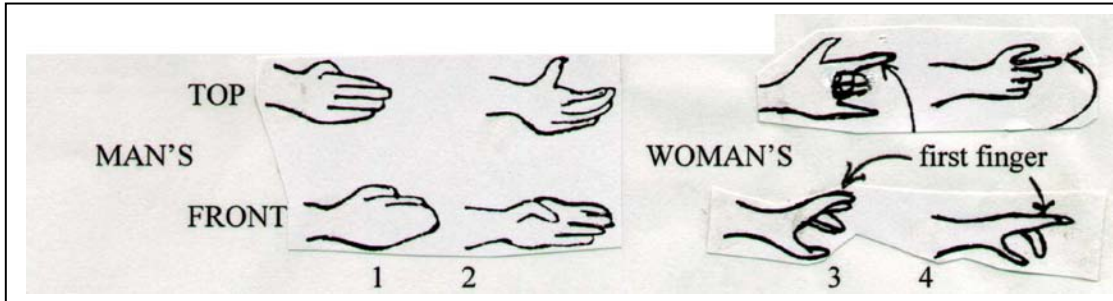
Notice that the arm goes from the man's chest center to the front, and then to the man's side. Usually, as the arm begins to go to the front from the center, the hand turns palm up. Seen from the front, this arm motion describes the slight figure "8." The hand turns over in the transition from 1 to 2. After the hand reaches position 3 it twists back, so that it is palm down again.

A preparatory exercise for this arm motion is to do the across, front, out-and-away movements, while holding a relatively heavy weight in the hand. Remember that the upper arm is to be locked. This will give a certain amount of snap to the arm motion as well as to the hand twist by making it brisker. This hand twist can also be improved by holding the weight straight out in front, chest high, palm down. Quickly twist the hand so that the palm is up-in other words,

a half turn. Then practice the same movement with the fist closed when the hand is palm down. As the hand is quickly rotated, the hand snaps open. This motion is done more slowly in the Polish Walking Dance than in the Mazur.

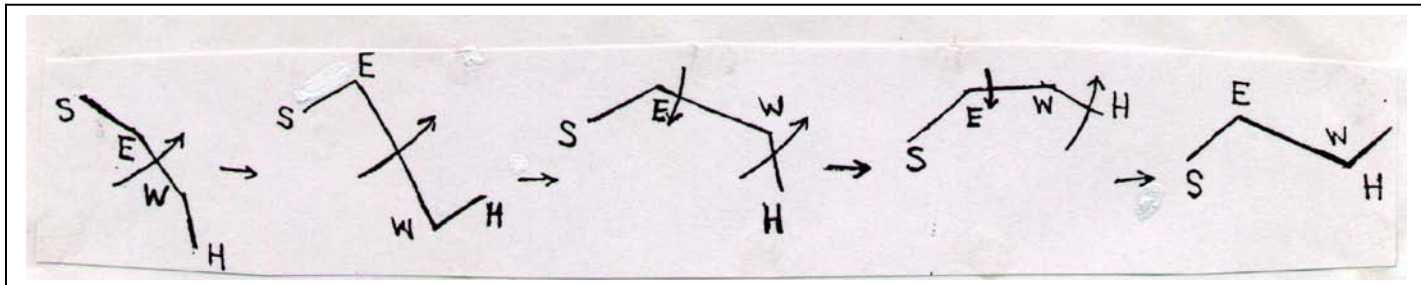
The woman starts the dance with her free arm, more or less, already at her side as shown above. There is a definite break in the wrist. The woman's wrist is very free and flexible in opposition to the man's.

The fingers in relation to the hand are as shown below:



All the man's fingers in No.1 line up together. In No.2 the thumb is at an angle to the rest of the hand. The remaining four fingers form a cup. The woman's hand must be delicate. She has a more open position. In No.3 the first and smallest fingers are arched upward relative to the middle two, which are together and downward. The same positioning holds for No.4, except that the end finger is together with the inside fingers.

The flexible wrist of the woman is used in doing bows and curtsies. As the woman descends in her bow, a pulse-wave, originating in the shoulders, is sent out down along the arm. It travels from the shoulder, elbow, waist, and to the hand.



The above illustration is very much exaggerated. The elbow and wrist are not raised to the height of the shoulder. Observe only the relationship between the wrist and hand as the pulse travels down the arm. For a time the hand is higher than the wrist.

After this first wave-pulse there is another which starts from the fingertips and goes back up the arm, returning the arm to its original position.

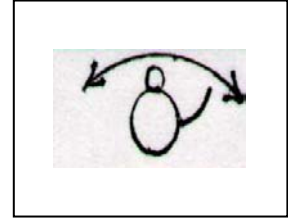
It takes a certain amount of practice to master this wave-pulse movement. But it is easy. First, practice with one arm, then both. Finally, do it with a curtsy. This movement must be done gracefully, delicately, and completely naturally-and without consciousness.

For hand positions 3 and 4, the woman must think of making her fingers as gracefully long as possible. The elbow is also to be very flexible.

Here these arm and hand movements are shown and done in the vertical plane. They are also done in the horizontal plane as the woman dances forward.

Although we stated that the free arm is not waved there is a motion back and forth. However, it is not like flowers waving in the breeze. It usually follows the motion of the body. As the body turns in toward the partner, the free arm also moves in that same direction. The hand begins to move on the ct&, ct1 of each measure.

A second type of movement is the “conversational movement” of the woman to the man. Leaving the free arm curved and out to the side, the body is turned to and fro on its axis. This is first practiced by moving the feet, and then progressing upwards until only the upper body does the turning. The movement comes from the chest. Inflating it, pulling it up, and then placing it to the right, then left. This is done with a motion of the head. This is quite a subtle motion.

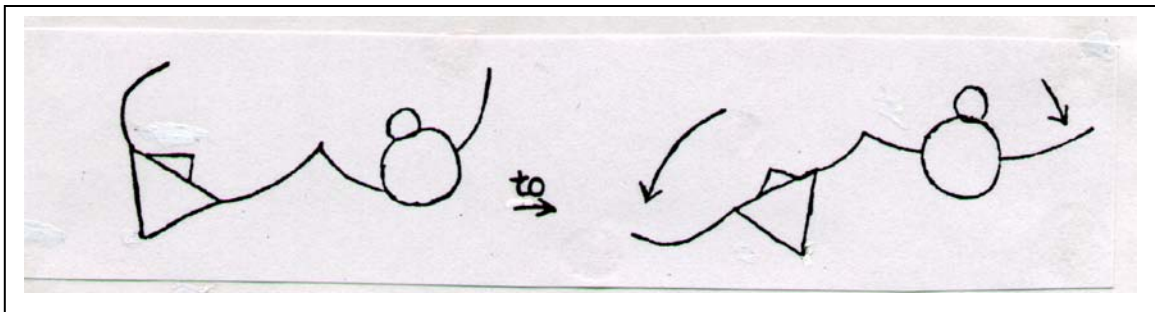


For the men there is a characteristic hand twist. This movement is very much developed by the stage version, in a snappy movement of strength. Since we have no records to go on concerning the actual arm movements, we hesitate in attributing this style to real people of the 18th century. Although these men had dance lessons, they were not professional ballet dancers. They must have been more “crude” in their movements than graceful.

In order to achieve this movement of strength without over-refinement, the men may do the following exercise. Do the arm movements with a closed, tight fist, starting all movements on ct &. The motion starts with a crisp, sharp movement. Remember not to bend the elbow. The man’s arm motions are generated from the shoulder, upper arm, and elbow as one unit. Keep this portion locked and snap it, and thus the arm, into motion. Do not let the hand dangle from the wrist. After mastering this, do the same movement with hand positions 1 and 2.

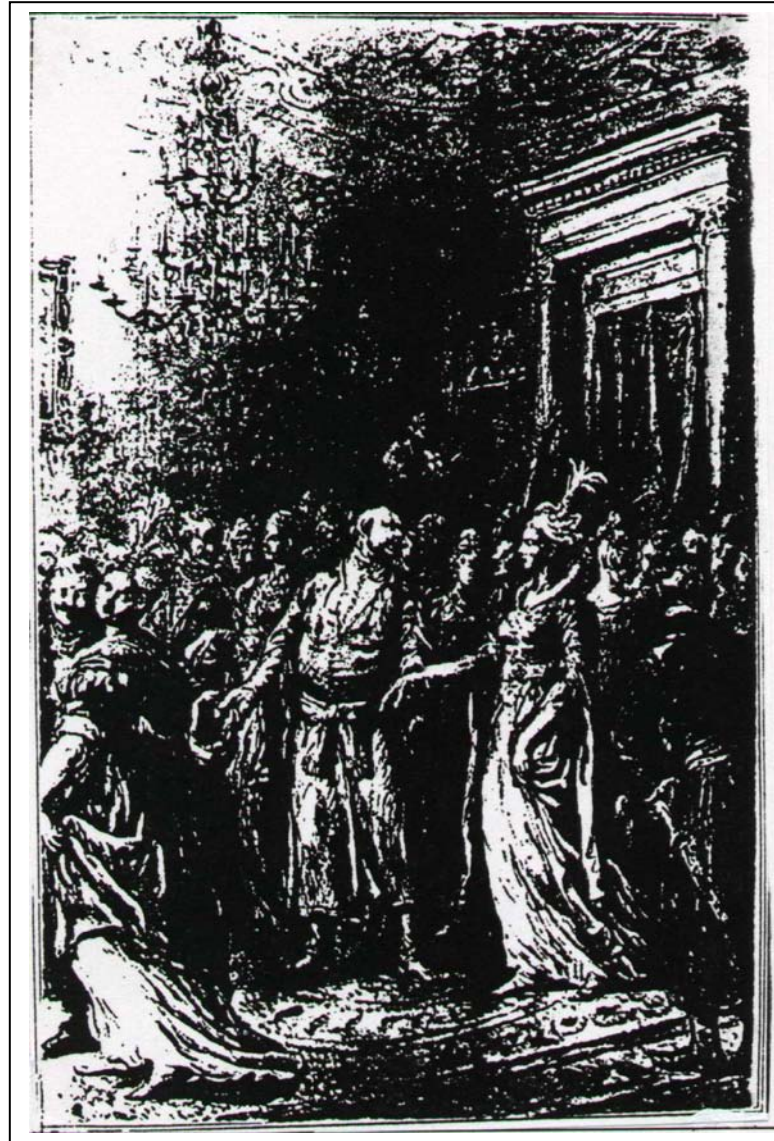
The woman does the same arm movements, but without masculine strength and the hand twist. Her arm and hand floats. At times, the women do rotate their hands somewhat. With the opening foot-movement on ct& to ct1, turning the palm up and then letting the hand float down.

The amount of arm motion depends upon the amount of distance between the partners and how much they turn in towards each other.



A common accessory of woman’s attire is a beautiful handkerchief, usually embroidered. How this embellishes her movements!

Let us turn once again to the iconographic evidence for the Taniec Polski—namely, Norblin's painting—to reinforce our practice and understanding of the body's head, arm and hand attitudes for the Taniec Polski.

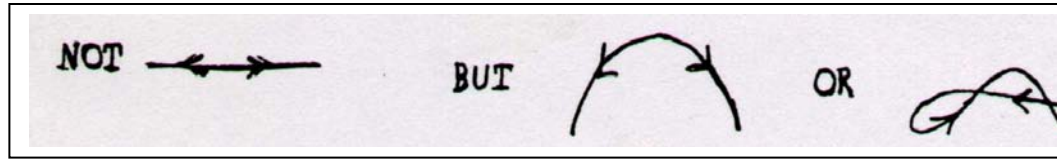


This evidence allows us to use the attitudes, this spacing and in particular the hand hold—what a splendid variation. Examine it—do it! Experiment by varying the position of the man's hand from the woman's wrist even up to her elbow! Vary the length of the fingers of the man's grip. Once you realize the delicate Beauty and Strength of this handhold you may never do another.

A variant of this deals with the manner of taking the woman to the Dance. The man offers his arm to the woman, palm down. She then places her hand, palm down, on the man's lower arm, wrist or hand. They do not join palms: both are palm down. This is very Polite and Beautiful! A real thrill!

HEAD

As mentioned above, the head is held up. The best exercise for maintaining this position is to place the chin up and to think that it is the chin, which leads the head around. If viewed from the front, the chin describes an arch.



Practice this movement at first with a high arch. When the head motion is smooth flatten out the curve. At the end of the movement a slight bow of the head may be done.

BOWS

The general term for showing Respect to one's partner is "Reverance." In the 17th century the reverences became specialized and re-named: the men now "Bow", the women now "Curtsy."

*"... the bow consisted in bowing the body, the curtsy in bending the knees."*⁵³⁷

The man's bows for the Taniec Polski are completely different from that of the Polonez. This is perhaps the most distinctive feature of the Taniec Polski. Bowing is actually more difficult to do than the step-movement: Staropolska Bowing is an accomplishment—for some, **this** is what sets the Taniec Polski movement apart from the latter and the contemporary Polonez. This "Staropolska Ukłon" is a manifestation of Politeness, Respect and Dignity. The dancing person must radiate these qualities in everyday life. These qualities are intensified in the Polish case by the Szlachta lifestyle of glorious Bombast and Heroism. Thus, the wide movements of sweeping arms and clothes.

1. THE "STAROPOLSKI UKŁON"

There are several Men's Staropolska Bows or perhaps better yet, variant movements as expressions of a certain Attitude, the "Staropolska Attitude." Remember that it was the custom for Men to greet other Men with the Bow and not with a handshake. The degree of incline is directly related to the deference and courtesy, which one wishes to show to the other—or, even of servility, as the case may be. This behavior is also a self-reinforcing gesture. However, we must never leave out the Aesthetic Pleasure, or the "fun-of-playfulness," which mutual bowing engenders. Yes, it **is** true. Also, the very act of bowing gives "significance" or increases the importance of an event—it confers a "higher status" to the event or people involved in the event. (This is just the realization of the nature of people and society.)

In the most simplistic view if one designates the "Taniec Polski" as the predominant form of the 17th century and that of the Rococo/Classical Polonaise as that of the 18th century then a problem arises. The problem lies in the lack of iconographic evidence of the Polish Bow for the 17th century—most of the actual iconographic evidence is for the 18th century. We do have at least one Polish drawing, which follows, under our title, "The Actual Bowing."

⁵³⁷ J. Wildeblood, *The Polite World*, (London: 1965), p.197.

But there **is** quite a lot of iconographic and verbal descriptions of Bowings, Curtseys and Polite Manners from this period (17th century), however they are all from non-Polish sources published in Italy, France, England, that is, from Western Europe. The Royal Court of Poland of this time followed the behaviours of the Western European Courts. Therefore what are known as “Staropolski” behaviours may be an exact replica of this European behaviour. Here are some descriptions of these Western European Bows.

“ . . . whereas when saluting persons of ‘quality’, the full inclination of the body forward, together with the kissing of the right hand, changed the action into one of deep respect.

*This flowing bow was as much an expression of the age as were the softly-falling lace collars, curling feathers, and hanging ribbons with which the cavaliers loved to deck themselves. The sweeping arm, the curving back, these matched the current phrase then used in salutation – ‘Your very humble servant’ – said to have been introduced in imitation of French manners then in vogue.”*⁵³⁸

And another English source from 1671:

*“If we be to salute a any person arrived lately out of the Country, it must be done with an humble inflexion of our bodies, taking off our glove, and putting our hand down to the ground. But, above all, we are not to do it precipitously, nor with over much pains, neither throwing ourselves hastily upon our Nose, nor rising up again too suddenly, . . . ”*⁵³⁹

As we now know, from the present survey consciousness of the Taniec Polski never died out—but the bodily attitudes or behaviors of it did—we speak here of the Baroque-Sarmatism behaviors and gestures of the Gentry. The less flamboyant style of the latter 18th century has lasted to our day (1998). The exaggerated Baroque-Sarmatism Style was used on the Polish Stage and is still alive today. The Polish Stage came alive in the 18th century with the collapse of political Poland.

There is no evidence that the Polish Stage representations of the Baroque-Sarmatism Style were different from the actual behaviors and gestures of the Gentry. The Stage did not forget or did not experience a lapse in its portrayals of this Staropolska Style. The point is that one can find the Staropolska Style and Manners on the Polish Stage (this includes Drama and Film) today. This has been a continuous tradition.

Thus we have the verbal evidence of the 17th century and the iconographic evidence of the 18th century as well as that of the examples of the representations from the Polish Stage. In addition to this we have the living traditions of the various peasant and folk classes of Poland whose behavior and manners followed the old Gentry Style. This allows us to easily “uncover” the Staropolska Bows. They do not have to be “re-constructed” or invented. So all this evidence can be applied to the Taniec Polski of the 17th century with the understanding that up to 1945 (for all practical purposes) in Poland this way of behavior could be found in the rural areas of Poland as a natural way of expression.

⁵³⁸ Wildeblood, *The Polite World*, pp. 196-197.

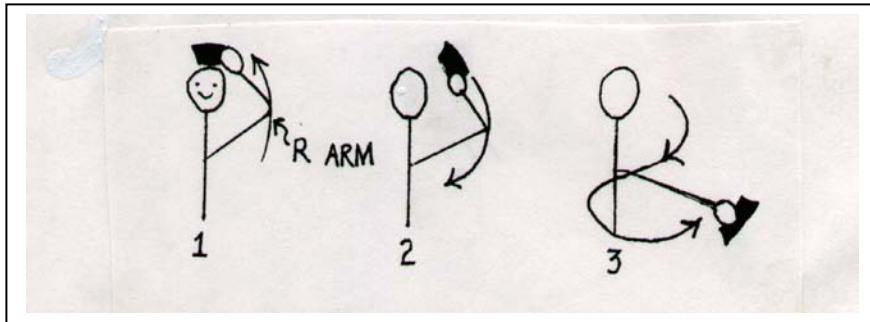
⁵³⁹ Wildeblood, *The Polite World*,...p.197.

PRELIMINARY MOVEMENTS FOR THE BOWS

THE REMOVAL OF THE HAT (AND ARM MOTIONS)

The men only do hat removal and the arm motions necessary to accomplish this, as women generally do not remove their head-coverings. Hat removal is done by men to show Honor both to men and women. The stick-figure drawings below are facing out of the page. The movements follow the number sequence 1,2,3. It is the right hand usually which removes the hat.

Variation A S-FIGURE

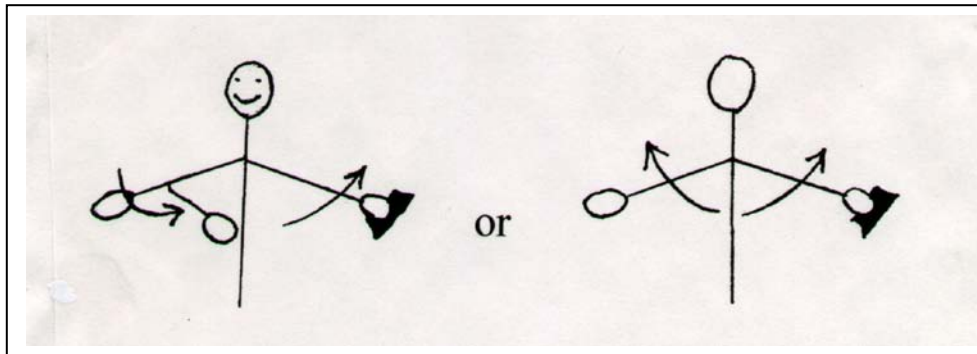


Variation B HAND TO THE HEART

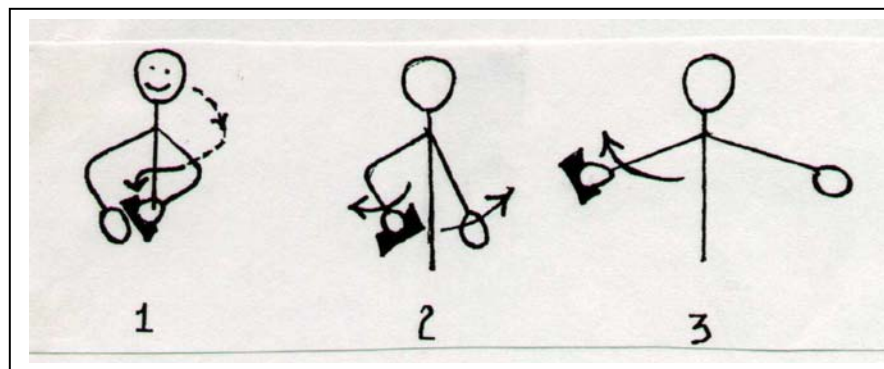
Same as Variation A but with the hand markedly touching the heart or chest, momentarily stop, bow head, and continue the motion out to the side.

Variation C BOTH ARMS

After doing 1,2,3 of the S-figure above continue with the moving of both arms simultaneously as shown here.



Variation D CHANGING HANDS



These motions have to become free, natural, customary actions. An auxiliary exercise to achieve this ease of behavior is to practice the habitual action of removing one's hat: whenever one is introduced to women, or upon entering elevators, or entering a room, or meeting elders or one's parents or someone else's—common habits fifty years ago in Europe, America and many other parts of the world.

Once having mastered these Hat Removal movements practice these with the left or right foot extended or pointed out in front—this is a Bow in itself.

HÄNSEL'S HAT REMOVAL

Now come his most interesting remarks which are unique and probably based on his personal observations of Polish dancers. Remember he was a dancemaster at the University of Leipzig which is located in Saxony. Many Poles and their families visited the Saxon Court in the first half of the 18th century. These were probably his models if he attended the Saxon Court.

“Von dem Ceremoniel des Huthes

*Soll bey dem Polnischen Tanze der Huth gezogen oder aufbehalten werden? . . . Manche pflegen solchen ohne Drehung, andere aber mit einer artigen Wendung aufzusetzen, weil sie nämlich den Huth in der linken Hand halten, wenn sie mit der rechten das Frauzimmer führen, stecken sie solchen durch ihren rechten Arm, drehen zugleich das Frauzimmer eine Tour herum, und setzen alsdenn den Huth auf.”*⁵⁴⁰

About the Ceremonial of the Hat

Should in the “Polish Dance the Hat be removed or worn? . . . Much care should be taken when turnings are done so that there is politeness during the turns, since when the Hat is held in the left hand the man is leading the Lady with his right hand in these turnings and then he can replaced his Hat .

The term “Ceremonial” is misleading here since it is not a religious ritual but a manifestation of good manners—it is a custom. The handling of hats in the 18th century was part of the performance of Court Dance in Western Europe. We do have iconographical evidence of not only hat removal but also of the waving of the hat.⁵⁴¹ Of course this not just any hat, but the Polish Hat which was part of the Kontusz of the native Polish Noble Class of the 16th to 19th centuries and was highly symbolic of them and their style of living. The motions of the Hat, if one wishes to do them, are not to interfere with the process of the Dance. This is the gist of Hänsel's remarks.

The handling of the Polish Hat continues. Now he does give us some new observations:

*“Wolten wir aber die **Polen** nachahmen, so müssen wir den Huth, wie iene ihre Mützen auf den Sebel, auf unsere Degen hängen, oder den ganzen Tanz hindurch einmal in die rechte, das anderemal in die linke Hand nehmen, welches freylich wohl sich nach*

⁵⁴⁰ Hänsel, C. G., *Allerneueste Anweisung* . . . , pp.154-155.

⁵⁴¹ See the drawings of Norblin in the “Polish Walking Dance of the 18th Century” and The Curl-Up figure action in the “Rococo-Polonaise” chapters of the present work.

*der Nation gerichtet heist. Aber wenn man das Schwenken, drehen und halten des Huthes nicht wohl innen hat, so ist es sehr unbequem, und man verlieret wohl ofte gar den Huth bey einer kleinen Wendung.”*⁵⁴²

If we want to imitate the Poles, so must we place the Hat, on the hilt of our sword, or through the entire dance take it once in the right, another time in the left hand, which freely is proper to this Nation. But when one swings, turns and holds the hat not properly so that it is troublesome and one then loses the motions of the hat.

The question is when and how much is it appropriate for the man to wave his Hat. The aforementioned drawing, “Curl-Up” figure action gives us direction in this matter. We see that the couples are dancing in the open air. There is the whole of space to dance through! By contrast we see in the drawing of Norblin’s the smaller, graceful Hat movements. In a small ballroom or when many couples are dancing wide and broad arm actions are not that appropriate. Of course the quality or knowledge of the dancers and spectators is important. With persons who know the nature of this Dance these arm and hand motions are not improper.

Looking closely at the “Curl-Up” drawing we see that men are wearing their swords. This is a confirmation of Hänsel’s observations made in the above paragraph. Not only that but it means that men worn there swords inside, in a ballroom. These are display swords which were beautifully ornamented.

This takes us to a final remark of Hänsel’s:

*“ . . . Doch will ich noch so viel melden, dass derienige Arm, welcher ruhet, nicht gerade an der Seite hängen darf, sondern er muss vielmehr gebogen mit der Hand nach Polnischer Art in die Seite gestellet werden, so, dass der obere theil der Hand, dichte an die Seite liege, das innerste aber, mit den Fingern heraus zu stehen komme.”*⁵⁴³

. . . Yet I still have something to add, that the arm, which is free, may not just hang at the side, but it must be bent with the hand, after the Polish fashion, placed at the side, so that the outside of the hand lies on the side, but with the inner fingers on the outside.

Why should this be important enough to be mentioned? In the Court dancing of the time, for example, the Minuet one did not place one’s hands on their hips. Even in our times there is a slovenly quality to this posture. Additionally when most people place their hands on there hips they make a closed fist or place their fingers forward, so this Polish fashion is different.

It is worthwhile to repeat Liszt’s remark about this:

*“During the Polonaise the ability to doff, to don, and to manipulate this cap easily and with the meaning attributed to these movements was an art in itself, chiefly noticeable in the knight of the leading couple who, as head of the line, gave the word of command to the whole company.”*⁵⁴⁴

⁵⁴² Hänsel, C. G., *Allerneueste Anweisung* . . . , p. 155.

⁵⁴³ Hänsel, C. G., *Allerneueste Anweisung* . . . , pp. 156.

⁵⁴⁴ Franz Liszt, *Frederic Chopin*, (London, 1963), pp. 45-51.

The main distinguishing feature of the various Staropolska Bows is their degree of flourishes or lack thereof compared to the other variants.

We repeat some descriptions of this bowing in order for various sources in order to remind ourselves about its nature.

*“Poles seem a lively people, and use much action in their ordinary conversation. Their common mode of saluting is to incline the head, and strike the breast with one hand, while they stretch the other towards the ground: but when a common person meets a superior, he bows his head almost to the earth, waving at the same time his hand, with which he touches the leg, near the heel, of the person to whom he pays his obeisance.”*⁵⁴⁵

*The people are very like the peasants of Poland; [they] bow deeply, kiss and grasp [the other person] by his knees, . . .*⁵⁴⁶

I think that more should be said about their bowing. Men and women express their pleasantness or pleasure in the same way: both bow [lean] the entire [upper] body forward, but their hands are hugging the other person’s knees or even lower if they want to show [a greater] reverence.

If a man or a woman is earnestly asking for something they always will [wrap] one or two hands around the knees of the person.

*No other civilized Country can perform as low a Bow as the Poles do: even [in this action] they display a unimitative, “Grandness.”*⁵⁴⁷

*“Here we again saw the genuine old Polish bow, . . . Generally, however, the Poles bow so low that they almost lose their balance, bending over sideways, and kissing the hem of the garment of the saluted person, sideways. The usual Polish salutation which accompanies the bow, is: “Padam do nog,” [I throw myself at your feet], or else more strongly, “Padam pod nogi,” [I throw myself under your feet] . . . Even the young Polish elegants at the balls of Warsaw, Lemberg, and Wilna, talk of throwing themselves “at the feet” and “under the feet” of their partners. The Polish beggars also sometimes place their caps on the ground, and bow down low over them, in saluting a superior.”*⁵⁴⁸

We shall present four variations one of which is a special. The first variation will be shown in Kontusz and the others not so that the degree of bending can more clearly be shown. Practice these bows while wearing a Kontusz or similar garment is recommended as this helps to produce the correct moral-spiritual “feeling.” Once this “feeling” is inculcated or assimilated to a person’s personality then the Kontusz can be dispensed with.

**THE ACTUAL BOWING! FOR SOME OF THESE THERE IS ACTUAL
ICONOGRAPHIC EVIDENCE. THESE SHALL BE INCLUDED BELOW.**

THEY ARE FROM THE 18TH CENTURY.

⁵⁴⁵ William Coxe, *Travels in Poland, Russia, Sweden and Denmark*, (London: 1802), Book 2, Vol. I, p. 147.

⁵⁴⁶ Originally from J. Bernoulli, *Reisen durch Brandenburg, Pommern, Preussen, Courland, Russland und Polen in den Jahren 1777 und 1778*, (Leipzig: 1779-1780). Here from *Polska Stanisławowska W Oczach Cudzoziemców*, (Warszawa: 1963), Vol. I, p. 463. Henceforth, *PSOC*.

⁵⁴⁷ Originally from J. J. Kausch, *Nachrichten uber Polen*, (Graz: 1793). Here *PSOC*, Vol. II, p. 294.

⁵⁴⁸ J. Kohl, *Austria*, (London: 1843), p. 449.

Variation A

This is a fragment from Norblin's painting, *Szlachcić Klaniający się w pas*.

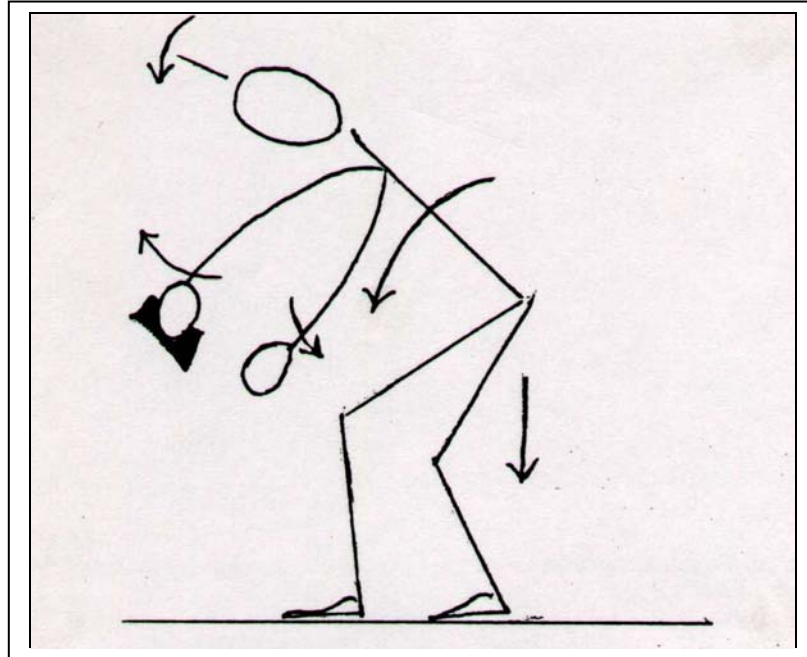


Note here that the body is bending at the waist. It is very much an upper-body movement.

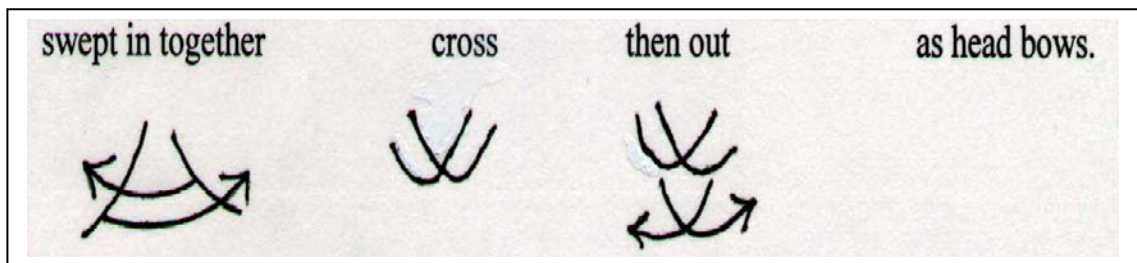
This bending of the upper-body was also done by the man when dancing: now toward the woman, now away. (Bows away from the woman are also directed toward spectators.) The cover of this book is a good illustration of this animation of the dancing. The original painting was done by Z. Stryjenska in the inter-war period. This lively character of the Dance occurs easily when hand changes are done in transitioning from one figure to another. Look also at the body bending in the Curl-Up figure in the Rococo-Polonaise Section. Look again at Norblin's painting and think of it following a Bow and arm sweep with the hat held in hand as shown about.

Variation B

The hat removal, arm, and upper-arm movements are the same as above but both knees are bending as this is done.



For a Generalized Staropolska Bow do the following. Stand so that the legs are not stretched out, but that the weight is on both feet. The Bow is actually done with only the upper torso, head and arm. The free hand takes the hat off the head, and snaps it across the upper chest as the upper torso bends slightly fwd, and the head Bows. Sometimes, if both hands are free, then do the motions shown below.



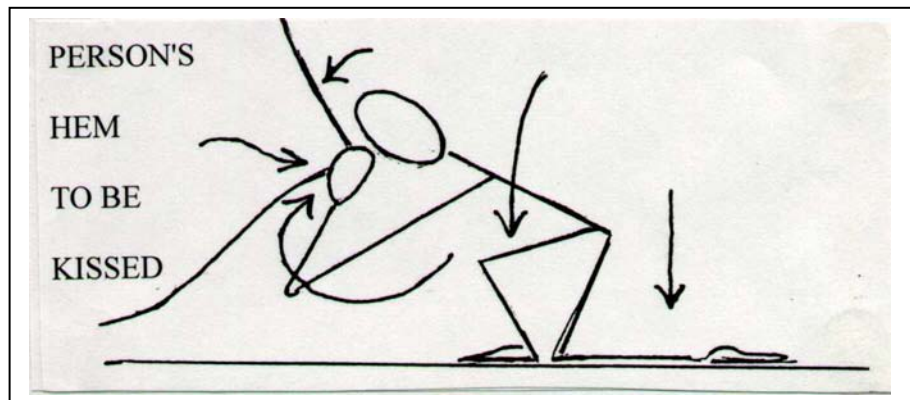
Variation C **LOW EMBRACE OR UPON THE KNEE—OR THE
“PADAM POD NOGI” BOW**

The following Bow has been verbally described many times in the course of Polish History. However there is only one illustration of this Bow from a real-life situation. It is from a painting of J.Wahl entitled, *Sejmik w małym miasteczku*. It is a lively painting which shows a number of the Gentry in animated conversations and in various stages of greeting one another. One small fragment of this painting clearly shows the “Padam Pod Nogi” Bow. Because of the small size of the original this photographic reproduction is not distinct but it does clearly show the depth of this Bow, with one hand holding the hat (close to the ground) and the other hand reaching for the boot of the person to whom the bow is directed.



Variation D **HEM-KISSING**

This Hem-Kissing Ukłon can be done for or toward a man or woman. One does the same action as for Variation C above but with an additional sweeping up of the person's hem in the hand and kisses the hem. Of course this is to be done in order to show extreme deference (or even flattery) or as a Magnificent Gesture—as was the “Charge of the Five Hundred”—a “Beau Gest.” This requires courage. This can be quickly done—as a spontaneous gesture.



This is not so rare as one might believe. From the previously mentioned diary of Madame Pin we read:

*“Standing at the far end of the room, he showed me just when to remove my glove and bow to kiss the hem of the of the Queen’s gown. He showed me the gesture she would make to present me.”*⁵⁴⁹

We often think of Hem-Kissing as an act of Gallantry with which men honor women. However it can be used as a training device to teach humility. From Catherine The Great’s memoir we read:

*“Her education was conducted entirely by her mother who kept a tight rein and did not overlook the slightest expression of pride, to which she had a tendency. On the contrary she required her from her earliest childhood on to kiss the skirt of the grand ladies who came to visit the Princess.”*⁵⁵⁰

Another eyewitness to this bowing was the English philosopher, Jeremy Bentham, who traveled in Eastern Poland in the year 1787. He wrote:

*“At my entrance a lad decently dressed presented himself with a book. I took it imagining it a book of my own dropped out of my pocket. I found it a Polish primer for teaching Latin. I returned it, but he followed me into the room, and not content with touching the hem of my garment, the Polish stile [sic] of supplication, prostrated himself on the ground and kissed one of my feet. His meaning was now sufficiently perceptible: he even used the first-mentioned mode of supplication to my servant to induce him to intercede.”*⁵⁵¹

This certainly made an impression upon the philosopher.

Of course that hand which is not holding the hat is the one which sweeps down, simultaneously raises up the hem of the second standing person, or of the corner, of the hem (if it is a Kontusz), and bends his or her head and gently kisses the hem.

Releasing the hem the man arises.

One need not actually kiss the hem—the intention being to show such Honor and or Respect by itself is sufficient—it usually makes the required impression. When done by a man to a woman this can be a Romantic-Erotic event—an overture. Of course this effusive behavior may not be welcomed or an embarrassment by the receiver of such attention.

This can also be done as a gesture of asking for forgiveness, say, of a son to a Father or Mother. It also restores the Harmony and Peace of Society and of Nature.

Contrast the above Bows with the stage form “Rococo-Staropolska” Ukłon which will follow in the text.

2. “ROCOCO-STAROPOLSKI” UKŁON

The name of this bow is just an invention of the present author.

⁵⁴⁹ Pin, *Memoirs of...*, p.68.

⁵⁵⁰ *Memoirs Of Catherine The Great*, p. 76.

⁵⁵¹ *The Correspondence of Jeremy Bentham, Vol. III*, (London: 1971), p. 609.

This is another type of Ukłon that is usually done on stage in an attempt to give the authentic “Staropolska” Bow “character,” which in effect means making it more visible to the audience. Thus, not only movements are exaggerated, but also poses. One may take one or two m of music to do this Ukłon. This depends upon the dancer’s position, music, etc. M steps back on the L ft, bending L knee, L ft turns out somewhat, and at the same time bends deeply from the waist and sweeps both arms to the L st R arm is about waist high and L arm is extended straight back to the L and up. Both lower arms are approximately parallel. Thumbs do not stick out. Recover from the Ukłon by bringing L ft to the R so that the wt is shared equally by both feet. This allows equal freedom of motion either to the R or L side.

The extended straight leg is direct evidence of the 17th century Cavalier Tradition of Western Europe as well as that of 18th century French influence. (Recall the Minuet and the stressed placed upon bows by French dance teachers.) It is just a touch too “pretty”—or not overly, “manly.” The point is, if it is not manly, then it is not “Staropolska.”

Of course, in these matters it is a question of degree. Bows of these types can be strongly done if one is conscious of its true character. It is a case of “how-something-is-done” being as important as “what-is-done.”

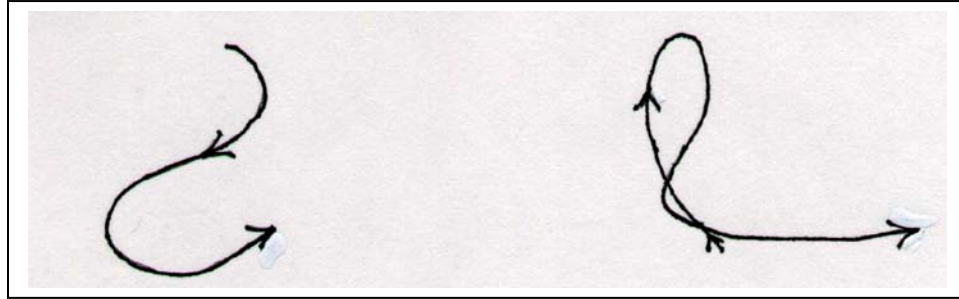


One very often sees this “pretty” bow on today’s stage. If it ever did exist, it could have only existed at the end of the 18th century and in a limited social sphere.(See the following Rococo-Polonaise Section.)

Recall that upon recovering from this bow as the man would extend his ins hd to the W, that he would often twist his mustache with his free hd, or merely brush his mustache upward often with glee in his eyes.

Variation A **RAK NA SERCE** This is a variation of the **UKLON GLOWA** which follows. The free hd, preferably the R hd, is brought up to cover the heart on ct 1. During this bow, the M should glance at the W.

Variation B **S-CURVES OR L-CURVES** After the man removes his hat the arm(s) can continue to trace-out curves such as are illustrated in the Staropolska Bows section.



Now with all this in mind let us now do some milder Bows.

3. UKŁON GŁOWA

This type of bow is more restricted than the Staropolska. It is a bow from the head or waist. Notice that they are described with the feet and legs together. This is more in keeping with the Polonez, which cultivated a trimmer, neater style of behavior and dancing. To stand with widespread legs was considered to be crude and unaesthetic.

To the mass of the Szlachta, Form and Discipline were held in high esteem, but so also were power and freedom. The “Staropolska” personality and attire were “open”—extroverted. To stand with feet together at a social gathering would be too confining for the “Staropolska” man. Except, of course, when they would be on military duty or when they were children standing before their parents or prominent adults.

The reader must remember that these gatherings were mixed, the persons were dressed in foreign clothes so that they would do these less extravagant bows.

4. HAND KISSING UKŁON

This is absolutely de-riguer for any and all Polish dancers! Naturally, this is done by the M.

m1

ct1 Bring ft together turning to face ptr, keeping body straight, knees locked, taking up W’s R hd with your R hd.

ct2 Bow from the waist, kissing W’s hd on either her fingers or top of her hand,

ct3 hold.

This may also be done with the man having his feet apart. Of course, this may require two measures and come on different counts as the occasion and feeling demand. When meeting an old friend or very dear acquaintance, the man may raise the woman’s hand with both hds. If the woman is relatively short compared to him, then the man will probably find it necessary to bend his legs.

This also must be part of one’s everyday life.

5. HAND-ARM UKŁON

Here is a movement that the author first noticed in the Polish pre-WWII film “Halka” (1937). As the cpl is dancing fwd, the M releases inshds, turns toward W somewhat, and swings the lower arm in a circular movement to his partner with a bowing movement. W may also do this, but leading the movement—as always—with a fluid wrist.

6. WOMEN’S CURTSY

Here is a description of the Curtsy done during the Restoration period in 17th century England. This gives us a good idea of its nature.

*“Practice makes perfect, and familiarity gives assurance, for only thus could these stately ladies, balanced on their toes in the manner of a gymnast in a ‘knee-bend’, perform deep curtsies with due elegance. With the body held erect and very slightly inclined forward, the lady gently and steadily bent her knees outwards, lifting the heels off the ground only if the curtsy was required to be made low; the arms were held easily at each side. The eyes, which should look at the company or person, at the moment when the curtsy was first directed were lowered (but not the head) on the knee-bend, and raised again as the body regained the upright position. It must be remembered that while greetings, adieus, and conversation, were punctuated by bows and curtsies, these reverences were not made low to the ground, . . . in general, a sufficiently deep curtsy could be made while keeping both heels on the ground, particularly with the higher heels then in fashion.”*⁵⁵²

Here are several more variations.

Variation A AN “ELEGANT” HISTORICAL CURTSY

*“This curtsy was performed on entering a room where company was assembled, when introduced to some one of consequence, and when beginning or finishing a dance. The court lady was taught to ‘direct’ her curtsy in order to allow the recipients of her salutation to prepare their answering reverence. The means of directing the curtsy was achieved by a preliminary step taken to one side (right or left according to circumstances) at the moment of ‘addressing’ herself to the company. Having gained their attention, the curtsy then was made by drawing the disengaged foot gently to that which supported the body, joining the heels only. The knees were bent smoothly, either slightly or in a deep bend depending upon the occasion, care being taken to keep the knees and toes outward. The body inclined only slightly forward. The arms open naturally and easily, falling to the sides as the bend is made. The wearing of heeled shoes enables the knees to bend in a deep curtsy without the necessity of lifting the heels off the ground. In the seventeenth century, when these curtsies were constantly performed, it was taken for granted, that if the situation demanded, the heels should be raised in order to make a deeper curtsy.”*⁵⁵³

Variation B CURTSY (REWERANS)⁵⁵⁴

This is a type of greeting that is still in existence today. Thus it has been in use for at least 400 years for educated women with a feeling for Art and Beauty. This, as well as all the other bows, may be considered as “proper” parts of the dance itself, as they accompany the man’s initial greeting at the beginning of the dance and that of his thanking the lady at the

⁵⁵² Wildeblood, *The Polite World*,...p. 197-198..

⁵⁵³ Wildeblood, *The Polite World*,...p. 265-266.

⁵⁵⁴ The English production of the black and white film version of “My Fair Lady” has a splendid example of how a curtsy may be done—it occurs in the Ballroom scene.

end. However, as the research shows, it is the bows, poses, and attitude of the dancers that reveal the character of the dance.

W's R ft free,

- ct1 Place R ft to the rear of L ft. R toes close to L heel, R heel not touching floor,



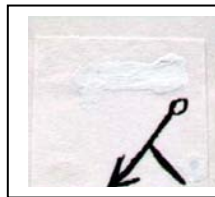
- ct2 sinking down, bending both knees, not changing position of feet,
- ct3 hold position or rise, depending upon the situation. W hd's go to sides, as described above in the previous Ukłon. In this movement is the woman's reply to a greeting then she offers her R hd to be kissed if she is not a girl (roughly over the age of 14 or younger if she is mature for her age). If she is still a young girl, then she curtsies, holding her dress to the sides. Women always stand with feet and legs closed together.

Variation C

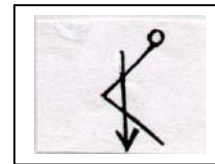
This is a contemporary variation.

- ct 3 W steps fwd with, say, the L ft and,
- m1
 - ct1 rises upon the toes of both ft, wt carried by the L ft,
 - ct2 steps back, in place, upon the R ft, bending both ast bowing the head slightly. L ft remains in place. W picks up the frt of her dress with her fingers as shown below.
 - ct3 Hold.

The W "settles-down" vertically as shown here



and not



As the W "settles" down her hands holding her dress go up, ever so slightly: moving the wrist first.

- m2 Recover closing ft tightly together.



FOOT AND LEG MOVEMENTS

All steps descriptions are for the man. Women use opposite feet and directions. Usually the woman may use the same instructions, but she always dances with women's styling.

1. RHYTHMICAL STEPPING, TAPPING, STAMPING

This is primarily included in order to convey the Staropolska character of the man. The Taniec Polski music is powerful or heavy at times, especially at the introduction which is usually a fanfare. This bombastic music is just what fits the character, which we must not forget, is also dignified. The strength of the Taniec Polski is not one of wild abandon. The accent of the Polish Walking Dance Music is on the first count. However, accents (especially in introductions) can be done one after another.

The man does the stamping. (Recall the description of the rural "kulig" of 1861 mentioned in Part I. Stamping did happen.) This cannot be a loud stamp. It is more for the feeling of the individual. It is only for a measure or two. Often accompanied by a corresponding arm swing and happy expression.

Remember the factual quotations from the 18th century that described how happy some were when seeing the Taniec Polski done in Kontusz and Żupan. How they beamed with happiness!

Variation A KROKI W MIEJSCU

This is for dancing in place. Stand with the wt equally distributed upon both ft.

m1

ct& Transfer wt upon L leg and tap the R ft in place next to the L ft, R knee bent

ct1-3 step R,L,R in place,

m2

rep m1 oppftw,d.

2. BASIC TANIEC POLSKI STEP

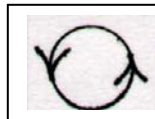
As the reader will recall, this basic step is at least 300 years old. It consists of a slide, walk, walk. The description is the same as that for the Social Ballroom Polonez. Because of this, we shall include the following long description and exercises for this movement here, with other forms of the Polish Walking Dance.

Remember, however, that the emphases are different. For the man in the Taniec Polski, the first count is very heavy and slidingly done.

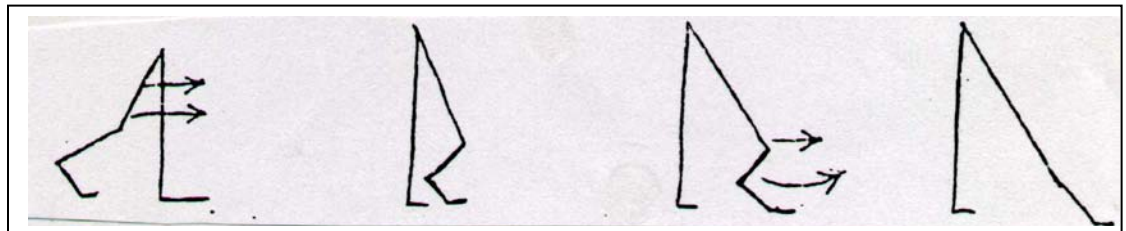
PREPARATION EXERCISES

This set of exercises is for both men and women in all forms of the Polish Walking Dance (except Chodzony).

- a) Clap on ct1.
- b) Clap on ct1,2,3.
- c) Take one step twd with each ct.
- d) Rep (a) but call out the "ct&" before the ct 1.
- e) On ct& quickly extend the R ft fwd. Keep it low and keep leg stiff. Body does not lean fwd.
- f) Rep (e) stepping on the ft on ct1.
- g) Stand with wt equally distributed upon both ft. Rise up onto the frt part of both ft by transferring the wt onto the balls of the ft. This is to be done slowly, and in a controlled manner, keeping the entire body stiff.
- h) Keeping the upper body erect repeat (g), but bending both knees at the same time. The knees are simply not bent straight down, but the knees are rotated in a circle, down, fwd, up and back. All this is done as you rise up on the balls of both ft. As the knees rotate fwd and up, the wt of the body shifts fwd onto the rear of the toes. Viewed from the side the rotation motion of the knees is as follows. The ankles themselves describe a similar pattern as the wt is rolled onto the toes of the ft.



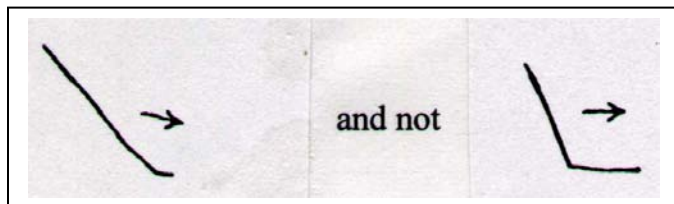
- i) Practice (h) with the wt upon one ft holding the other ft just off the floor, next to the supporting ft.
- j) Practice (i) with the knee only rotating half of the way around.
- k) Stand wt on L ft which is flat on the floor. R ft in back, about 25 centimeters (10 inches), only the ball and toes of the R ft are on the floor, heel off the floor. Slide the R ft fwd, past the L ft. This is accomplished by two separate muscular actions. The R ft comes from the back to a position ahead of the L, but next to L ft, by about the length of the big toe. This is done by the upper thigh muscles. The entire R leg which is bent at the knee is "unlocked," and the lower leg is uncoiled going fwd. This lower leg moves as one unit. This second motion continues until the R leg is completely straight. With the start of this knee action the heel drops closer to the floor as the fwd part of the ft continues to slide fwd upon the floor.



1st motion
from thigh

2nd motion
from knee

- l) Practice (j),(k),(e) together. The toes of the free ft must be the first to contact the floor st the attitude of the free ft as it goes fwd is



The toes of the ft are slid fwd on the floor. Try to crease the floor with the big toe of the ft. Keep this free ft directly fwd.

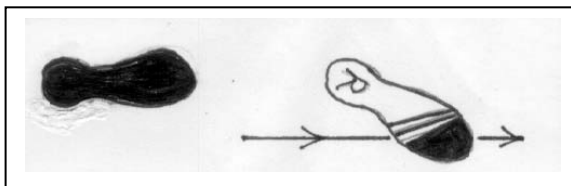
- m) Do (l) on all ct&.

MEN'S AND WOMEN'S STEPS

1. THE MEN'S "STAROPOLSKA" VERSION—POSUWISTY

Standing with wt on L ft,

- ct& bending the L leg-brush-slide the R ft fwd with the front part of the R ft touching the floor, R ft is turned out st the dancers feels the resistance with the floor; the body may also lean into this sliding ft,



- m1
- ct1 at the finish of the slide, step onto the R ft, transferring all the wt to this R ft,
 - ct2 step onto the L ft going fwd a shorter distance than in ct1,
 - ct3 step onto the R ft as in ct1
 - ct& rep ct& oppftw,
- m2 rep m1 oppftw.

Most of the weight on the sliding foot can be on the front part of the foot also—even on the entire sole. Once this is learned then the sliding forward can start from the previous ct3 so

that one is actually bringing the sliding foot from behind—you are actually dragging the foot forward—this makes for a very long sliding action. It is different enough to be considered as a separate variation.

Many contemporary Polish teachers/choreographers think of this Posuwisty version as being the only true Polonez step. They use it for any and all stage purposes regardless of the Historical Time setting.

They do a very heavy slide on a completely turned-out foot. This, naturally, is only done by balletically-trained dancers. The step-movement is often done to the dramatic Polonaise's of Chopin. It is beautiful, but requires considerable practice.

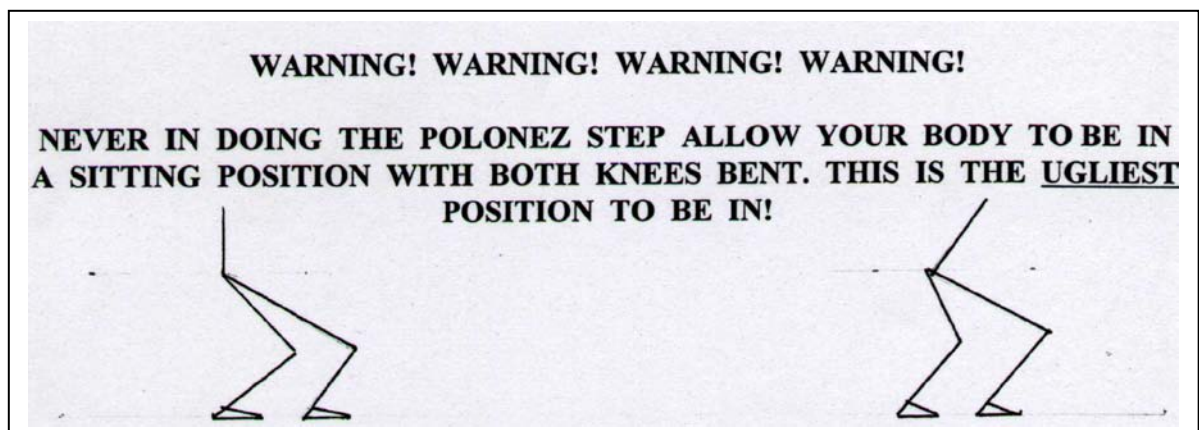
But most unfortunate is the ignorance of the teachers and dancers concerning the historical development of this movement, which they pass on to others. Remember that one "beautiful" movement can destroy several variant movements and thus impoverish our Cultural and Aesthetic Forms.

The relative lengths of the three steps in each measure are long, medium, medium. When this sliding version is done for many measures of slow music, it can become tiring and dull. In order to avoid this, the men should do less sliding and just walk three steps per measure. The amount of sliding varies. But it must be more marked for M than for W. Beginners should practice a heavy slide.

Many non-Polish dancers put the slide at the end of the measure. Whereas, Polish dancers start immediately with the knee bending (ct&) and slide. This requires some extra strength. Maybe this is where the power for this step comes from.

WOMEN'S VERSION

The woman does the same as above, with this exception: the slide on ct& is minimal. The man brush-slides, whilst the women *glides* her ft across the floor. This is done by the woman keeping her weight upon the supporting (rear) leg for as long as possible. To slide, the wt goes forward onto the leading ft sooner. The women's movements are more flowingly done: she must walk smoothly without bobbing up and down or a swaying dress. This can be accomplished by taking short steps. She must glide along forward. However keep in mind that the woman often must cover a greater distance than the man does. This she must do by taking long, reaching steps. This is done by stretching the lower ft ast the toes contact the floor first. There is no need to allow the heel to touch the floor until the full weight is transferred to it. A Woman's Step Variant would be to just eliminate the knee-bending movement.



NEWER STAGE VERSION OF THE STAROPOLSKA MOVEMENT FOR MEN

There are at present two “newer” stage versions of the Taniec Polski step for men.

The *first one* is hard to pin down as to its origin. We include it here because many Polish amateur groups use it. Because of this, one can speculate that this may have been done, although both seem to be a cross between elegant Polonez and the demands of the Staropolska character. As it stands, it also is the description of a very refined 19th century Polonez step, and by inference suitable for both the Rococo-Polonaise and the Ułański Polonez.

This version of the basic Polonez step is an attractive variant. (Perhaps the most “elegant” of the Basic Polonez variants, which is itself a variant of this one, is described in the The Contemporary Social Ballroom Polonez section (Variant D) of this Workbook. This version is what the author has chosen to be the second of the “newer” stage versions.) Both involve a stepping-up, upon the balls of the ft.

Stand facing LOD, ft together, wt equally distributed on both ft.

- | | |
|-----|---|
| ct& | Do exercise (k), transferring wt to L ft, freeing R ft, which goes fwd and |
| m1 | |
| ct1 | step up onto the ball of the R ft, keeping R leg stiff. This first step is the longest within the measure. However its length must be one that is comfortable for the dancer. It should not be so long a step that one cannot “step up.” The amount of “step up” is generally not very great, but enough to bring the heel off the floor. As always, the final criterion is how beautiful it feels to the dancer and how it looks to the others. After the step is mastered going directly fwd, then do it by stepping with the ft slightly “turned out.” In this case, diag R. |
| ct2 | Step L ft fwd onto the frt of the ft. This step is shorter than the first, and its length is the same as that of a medium walk step. The elevation of this step is the same as that of the first. The leg is more or less straight and stiff. |
| ct3 | Rep ct2 oppftw, releasing the ankle st you are on the entire ftat of the R ft, |
| ct& | rep ct& oppftw, |
| m2 | rep m2 oppftw. |

Keep in mind that this is actually a continuous action that can start from the previous ct3 through ct& and part of ct1. What has been described above for ct& can be extended into part of ct1 so that the wt is placed upon the R ft at the end of ct1.

The motion of this step-or rather, version-is to roll-fwd, step-up, walk, and drop down. Depending upon what effects the dancer may want, this step can be done differently—that is, on cts 2,3 step onto a more or less flat foot, but actually carry the wt on the frt part of the foot. With this variant, there is a step down in going from ct1 to ct2. It must be pointed out that often when Polish “authorities” describe this step, as well as others, they use the phrase “na całą Stopę.” This means to walk onto the entire foot. The problem is in deciding just what they mean in their use or interpretation of this term. Taken at its face value, it means to walk or run fwd st the entire ft strikes the floor at the same time. This implies that

the ankle is locked, and the ft is “slapped” on the floor. Good Polonez (nay, Polish dancers) very rarely do that. They step onto the frt part of the ft first, then they may lower the rest of the ft to the floor. The ultimate test is the Beauty revealed in the execution of the variant in question.

THE STAROPOLSKA BODY MOVEMENT FOR MEN AND WOMEN

The man often bends his upper-body to and frow, bending it now toward the woman, then away from her with corresponding head bowing. It is a movement of animation. This is often done when hand positions or hand holds are changed as occurs in the Curl-Up figure as depicted in the figure section of the Rococo-Polonaise or in the Polonaise Stage Version chapters. Look again at Norblin’s painting as well as the cover of this book. This will give you a feel for it. Women also may do this but less so. Both do this as replying to each other: first the man, then the woman.

MEN’S VARIATIONS

VARIATION A ACCENT ⁵⁵⁵

Same as above, but with knees somewhat bent. From the up position, ct2,

ct3 fall onto a “turned-out” R ft, with a stamp beginning to brush L ft fwd. Here the accent is on count3, but once you have mastered the motion of “going-up,” “falling-stamping,” the count may be altered.

In this variant it is an absolute must to take each step not with the ft pointing straight fwd, but “turned out”—that is, with the toes pointing diagonally R and L, respectively, with each R and L step. The knees should also be turned out. The man must also take long, powerful steps, with the wt—which he feels up in his chest—carried fwd and high. Do not sit back onto the legs. It is a wonderful variation for moving “accents” to the dance to achieve dramatic qualities for the dancer, such as when he changes ptrs, returns to his ptr, dances directly fwd down the room, leads the figures, etc. When he gets tired, he may change to less demanding variations.

VARIATION B KRZESANY

Another M’s variation. Whereas the Hołubiec variation to follow is suited to a Polonez step done “flat-footedly,” this is, the weight is on the entire ft. This is more suited to the “step-up” variation:

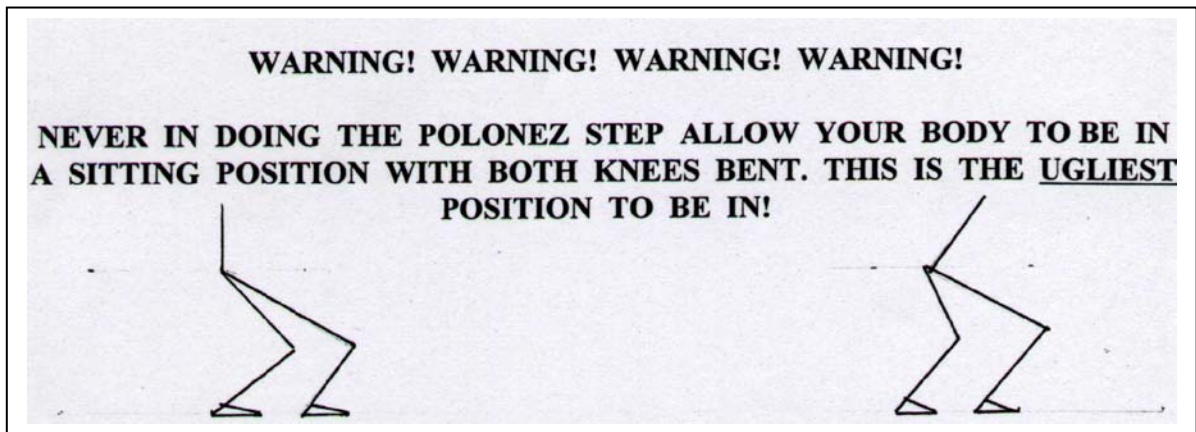
ct& as the ft which is free is brought fwd, the heel strikes the floor.

2. KROKI W TYŁ

There is no evidence that dancing backwards was deliberately done. However, actually dancing under crowded conditions often necessitates moving backwards. Again with the exception of persons whom have had many Minuet lessons, most people (especially men), do not naturally dance with a well turned out pointed foot. That requires practice. So in order to

⁵⁵⁵ Both the “Accent” and “Krezsany” do have a historical justification according to Roller’s account of 1843. See the first section of the present work. But more importantly the description of Feldenstein (1772) and inferences from his description can be used as justification for this variant. See his description in the pages to follow under the Historical Sources of the Basic Step.

go backwards for the Taniec Polski, merely take three steps per measure with the knee bent on ct&. Of course, if there is little space, these steps are very small.



VERBAL-ATTITUDUAL PRACTICE FOR THE TANIEC POLSKI

We have deliberately placed this section at the end of the physical movements exercises for the Taniec Polski because the Spiritual-Attitude which the Taniec Polski requires is often the most difficult for contemporary people to assimilate this manner of speech into their lives. It is not impossible: practice will lead to success. Repeat these phrases until they are second nature. These fulsome expressions should be then practiced with the Staropolska Bows—then the dancing may begin.

In order to help the contemporary dance student learn the proper method of dancing the Taniec Polski Form we re-introduce here **some** verbal expressions, which should help place, the dancer in the appropriate mood or atmosphere for the Taniec Polski. Here are some expressions with which a Man addresses to a Woman or to a Man or to Men as the case may be.

<i>“Padam pod nogi twoja.”</i>	I fall at your feet
<i>“Padam pod nogi twoja, Pani.”</i>	I fall at your feet, Madam.
<i>“Pani, Padam pod nogi twoja.”</i>	Madam, I fall at your feet.
<i>“Proszę Państwo, bardzo proszę do Taniec Polski.”</i>	Please everyone, please join in for the Taniec Polski.

To make a toast:

<i>“Miłość Braterska! ”</i>	Beloved Community/Brotherhood!
<i>“Kochajmy Się!”</i>	Let us love one another!
	We all love all (Our Community)!

Some terms of honor/endearment:

<i>“Brat”</i>	Brother
<i>“Dobrodziej”</i>	Good Friend
<i>“Waszmość”</i>	Your Grace
<i>“Wielmożny”</i>	Noble, Great
<i>“Ekscelencja”</i>	Excellency

Be sure to use compound expressions using the terms “Pan”, “Pani” and their grammatical variants. Here are some:

<i>“Pan Brat”</i>	Sir Brother
<i>“Pan Waszmość”</i>	Sir Your Grace
<i>“Wasz Pan Brat”</i>	Your Sir Brother
<i>“Waszmość Pan”</i>	Your Graceful Sir
<i>“Waszmościa Pani”</i>	Your Graceful Lady/Your Ladyship

The term “Wasz” intensifies the meaning of the honorific “Your.”

Persons may be addressed to dance:

<i>“Proszę, Waszmościa Pani”</i>	Please, Your Ladyship
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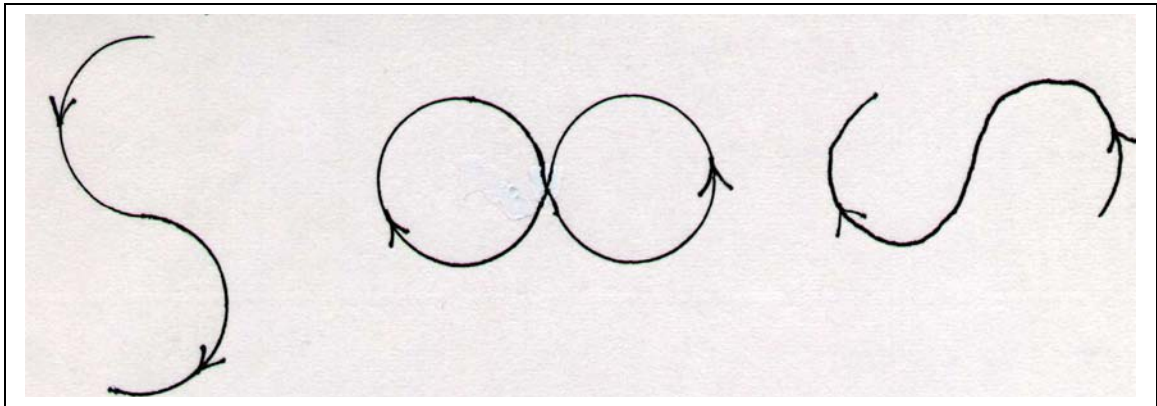
Occupational titles may be used instead of names:

<i>“Pan Engineer”</i>	Sir Engineer
<i>“Pani Engineer”</i>	Lady Engineer

DANCE FIGURES FOR THE TANIEC POLSKI

As has been pointed out above in the factual source section of the present work, the Taniec Polski, like the Chodzony, is very simple from the standpoint of figures. It is basically a promenading dance, which probably is why it has lasted so long. For the complete story of the figures for Polish dancing the reader must consult the present author's research work on Figure Dancing. Here we shall mention only the simplest of the figures.

The most basic figure is the circling of couples around the room clockwise. After this circling at the leader's command or indicated direction, any type of winding or weaving figure of columns may be done as illustrated below:



The column of dancers may pass in and out of different rooms (into the street, around the garden, etc.), if desired.

As we know, there were several figure motifs or games, which are used for the Taniec Polski. The best known is the "Odbijanego," or the cutting-in upon the first couple.

We do have a description or recommendation of this "cutting-in" figure from Häcker, one of the Saxon dance masters. However his description is from 1835 by which time the Social Ballroom Polonez is paramount. In fact, Häcker's description is the eighth figure of a complete dance choreography—it concludes his Polonaise. Because this description has some historical significance we give it here.

8 The Changing of Ladies

The lead M during the promenade lets his ptr go forward, then [he] turns to the 2nd M and claps [his] hands lightly. The 2nd M releases, at this sign, the left hand of his Lady, which now the lead M takes, who also [to this Lady] a Compliment [a bow] makes. This 2nd M does the same with couple 3 and so do all the M likewise repeat [this action]; the last M takes thereby the [unpartnered] 1st Lady. Now the lead M takes the 3rd Lady and this changing continues until

"8 Das Wechselnder Damen.

Herr 1 lasst während der Promenade seine Dame vorwärts gehen, wendet sich gegen den zweiten Herrn und schlägt leicht in die Hände. Der zweite Herr lasst auf dieses Zeichen die linke Hand seiner Dame los, welche nun vom ersten Herrn gefasst wird, wobei dieser zugleich der Dame ein Compliment macht. Herr 2 macht dasselbe gegen Paar 3 und so alle Herren durch; der Letzte nimmt die bis dahin allein gegangene erste Dame. Nun nimmt Herr 1 die dritte Dame und setzt diesen Wechsel fort bis

every M comes back to his
[original] Lady.

*jeder Herr wieder zu seiner
Dame kommt.*

During this entire circling
no one may remain stationary,
all the M must smaller steps,
all the Ladies must larger steps take,
than they usually make for the
Promenade, and especially
must the 1st Lady
take quick
steps in order to reach the end
of the Column so that [she],
thereby to the last M, who is alone,
can offer [him] her hand

*Bei dieser ganzen Tour
darf Niemand stehen bleiben,
die Herren müssen aber etwas kleinere,
die Damen etwas grossere Schritte machen,
wie bei der gewöhnlichen
Promenade, und besonders
muss die jedesmalige erste
Dame mit fluchtigen
Schritten an das Ende
der Colonne zu gelangen suchen,
um dort dem letzten allein gehenden Herrn
ihre Hand reichen zu können.”⁵⁵⁶*

Note in this description the last man does not leave the circle of dancers—it is just a variation on the theme of the changing of partners.

Another figure is the surrounding of one woman who must then dance with each man in turn. There is a figure mentioned by Łukasz Gołębiowski in 1830, which we call “Sejmu Konfederacyjnego.” There is no way to date this figure. Symbolically, it belongs to the political world of the 18th century. However, it may have been a 19th century Historicism. If the leader of the dance leads the dancing in such a way so that the figures are poorly executed and confusion results, then the women retire to one side of the room and choose a new man to lead the dance. This “rebellion” is analogous to the 17th and 18th century political instrument known as a “Konfederacja.” One reason for inferring that this is an early 19th century figure is that the figures of the 18th century Taniec Polski are so simple and few that it is hard to imagine that mistakes could be made. Be that as it may, we include it in the Taniec Polski section.

The Taniec Polski is by and large a collective dance. There really are no special couple motifs or solos. However, from practical observations of crowded dance hall rooms, here is one couple motif that does not violate the Taniec Polski character.

UKŁON I NAPRZÓD

- m1 With an outs Polonez step, ptrs holding ins hds, go fwd,
- m2 ptrs do 3 steps in place (more or less) doing their respective bows. Here the man just does a head or waist bow.

Repeat as desired until space is no longer limited.

With the passage of time the Taniec Polski became transformed into a Pan-European and Russian Dance. This accelerated its development into a highly figured-dance with couples changing places, reversing of directions, etc., it became a choreographic exercise. And this can be pleasurable.

⁵⁵⁶ G. Häcker, *Der selbstlehrende Tanzmeister*, (Chemnitz: 1835), pp. 243, 244.

THE ROCOCO-POLONAISE OR CLASSICAL POLONAISE

That there was such a dance-form as the Rococo-Polonaise or Classical Polonaise the reader will have to read the arguments contained in the text, primarily those topics which describe:

- a) the musical connection between the Polonaise and the Minuet.
- b) the dance masters who described the Step as a Bouree.
- c) the historical record of the strong cultural connections between France and Poland in the 18th and 19th centuries.
- d) consideration of the clothes worn in Poland during the 18th century.

The main point of the present author is that there is music of the late 18th century in Poland which is Rococo-Classical in character. The same orchestra of this type existed in Poland not only for Operas and Concerts but also for the playing of dance music. The sound of this music is very feminine, delicate, more like a Minuet than a Taniec Polski. The only real problem here is for the man. The man's part in the Taniec Polski is rough and never, never feminine. Now for a man who was a francophile, speaking French, and dressing in the French mode, learning French dances, he would have no qualms about dancing in a graceful, over-elegant style, which to a Taniec Polski man would look more suitable for a girl than for a man.

For a woman there isn't any change in her attitude except that she may be a trifle lighter than she already is.

What could we expect in the way of the character of this dance variation? We must speculate. However, it must be pointed out that this dance variation definitely exists as a stage form among Polish dance groups. There is this difference though—these groups never have the men dance in “foreign clothes,” but always in the “Staropolska” style. This is in direct conflict with the actual way the individuals dance.

We must never forget that ideally, the Szlachta, if the occasion demanded, would jump upon their charger and go to war or protect their Person and or Honor with the swords that hung at their side. These men would not have been men with weak wrists and feminine hand motions. But this is very widely used among male dancers today. These are the hand motions, which come from a poor understanding of classical ballet training and the character of the Polish Walking Dance forms.

Not being adequately versed in World Cultural History people responsible for teaching these groups make the mistake of identifying the French Aristocracy with the Polish Szlachta. This, as we have pointed out, is a gross error. The French Aristocracy at the close of the 18th century was noted for its artificiality and affectation. The strength of the Taniec Polski comes in part from the physical strength of the men themselves (and the fact that they actually ruled the State). To have a man dancing the Taniec Polski in an affective way (even though it may be very beautiful), is a travesty. Again, it is not so much a case of what one does, as how one does it.

Whether or not one chooses to seriously and deeply study the Rococo-Polonaise variant one can still derive some feeling for this Rococo-Polonaise variant simply by examining the pictures of the clothes which were worn and the poses which occur as the Rococo-Polonaise Bows are done.

Good taste, restraint and clarity mark the Rococo-Polonaise—it is not like the Staropolska variant.

It is well to note that those observers who commented that the Polonez in Poland was not even a “Dance” were consciously or unconsciously comparing the Polonez with the Dances of Western Europe, that is, the French Court Dances of their time.

The most well known Dance of this time was the Minuet. The Minuet was overwhelmingly a dance done by a single couple who were dancing for a gathering of spectators who themselves were knowledgeable practitioners of the Minuet.

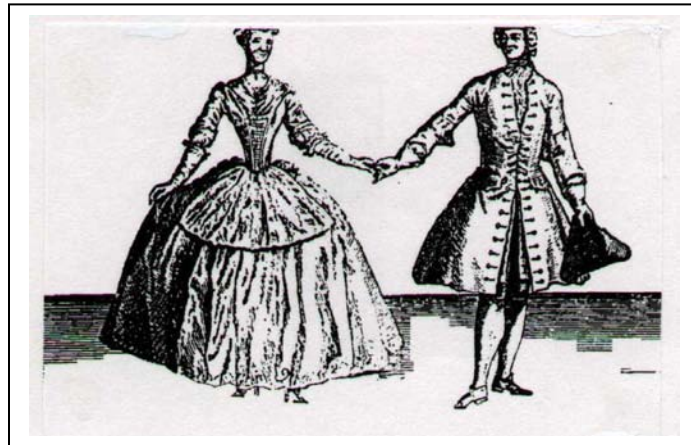
This made the Minuet a dance of individual performance or skill, of “showing-off.” This is the complete opposite of the Taniec Polski or Polonez.

There are benefits of learning both or all of the different variants of the Polonez not the least of which is the living preservation for future generations of the variants. The second benefit of doing the variants is discovering which different ways of dancing brings to us as well as the intellectual satisfaction.

We shall first present selected descriptions of the general French gallant-style Dancing for the 18th century. They are all excerpts from the standard work of Pierre Rameau’s *The Dancing Master*, published in 1725 along with his original illustrations. This will give us a feel for the gallant-style. We do also include these lengthy descriptions for those persons who belong to Costume-Stage-Dance-Groups, that is, for people who are only interested in Costume-performance.

COUPLE POSITIONS

The open position with partners side by side is used. Note the distance between them. See the *Stage Versions* for other couple positions.



ARM POSITIONS AND MOTIONS

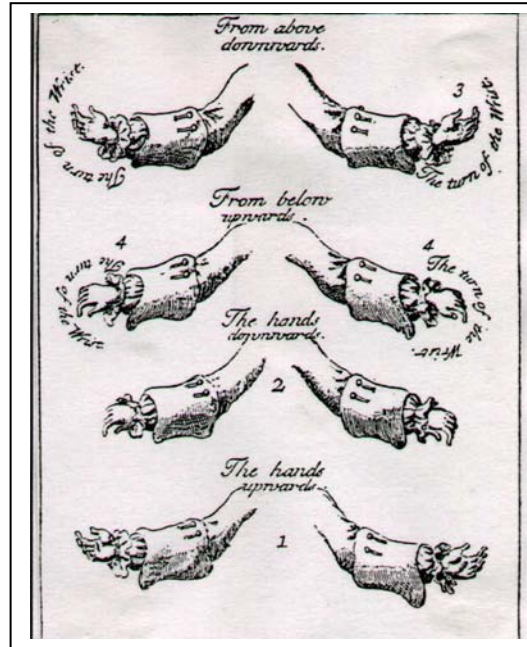
MAN’S ARMS POSITION AND MOTIONS

As already mentioned above, the man’s arm motions are more fluid and deliberate than for the “Staropolska.”

P. Rameau has a linkage of wrist, elbows and arms for arm movements. These are for him three separate zones of movements. These are also specific movements of these zones for different steps which we shall consider later. What does Rameau say about the wrists?

“Although the movement of the wrist do not appear difficult, they merit proper attention, for infinite graces reside in these extremities, when the arms are moved smoothly according to the rules I shall describe...the movement of the wrist is done in two ways, viz., from above downwards, and from below upwards, therefore, when the movement is done in the first manner, the wrist must be bent inwards making a turn of the hand, which, from this same movement, returns to the first position as shown in (3) by the words: ‘The turn of the wrist’, which demonstrates the manner according to the first representation of the arms (2). But care must be taken not to bend the wrist too much, which would make it appear broken.

As for the second movement, which is made from below upwards, the hands being downwards as shown in (2), bend the wrist as in (4), then let the hand return upwards, making a semi-circle according to the words: ‘The turn of the wrist’, and by this movement the hands are in the position as in (1).”⁵⁵⁷

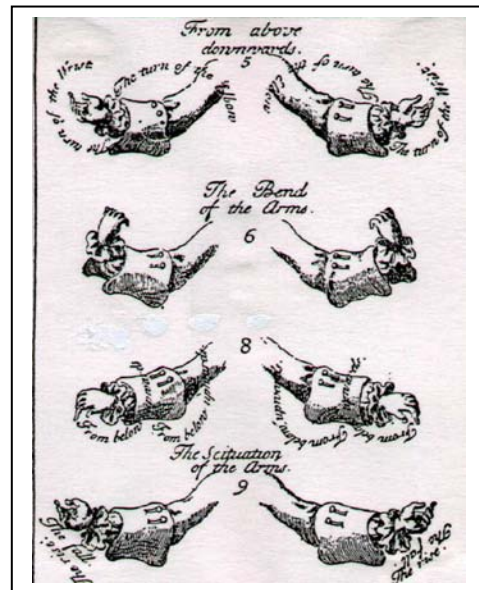


The point is that there is bending of the wrist—concave and convex and some rotation, but not carefully what Rameau states, “...they merit proper attention, for infinite grace reside in these extremities...” It is just this movement that easily becomes effeminate. Men be careful. (Of course I am not referring here to persons who are deliberately being satirical.) This circular rotation of the man’s hand before taking the women’s hand may be used to distinguish a Rococo-Polonaise from that of the Taniec Polski.

Rameau states that the movement of the elbows are important for the steps, Pas de Bourree, and the Temps de Courante. It is these steps which were cited by dance masters in their descriptions of the Taniec Polski or Polonaise.

“The elbow, like the wrist, has its movement from above downwards, and from below upwards; with this difference, that when you bend the elbows the wrists move too, which prevents the arms from being stiff and accords them considerable grace. Nevertheless, the bend of the wrist must not be exaggerated, for that would appear extravagant. The same observations apply to the feet, for when you bend the knee it is the instep that completes the movement by rising on the step, and so of the elbow with the wrist . . .

Therefore, to move the arms from above downwards, the arms being placed as shown, (5), the elbow and wrist must be bent according to the words: ‘The turn of the elbow, The turn of the wrist.’ And when the wrist are



⁵⁵⁷ P. Rameau, *The Dancing Master*, trans. C. Beaumont, (London: 1970), pp. 118-119.

bent (6), you extend them (8), and the arms return to their original position (5). Thus, when you make a movement of the wrists, they should bend and extend as if they were bent with the elbows.

As for the second movement, which is made from below upwards, the hands are turned downwards as shown (8), the wrists and elbows being bent in making a circle only, according to the words: 'From below upwards', to show that both arms ought to bend together equally and return to the original position(5)." ⁵⁵⁸

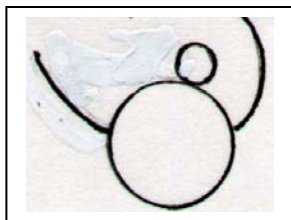
How are the arms to be moved with the feet? Rameau states that the movements are contrary. When the left foot steps forward the right arm is back. With this movement the partial rotations of the hand, wrist and elbow are done. For example when doing the Pas de Bourree step:

"...if you make a Pas de Bourree en avant with the right foot, the change of the arms should be made thus: the right arm, which is in opposition to the left foot, should be extended as you bend the knee, while the left arm turns downwards at the same time to bend the knee, while the left arm turns downwards at the same time to bend in front of you; the right foot moves forwards for the body to rise upon it, which makes the opposition of the left arm to the right leg. As to the two steps which follow and complete your pas de bourree, you must not change your arms since there is but one opposition in this pas." ⁵⁵⁹

This should give you some idea of just what was involved in the Gallant-Style. The most important are the partial hand, wrist, and elbow rotations, which are not exaggerated. For a fuller understanding of this style one must learn from specialists in Baroque and Rococo Dance.

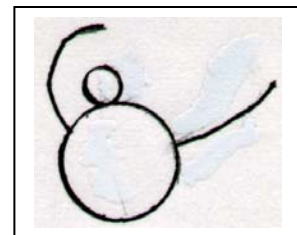
WOMAN'S ARM POSITION

This is an arm position which comes from the stage. It is exceedingly delicate. It is also used in all stage forms of the Polish Walking Dance, except the Chodzony variant. View from above the position is,



Leading Arm

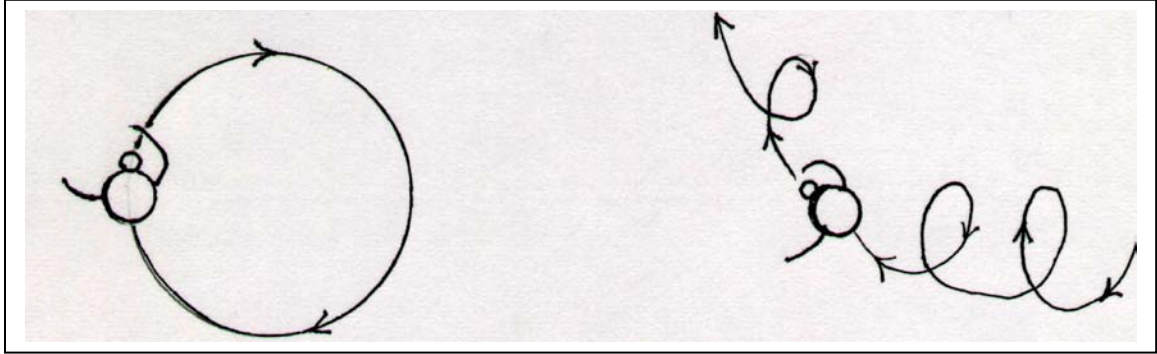
Trailing Arm



Notice that there is a trailing and leading arm relative to the direction of travel. Usually the woman holds a handkerchief in the leading hand. Most often the woman does a circle or a spiraling circle. Very often the women use the KROK OSEMKI, (6 running-like steps per measure) which is shown below.

⁵⁵⁸ Rameau, *The Dancing Master*,... pp. 119-120.

⁵⁵⁹ Rameau, *The Dancing Master*,... pp. 130-131.



Each time there is a directional change she takes the opposite arm position. The arms are well rounded and wide; the leading hand is held mid-chest high, palm turned toward dancer while the trailing arm is held somewhat lower, open hand palm down.

UKLONS (BOWS)

As previously stated the influence of French Etiquette was strong in certain Social circles of Poland during the 18th century. We know that Poles did travel widely and were received at the French Court. French Etiquette and Dances were taught in Poland by French dance masters. Thus we can deduce that French Court Bowing, or at least a flavor of it, was done in Poland, by some, for the Polonaise. Here we shall first include the instructions for some of these Bows contained in P. Rameau's book. These are all from original sources from the 1730's. Practice these in order to get the **feeling** of the Rococo Aesthetic—it is a nice feeling.

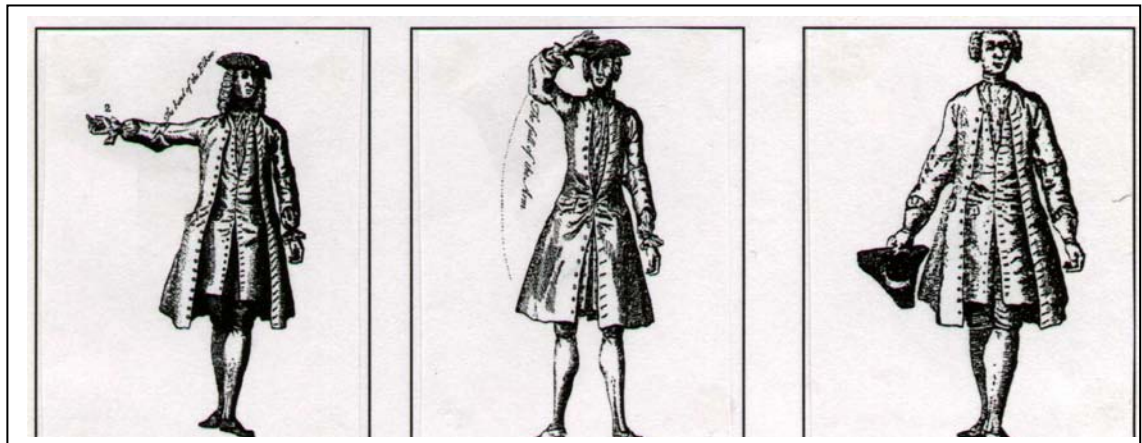
MAN'S HAT REMOVAL

First before bowing the hat must be properly removed. The concomitant arm motions for the man may be illustrated with the instructions given for the removal of one's hat. One must remove one's hat before beginning the Bow.

Fig. 7

Fig. 8

Fig. 9



“ *The body being placed according to the aforesaid rules, if you desire to salute someone, the arm must be raised to the height of the shoulder (Fig.7), first, having the hand open (2), secondly, bending the elbow to take hold of the hat. This causes the hand to describe a semicircle, according to the words: ‘The bend of the elbow’, the centre of the circle being the elbow itself.*

The elbow being bent, as shown in Fig.8, and the hand open, as in Fig. 7, it must be carried to the head, which should remain still; then place the thumb against the forehead with the four fingers resting on the brim. On closing the hand the pressure of the thumb will cause the hat to rise, while the four fingers will grasp it. Then, raising the arm a little more, lift the hat above the head, extend the arm in a line with the shoulder (and at right angles to the body) and lower it to the side. This movement is termed: ‘The fall of the arm’, and is shown in Fig.8. Fig.9 represents the manner of holding the hat at the side, crown behind.

...there should be no pause, and that the three actions should be continuous, so that they appear to be but one single movement; because it is merely one movement divided into three – which seemed to me the best method of explaining each action; that is, to raise the arm from the side, bending the elbow; to carry it to the head and take hold of the hat; to raise it and allow the arm to fall to the side again.

*To put the hat on again the same order is to be observed; . . . ”*⁵⁶⁰

Notice how understated this is compared to the Staropolska bow.

SOME POSSIBLE HISTORICAL BOWS AND BOWING FOR THE ROCOCO-POLONASIE

It is often easier to apprehend and appreciate the nature of the Rococo-Polonaise Dance by doing the Bows rather than the Steps appropriate to this variant because the Steps are rather difficult.

Besides this there is also the fact that the bowing in attenuated forms has lasted for a long time whilst the Steps have been submerged or superseded by others (except to present readers of this book, dance students and practitioners of Historical Dances).

⁵⁶⁰ Rameau, *The Dancing Master*,... pp. 17-18.

MAN'S ROCOCO-POLONAISE BOWS

A Bow to be made when entering a room or when first approaching a person in order to engage in a conversation.

The Static Bow to the front.

“Keep the body upright and slide forwards the foot that is in front (for the purpose of my drawing I have assumed this to be the left) until it is in the fourth position, as shown in Figs.10 and 11. These show the uprightness of the body when one foot is advanced, for it must be understood that the body is not to bend or incline until the foot

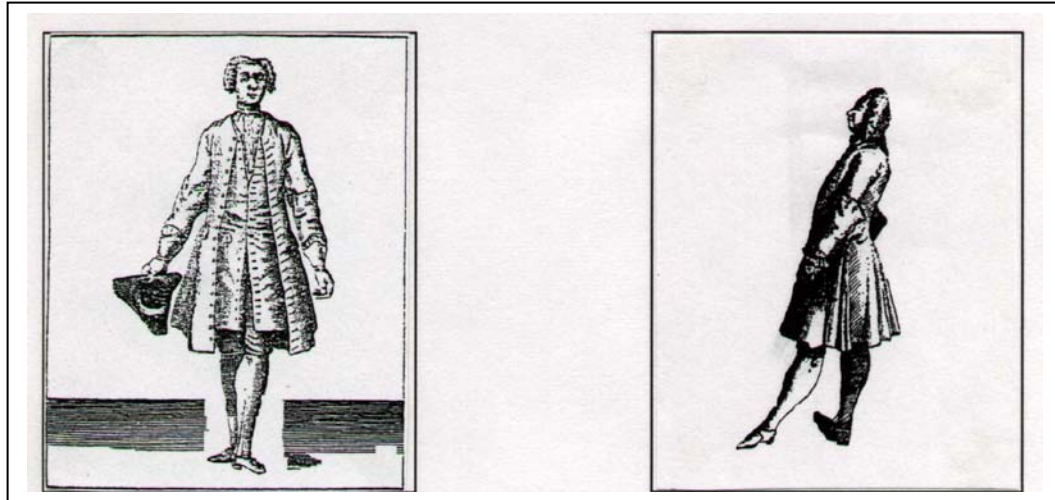


Fig. 10

Fig. 11

has been moved, because the body follows the legs, and what it should do afterwards is explained in the other two plates in which the body is shown bent (see fig. 12 and 13).

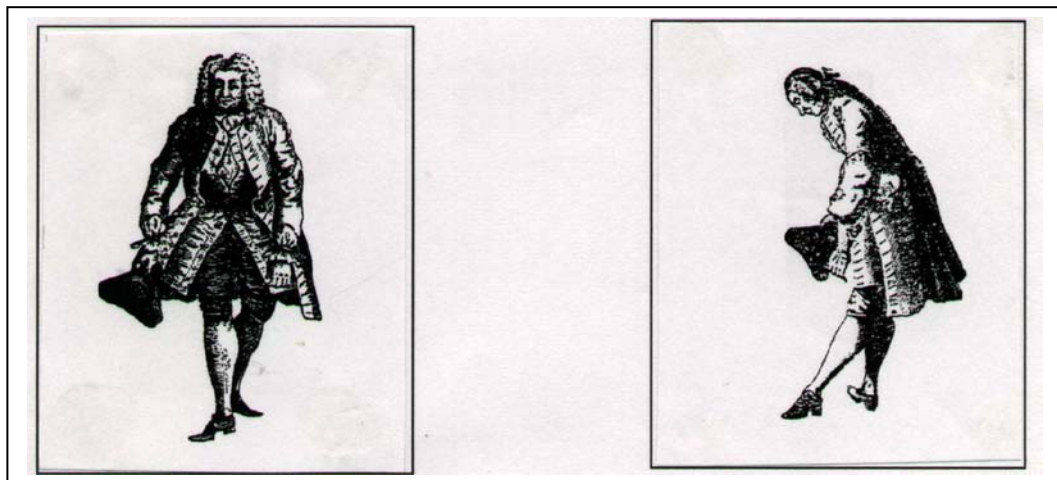


Fig.12

Fig. 13

I say then that you should move the foot gently forwards, leaving the weight of the body on the rear foot, the knee of which is forced to bend on account of the weight of

*the body, whereas the front leg should be well extended. But the inclination of the body is greater or less, according to the rank of the person you salute. The head also is inclined, and this is one of the essential parts of the bow. In bending the waist, do not straighten the knee of the rear foot, for that would cause the hip to rise and twist the body sideways, instead of you assuming the position I have shown, where all parts are balanced in opposition. When you rise, do so with the same ease with which you bowed, and, in rising, transfer the weight of the body to the front foot. This permits the rear one to be ready to move forward or sideways to perform another bow, which is usually made backwards, and which I shall explain when dealing with the honours to be made on entering a room.”*⁵⁶¹

The Passing Bow.

“In regard to the passing bow, this is done in the same manner as the bow forwards, save that the body must be turned diagonally towards the persons you salute. That is, you turn half-sideways towards them, sliding forwards the foot that is nearest them, whether it be the right or the left, bending the waist and inclining the head at the same time, as shown in Fig. 14.”



Fig.14

“If the salute be made to the left side, then it is the left foot which slides forwards, and similarly in the case of the right side; but, as this bow is used in different places, it is important that I should cite the conditions under which it must be performed with the utmost nicety.

*But in the case of bows made in fashionable promenades, such as the Tuileries or similar places to which the best society resorts, they must not be made with the same slightness, but performed with ceremony and grace . . . when you bend your body do not incline the head so low as to hide the face, a fault which is rendered the greater because the person is in doubt as to whether you desire to salute him or not. Hence, before you begin your bow, look modestly at the person; this is termed ‘directing your bow before you make it.’ ”*⁵⁶²

The Backwards Bow.

“These bows are performed quite differently from those forwards and are more ceremonious, for this reason they demand more care, but this is set off by the pleasure experienced in being distinguished from the common herd. Suppose than the

⁵⁶¹ Rameau, *The Dancing Master*,... pp. 20.

⁵⁶² Rameau, *The Dancing Master*,... pp. 20, 25.

hat to be held in the hand and the feet placed in the fourth position, . . . , and the body supported on the left foot so that the right is ready to move sideways to the second position; but, in making this step, the heel should be the first to be placed on the ground which makes it easier for the body to balance. Then the body is inclined, . . . [with] the feet in the second position.

*The weight of the body is then transferred to the right foot, and the left, being ready to move, you gently draw it behind the right so that it is in the third position, raising the body as the foot is drawn behind, which restores the body to equilibrium and is the extent of your bow . . . in the bow backwards, the body and head is inclined before the foot is moved [into the rear third position], but the interval between these movements should be short, so that they appear almost simultaneous, and also to avoid any suggestion of affectation.*⁵⁶³

Now that we have learned how to Bow and Curtsy we must learn how to use them; in this case, how to enter a room.

“When you enter a room, take off your hat with your right hand, . . . and take two or three steps forwards so that the door will not be in your way, and also to give yourself time to direct your bows. Then make your first bow forwards, but , on rising , transfer the weight of the body to the foot moved forwards ,and carry the rear one to the side so that it is in the second position, ready to make your bow backwards.

Having made these two bows, you enter. If there be much company to your right and left, make your passing bows as you go among the assembled persons. But should you wish to converse with some one, you make the same bows as on entering, and in leaving him you make two bows backwards, and such other passing bows as politeness demands, which has no limits.

*Having taught the manner of entering a room, there remains, in continuing the instruction necessary for a noble youth, to afford an idea of a Ball and the manner of comporting yourself with politeness so that you will be asked to dance, or be able to invite a person to dance with you, which matters shall be explained...”*⁵⁶⁴

Of course once having mastered these one can give these men’s bows a stronger “Staropolska” flavor: giving them a more Polish Gentry Baroque influence. This is a fusion of French Etiquette with Baroque mannerisms.

⁵⁶³ Rameau, *The Dancing Master*,... pp. 27, 30.

⁵⁶⁴ Rameau, *The Dancing Master*,... pp. 36, 37.

WOMAN'S ROCOCO-POLONAISE COURTESY

It is important to note the difference in the terms “bow” and “courtesy” as used by Rameau – “bow” is what men do, whereas women “courtesy”, that is, the woman’s bow is what we now call a “curtsy.” It is a matter of degree in the depth of the bowing.

Rameau has first some preliminary remarks about the role of women in dance.

“ . . . the fair sex, who are the soul of dancing and accord it all the brilliance it possesses, did I omit the most graceful beings fashioned by Nature. For, without ladies, dancing would not be so animated, because their presence evokes that ardent and noble emulation which we put forth when we dance together, particularly in the case of those who dance well, of whom there is a goodly number.

In my opinion nothing is more pleasing in a company than to see two persons of the opposite sex dance together correctly. What applause they evoke from every one!

*“I have made what seems to me a very just observation regarding the manner of holding the head. A lady, however graceful her deportment, will be judged in a quite different way than a man. For example, if she hold her head erect and her body upright, without affectation or boldness, it will be said: ‘There goes a fine lady.’ If she carry herself carelessly, she will be regarded as indifferent; if she hold herself too far forward, she will be termed indolent; finally, if she stoop, she will be looked upon as dreamy or shy; and there are many other examples which I shall not cite here, . . . I have placed this figure (Fig. 17), which demonstrates their correct deportment when walking. A lady should carry the head erect, the shoulders low, and the arms bent and held backwards close to the body, while the hands should be in front, one over the other, clasping a fan. But remember, above all, no affectation.”*⁵⁶⁵



Fig. 17

*“Ladies do not labour under the same difficulties as men in making their honours; it suffices for them to have a good deportment, to turn their feet well outwards, slide them properly, bend the knees equally, hold the head and body erect, and the arms well disposed, as shown in Fig. 18, which illustrates the essentials to be observed..”*⁵⁶⁶

From the diary of a woman who was presented to the Queen of France at the Court of Versailles we learn:

*“Mme d’Henin added that I would have to go with her to Paris on the morning of Thursday so that my dancing master could give me two lessons in the curtsy.”*⁵⁶⁷

Note that her dance teacher taught this etiquette which was customary for a long time.

⁵⁶⁵ Rameau, *The Dancing Master*,... pp. 30-31.

⁵⁶⁶ Rameau, *The Dancing Master*,... pp. 31-32.

⁵⁶⁷ De La Tour du Pin, *Memoirs of Madame de La Tour du Pin*, (New York: 1971), p. 68.



Fig. 18

The Static Courtesy to the front.

“I shall begin with the courtesy forwards. Slide the front foot to the fourth position and leave the weight of the body supported equally on both legs, then gently bend the knees without inclining from the waist, which must be held upright without that shaking which often arises when the feet are badly placed. Hence they must not be too close together nor too far apart. When you have bent the knees sufficiently, rise with the same smoothness; this makes the conclusion of the bow.”

The Passing Courtesy.

“The passing courtesy is performed similarly except that when you meet a person you take two or three steps forwards before beginning your courtesy. Look at the persons you wish to salute, simultaneously directing your courtesy and turning half-sideways towards them. Then slide forwards the foot nearest to them and sink and rise very gently, taking care to transfer the weight of the body to the front foot in order to be ready to move the rear one.

*Fig 19 is intended to represent the correct manner of this courtesy. The lady salutes to the left side, the head is turned similarly; the left shoulder is drawn backwards as shown. But since these courtesies are used in promenades and other places of ceremony, it should be noted that, when you salute a person of superior quality, the courtesy backwards, which is more respectful, and not the passing courtesy, should be employed.”*⁵⁶⁸



Fig. 19

The Courtesy backwards.

“This courtesy backwards is made by carrying either foot to the side so that it falls into the second position, the weight of the body resting on the foot that was moved, while the other is drawn to it so that the heels meet and the feet are in the first position.

⁵⁶⁸ Rameau, *The Dancing Master*,... p. 33.

Then bend the knees equally and very low, and rise with the same care with which you sank. But should you wish to make a second courtesy, leave the weight of the body on the foot you have drawn up, carry the other foot to the side and close in the first position as before. For this reason I have drawn this Fig 18 which represents a courtesy direct or facing the person saluted. Care must also be taken not to draw the foot and bend the knees at the same time, as this destroys the balance and produces shakiness.

I have already said that the two heels should be close to each other, because when you bend the knees in such a position, turning them outwards, neither is advanced before the other; whereas, by drawing one foot behind the other, one knee is brought forwards and inclined to turn inwards, two faults which must be avoided.”⁵⁶⁹

Please keep it in mind that all these Bows were done in the clothing worn in Western Europe during the 18th century. How does this fit in with the Polonaise done in Poland at that time?

There isn't any problem for the women since this Western style of dress was worn by women, in Poland at this time. So the women can dance the Rococo-Polonaise with the deportment, manners and behaviors of the Gallant-Style.

For the men it is somewhat different. The use of the third position of the feet is not part of any Polonez variant. Thus the Backward Bowing is not really a part of the Rococo-Polonaise. When we say that it is not a part of the Dance we refer to the moving, to the actual dancing of the Rococo-Polonaise. This Bowing is to be done before the actual dancing takes place: that is, upon entering the Ballroom, or upon meeting one's dance partner or upon meeting a new partner during some figures of the Dance and of course, at the end of the Dance and in returning the Lady to her place.

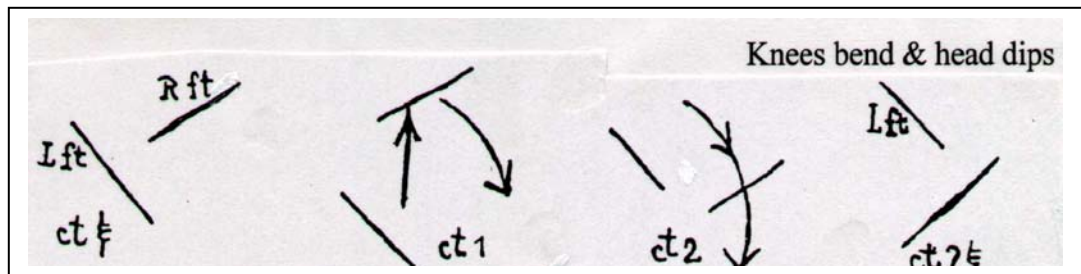
But the most important thing about these Bowings is the atmosphere of Refined-Aesthetic Behavior—this does carry-over to all the forms of the Polonez because it is a genuine part of the Polonez Spirit. (One need not be defensive about doing these Bows nor be intimidated by others who do not do these Bows.)

Note these Bows do not include the extreme Baroque Gestures of the Staropolska Taniec Polski—there is no hugging of the other person or falling at the feet of the person. So it is different.

On occasion ladies do a stylized curtsy, which is related to the Minuet in feeling. In 1905 in the figure book of Boleslaw Londyński, he included several different Bows to be used in the Ballroom of that period when an attempt was made to revive the Minuet. One of these is the *Rewerans Minuet*, which is a series of risings and sweeping of one or both legs to the sides and front with the toes contacting the floor.

This entire series is not done in this stage form, but what is done is a 1/2 arch, toes

going on the floor from front-side-back, and then



the knee-bend and head dip. Viewed from the top, this starts with the feet together on ct&.

⁵⁶⁹ Rameau, *The Dancing Master*,... pp. 33, 36.

Men do this also but slightly stronger. This may also be done at a quicker tempo.

FOOT, LEG MOVEMENTS AND STEPS

A SUPPOSED SOURCE FOR THE HISTORICAL ROCOCO-POLONAISE STEPS

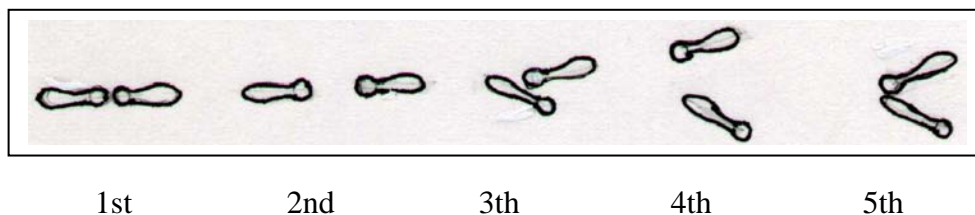
There are **not** any **explicit** mentions of the early to mid-18th century Polonez variant as the, “Rococo-Polonaise”, in other words,—the Polonez of the Rococo-Classical time was not called, “Rococo-Polonaise” by Poles in Poland or by anyone else. The term “Polonaise” was general throughout French-speaking Europe and even among French-educated Poles in Poland. The term “Polonaise” means, “from Poland” or “originates from Poland.”

There are differences in the music with the “Rococo-Polonaise” sounding like Rococo-Classical music: delicate, light, “pretty”—but in Polonez time.

Given the absence of technical descriptions of a **specific** “Rococo-Polonaise” Step we present here excerpts from Rameau’s descriptions of the common steps of some French Court Dances of the early and mid-18th century.

We only go into detail for those terms that came to be used by some authors to describe the Basic Polonez Step.

In order to understand the descriptions the reader may find it necessary to review the positions of the feet, 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, and 5th of the 18th and 19th Century Dance which are drawn below.



The distances between the feet for the 2nd and 3rd position are equivalent to the length of one’s own foot. In general, the heels are in line so that the feet are not “crossed-over.”

Most of the descriptions of the Basic Polonez Step come from the last quarter of the 18th century. These are contained in manuals which use the terms of the traditional French Dance Vocabulary. They had even lasted in some Polish Dance manuals up to 1938. They still are in use, among some dance teachers in describing some Social Ballroom Steps. Of course, the movements associated with the terms are different. Our concern here is to try to understand why certain terms were used to describe the Taniec Polski or Rococo-Polonaise variant of the 18th century and to see if they were valid terminological descriptions through time—that is, did they, do they convey something truthful about the dance movements.

The most commonly occurring terms to describe the Basic Step were “Pas De Minuet,” “Courante,” and “Pas De Bourree.” We shall reproduce here, in detail the descriptions of these terms by the French dance master, P. Rameau, along with his illustrations. Only by actually practicing these step descriptions can one learn the similarities and differences between the then current 18th century French steps and the contemporary Polish descriptions of the Polonez of the 19th and 20th centuries. (One can also decide by studying these variations which would be pleasurable or useful for the centuries to come whether for the Social Ballroom or for the Stage.)

To better understand the full French descriptions we first present some basic terms whose meanings have not changed much. These are “demi-coupe”, “marche”, and “sur la demi-point.”

The “demi-coupe”:

“To begin the demi-coupe, bring the right foot against the left in the first position and bend both knees equally, keeping the weight of the body on the left foot as shown in Fig. 24, in which both heels are touching but the weight of the body is on the left foot, the right off the ground, both knees equally bent and turned outwards, the waist straight and the head well back.”

Keeping the same position, carry the right foot forwards to the fourth position, as shown in Fig.25, at the same time transferring the weight of the body to it, and rise on the right demi-pointe (see Fig.26(3)). This may be termed the equilibrium or balance, because the body is supposed on one foot only.

But, on rising, the knee must be straightened and the left foot (4), with its knee likewise straightened, brought close to the right heel as shown in Fig.26. Afterwards the right heel is lowered to the ground, which completes the pas[step] and leaves you in a position ready to make another with the other foot, observing the same rules. Such pas can be repeated several times in succession, always taking care to bend the knees well, to rise on the demi-pointe, and to straighten the knees with each demi-coupe, which pas is one of the most useful aids to good dancing, for it enables the knees to be straightened and their strength given to the insteps. Therefore the ability to dance well depends on this first pas, since it is only the knowledge of how to bend properly and rise correctly which makes the fine dancer.”
570

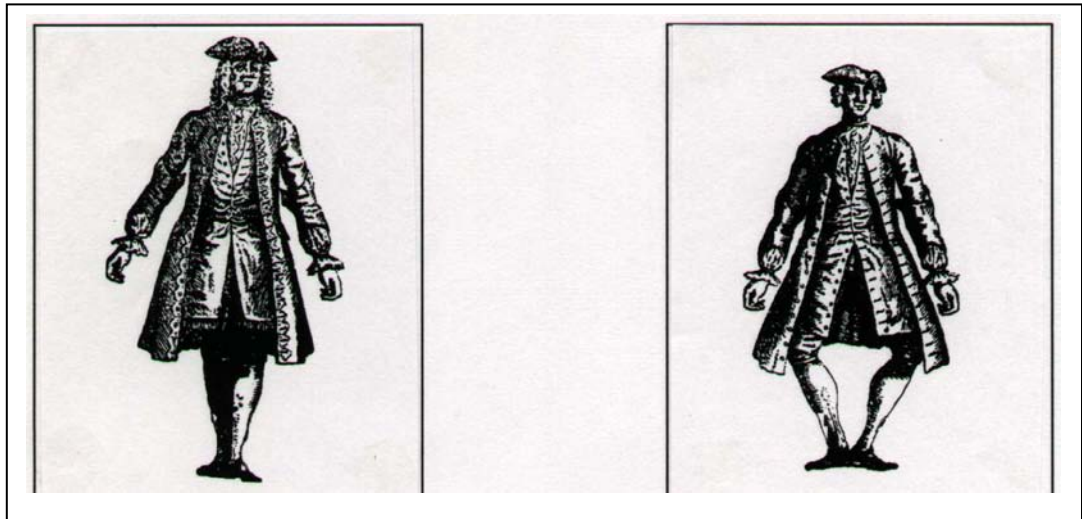


Fig. 23

Fig.24

⁵⁷⁰ Rameau, *The Dancing Master*,... pp. 47-52.

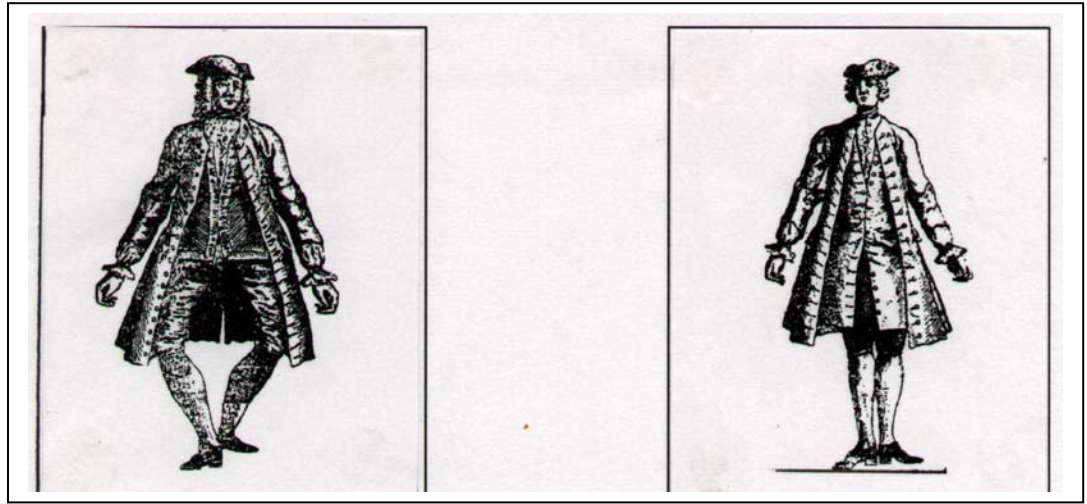


Fig. 25

Fig.26

We see that the demi-coupe involved:

stepping and the bending of the knees,
risings upon the toes,
straightening the legs,
and goes forward.

The “marche” and “sur la demi-pointe” mean respectfully, ‘to march forward,’ as “in walking” and “to do so by stepping up onto the half-toe.”

Now we can list four steps from the French Court Dances of this time, which resemble the Basic Polonez Step. (Not only that. Some of these terms and steps were used to describe the Mazur Steps.)

The “Pas de Menuet”

“To understand this more clearly, the bars may be divided into three equal parts, the first for the first demi-coupe, the second for the second, and the third for the two pas marches, which should not require more time than a demi-coupe.

Having then the left foot in front, let it support the weight of the body, and bring the right foot close to the left in the first position. Bend the left knee without letting the right foot touch the ground. When the left knee is sufficiently bent, move the right foot to the fourth position front, at the same time rising sur la demi-pointe, straightening both knees and bringing both legs together as shown in the fourth part of the demi-coupe (Fig.26), called the equilibrium or balance. Then lower the right heel to the ground to keep the body steady and at the same time bend the right knee, without allowing the left foot to touch the ground, and move the latter to the fourth position front and rise on the left demi-pointe, straightening both knees and bringing both legs together in the balance. Then execute two pas marches sur la demi-pointe, the first with the right foot, the second with the left, lowering the left heel to the ground after the second, in order to have the body firmly placed ready to begin another pas de menuet.

*In the execution of demi-coupes, take care to open the knees and turn the toes well outwards, but the best manner of acquiring facility of execution is to perform several in succession, which accustoms one to perform them without difficulty. These two movements should succeed each other with the body at an equal height, but after the second demi-coupe do not lower the heel to the ground, to avoid interrupting the sequence of the two pas marches; in the last, that performed by the left foot, the heel must be lowered in readiness to begin another pas de menuet.”*⁵⁷¹

We see that the Pas de Menuet involved:

music in three equal parts,
two walking steps forward,
the last walking step is flat,
there is an up-down movement,
done with turned-out feet.

The “Courante”

“I shall commence with the temps de courante or pas grave, which is one of the first movements and the most graceful.

First you must understand that the step is only called a temps because it consists of but one single step and movement.

But this temps is not employed solely in the Courante, but in all kinds of dances where it produces a good effect and affords grace to the body by its smooth and quiet movements, which must be attained if it is to be done well.

Let us suppose, then, that this temps is to be made with the right foot. Having the left foot foremost and supporting the weight of the body, and the right in the fourth position back, with the heel raised in the ready to move, you bend the knees and open the right foot sideways. Then you rise and, when the knees are straight, you slide the right foot to the fourth

⁵⁷¹ Rameau, *The Dancing Master*,... pp. 53-54.

*position front and transfer the weight of the body to it. But as the right foot slides forwards, the left knee bends and the heel rises, thus throwing the weight of the body easily on to the right foot, and immediately you rise on the right demi-pointe. Afterwards you lower the right heel to the ground, which finishes your temps temps de courante or pas grave.”*⁵⁷²

We see that the Courante involved:

an easy forward sliding of one foot while the other knee bends,
a sharp rise upon one foot- the “demi-coupe” movement.

The “Pas de Bourree”

*“ The pas de bourree is composed of two movements; that is, a demi-coupe, a pas marche sur la demi-pointe and a demi-jete, which makes the second movement and is the extent of the pas,. . . the last movement must not be marked too strongly.”*⁵⁷³

The “Fleuret”

“ . . . [The Pas de Bourree] has been largely replaced by the fleuret, a very similar pas and easily learned. To know its construction is to be able to perform it immediately. It consists of a demi-coupe and two pas marches sur la demi-pointe . . .

*I shall say that when you wish to perform a fleuret, being in the fourth position, left foot front and supporting the weight of the body, you bring the right foot to the first position without touching the ground, then bend both knees, which is termed plier sous soi. But do not move the right foot to the fourth position front until you have made your bend. As you move the foot forwards rise sur la demi-pointe, then make two pas marches sur la demi-pointe, that is, the first with the left, the second with the right, lowering the heel of the latter at the last, so that the body is firm, ready to repeat the pas or begin another, according to the requirements of the dance . . . if you are asked of how many steps a fleuret is composed, you can reply three: that is, a demi-coupe and two pas marches sur la demi-pointe.”*⁵⁷⁴

Note that this is a much easier step than the Bourree and Pas de Menuet and fits more readily than either of those do into 3/4-time music. Bringing the foot “without touching the ground” and keeping it in first position is still not the Polonaise Step—however, it is close, in the technical sense—but still difficult because of the requirement of maintaining the “turned-out” foot positions. Of course, this this brings to the fore, the question of just how much “turn-out” was necessary, if at all.

We may state that of all these elements, movements and steps the Pas de Menuet and Fleuret come closest to what is considered to be the Basic Polonez Step. This Basic Step has been recognized as being the “proper” basic step since the latter 18th century. Therefore we can compare the possible Rococo-Polonaise Steps to the established Polonez Steps of the last 200 years.

THE BASIC ROCOCO-POLONAISE STEP

The following description is a reconstruction. It represents one possible way in which the Polonez Step could have been done in the “Rococo manner.” The description is from the

⁵⁷² Rameau, *The Dancing Master*,... pp. 76-77.

⁵⁷³ Rameau, *The Dancing Master*,... pp. 78.

⁵⁷⁴ Rameau, *The Dancing Master*,... pp. 78-79.

year 1772 by C. Feldenstein. (See the Historical Source section for a fuller explanation.) We may certainly do it this way now.

FELDENSTEIN (1772) *PAS DE BOUREE*

Feldenstein actually referred to the step of the Polish Dance as, “*Der Schritt also der zum pohlischen Tanz . . .*”⁵⁷⁵ He did not use the word “Polski” but simply uses, “the Polish Dance.” He, once, refers to the Dance as “Polonoise” in his description.

Feldenstein did not explicitly count out his description. Basically its structure is:

- ct1 Take a R bending step fwd,
- ct2 take a L rising step fwd,
- ct3 take a R rising step fwd.

The most salient feature of all these Rococo-Polonaise elements and steps is the relatively “rigid” manner of stepping-up onto the half-toe (and ball of the foot) and in walking forward on the half-toe. This, therefore, is not a heavy, sliding step but is more of a toe-walking with the bending of the knees which occurs at the beginning of the measure as does the Basic Polonez Step. The description closest to the Polonez Step is the Fleuret—a demi-coupe and two marches on the half-toe where the demi-coupe is the bending of the supporting leg followed by two walking steps forward upon the toes and balls of the foot.

Summarizing the Rococo-Polonaise variant we can state that the entire atmosphere of the French Courtly Manners, clothes and music produced the possibility of a light, up-stepped and clearly done variant. It still may be considered by some to be a mistake or an artificial invention. But whatever it is, it does mean more variety for the Polonez of today and for the future.

⁵⁷⁵ C. J. V. Feldenstein, *Erweite und der Kunst nach der Choreographie zu tanzen*, (Braunschweig: 1772).

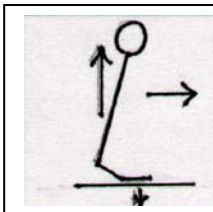
SOME AUXILIARY STEPS

For stage or choreographed dances, auxiliary steps are sometimes required in order to complete some figure movement.

1. KROK OSEMKI (SZYBKI step) ⁵⁷⁶

This is a woman's step. This is a very light movement. Rise up on the toes, keeping legs and body in one straight line and leaning fwd st shoulders are over toes or slightly ahead of the toes.

On every 1/8 of a ct, a small brisk step is done on the fwd part of the ft or slightly on the toes.

- | | | | |
|----|-----|--|---|
| | ct& | By pressing your wt into the floor, rise up, in reaction, lightly on the ball of the L ft, | |
| m1 | ct1 | Step R fwd, | <p style="text-align: center;">SIDE VIEW OF BODY POS</p>  |
| | ct& | step L fwd, | |
| | ct2 | step R fwd, | |
| | ct& | step L fwd, | |
| | ct3 | step R fwd, | |
| | ct& | step L fwd | |
| m2 | | rep starting with L ft fwd. | |

2. lw POLONEZA ⁵⁷⁷ W TYL

- | | | |
|----|-----|--|
| | ct& | Bend knees, transferring wt onto L ft and |
| m1 | ct1 | R step back, ast L leg extended stiffly in ft, |
| | ct& | bring L to rear of R, |
| | ct2 | step in back, |
| | ct3 | R step on it, |
| m2 | | rep m1 oppftw. |

The woman actually points her ft fwd, toes touching floor. M does not.

⁵⁷⁶ There is a tenuous authentic justification for this "toe-walking". The early 18th century Bourree and Minuet steps, the practice of which influenced European dancing, was used by a number of dance masters to describe the Polonez Step. Thus the Osemki can be considered to be a development or exaggeration of the Bourree Step.

⁵⁷⁷ Remember that the term "Polonez(a)" when used in the step description section refers not to one of the Dance Variants but is a shorthand term for the most general Basic Step for all the variations.

3. POLONEZ DO pw STRONY

This is an artificial stage-side-moving step.

Stand facing LOD.

ct& Bend the L knee ast extending the R ft to the R side slightly diag fwd
and,

m1

ct1 step up on the R ft,

ct2 cross the left in frt of the R ft, to the R side maintaining the step-up
height,

ct3 R step to the R side, flat-footed,

ct& rep ct& oppftw and past the L ft to the R side, in frt of R ft,

m2

rep m1 oppftw.

DANCE FIGURES

AS WITH ALL OF THE OTHER VARIANTS THE BASIC FIGURE–ACTION IS THE CIRCLING OF COUPLES

Since this Rococo-Classical Polonaise today exists primarily on the stage as the work of some particular choreographer, it is rich in figures. (Individuals with this Rococo-Polonaise feeling can actually dance this variant in the Social Ballroom of today—it depends upon the actual music played.) We pick two as fitting this type of Polonaise. This does not mean that they are in any way authentic for this variant. (Keep in mind that this variant itself may only be a figment of the present author’s imagination.) All of these stage-born elements may also be used for all of the stage variants of the Ułański and Polonez of the 19th and 20th centuries.

THE CURL-UP

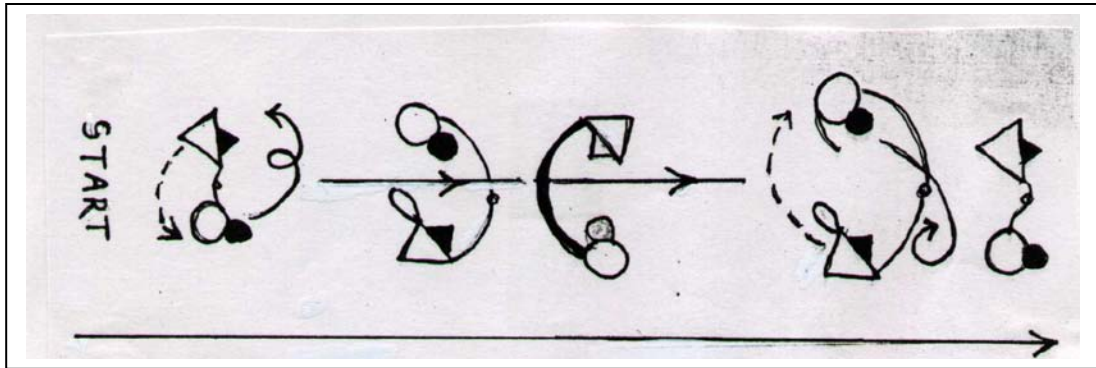
Here is a figure action for which there is iconographic evidence⁵⁷⁸ which is presented below.



We see that it is a variation of the standard “arch” or “gate” figure whereby couples pass under the joined up-raised hands of another couple. (Do you recall how Petrovski complained about this?) It was done and is done because it is such a pleasure to do. Full information about this painting is lacking. We do not know who painted it or its exact date. It is an 18th century painting. What is striking about it is its depiction of the people. Their elongated, elastic bodies are done in the Mannerist Style of Painting—similar to that of Bottocelli. The overall atmosphere is Watteauian in feeling. Note the bending of the body as was mentioned previously.

Choreographically speaking, as a Social Ballroom Figure, it speaks clearly to us. Note that before “entering” the gate the couples are on opposite sides of each other (than for the usual couple position) but with the same handhold. When the couple comes through they resume their ordinary positions. Before entering, the man leads the woman into a crossing-over-half-turn. Also note that the man removes and waves his hat. The men are also wearing their swords. They are dancing out-of-doors. The diagram shows the action.

⁵⁷⁸ Irena Turska, *Taniec w Polsce (1945-1960)*, (Warszawa: 1962). This illustration is between illustrations #223 and #224 contained in the book. Scholars of Polish Art have been unable to identify its date or the artist.



Look again at the painting. Note the couple about to go under the arch. The woman has her **right** hand joined with the man's **right** hand. (This is another Historical Variation!) Perhaps this was done to ensure that his sword does not encumber the action—but note here that the man is not holding his sword. Look at the relative positions of the various parts of the woman's handhold. There are almost three angles: one at the elbow, one at the wrist, and one at the knuckles.

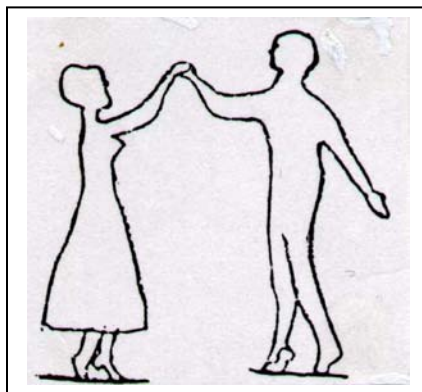
POWITAMIE Z ALLEMANDAMI FIGURE MOTIFS

This is used for the Rococo/Classical Polonaise form. It comes from the 16th century dance—the Allemand. According to historians, this was the first time that hands were raised higher than the head. With the hands joined and upraised, a window is formed through which the partners look through and acknowledge each other. There is a willowy motion that partners may do, back and forth, balancing in place, which gives a “Watteauean” feeling to the entire “Motif-Aesthetic,” and is graceful.

1. POWITANIE!

Ptrs bid each other welcome with this basic cpl figure.

- | | | |
|------|-----|--|
| m1,2 | m1 | |
| | ct1 | R step fwd, |
| | ct2 | rise upon the toes of the R ft, L heel comes off floor, ast join hds and raise them, |
| | ct3 | hold. |
| m2 | | Release hd hold and place wt upon rear leg (L). Toes of R ft remain in contact with floor. Upper body withdraws to rear. |



m1, ct2,3

Variation A **POWITAMIE Z pw ALLEMANDAMI!**

This means to greet each other with a Allemand as shown immediately below in the POWITANIE, holding and raising R hds.

Variation B **POWITANIE Z PANI OBRÓTEM!**

The following cpl figure may be used as a break or when ptrs meet. Cpls face and join hds for Okno Obróty. Step description is for M, and W does opp.

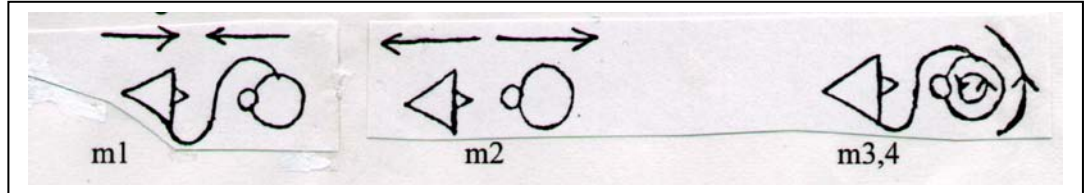
- m1
- ct1 R step fwd,
 - ct2 rise upon the toes of the R ft, L heel comes off floor, ast join hds and raise them,
 - ct3 hold.
- m2 Release hd hold and place wt upon rear leg (L). Toes of R ft remain in contact with floor. Upper body withdraws to rear.
- m3 Rep m1 but on ct3 close L ft to R as joined hands are raised and
- m4 W turns under hds, to her R, with 6 steps: 3/m.

Variation C **PARY! POWITANIE Z pw MŁYNEK!**

Ptrs face each other R hds joined. Free hds out and down to the side.

- m1
- ct1 Ptrs take R step twd each other, rising up on the ball of the ft ast joined hds are raised up,
 - ct2 rise up on the balls of both feet,
 - ct3 hold.

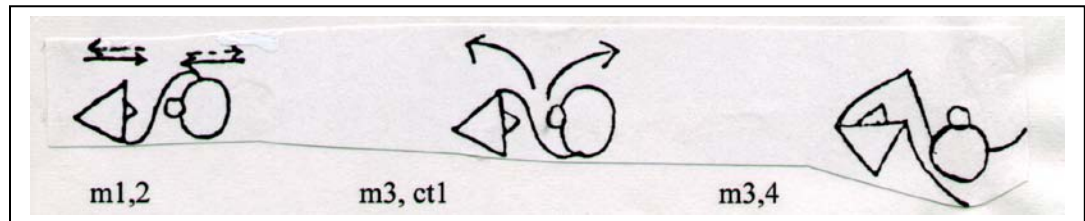
- m2
- ct1 Transfer wt onto L ft closing R to L remaining on the toes of both ft
ast joined hds drop somewhat and,
 - ct2 sink down upon both ft,
 - ct3 hold, freeing R ft.
- m3,4 With joined hds still held aloft ptrs turn once, CCW with 2 Polonez steps. Ptrs remain facing each other.



Variation D I NAPRZÓD!

Here is a variation from Mrs. Drabecka's work on Kolberg, mentioned previously. Partners face each other and POWITANIE for m 1-2,

- m3
- ct1 Both ptrs turn away from each other as shown below, hds held high.



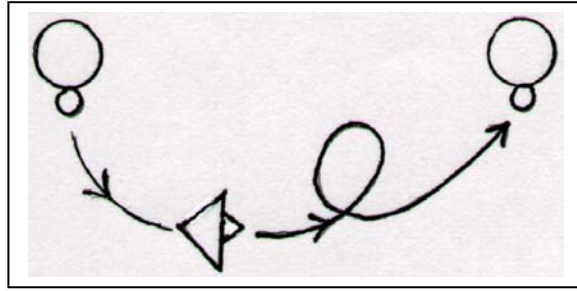
M leads W in an indication how to turn.

Variation E UKŁON Z OBIEMA RĘKAMI

M does m1,2 of the **POWITANIE** couple motif. On m1, ct1,2 M's arms and hands, palms down, are raised upwards and forward, chest high, arms are rounded, palms higher than elbows. As M shifts wt rearwards on m2 the hands are rotated so that the palms are upwards and arms go down and diagonally to the sides. As the arms sweep down, the palms are open to the W. This is a very elegant expressive bow.

2. "ROCOCO-STAROPOLSKA" UKŁON IN MOTION

Here is an example of how this Bow may be used. The over elegant ROCOCO UKŁON is most often used on the stage, for example, a M progresses from one W to the next, making a full turn which ends in a bow.



THE UŁAŃSKI POLONEZ OR UŁAŃSKI POLONAISE

The Ułański Era we roughly take to be from 1800-1831. During this period in Poland, the sons of the old Szlachta were all in the contemporary military forces as also were many members of the military class.

This time in Polish history also sees that French cultural institution, the “Salon,” taking solid root in Polish urban life. With it and the wide military training comes a greater emphasis upon discipline, good form and self-control. Everyone was always on their best behavior. As always, there was great respect for Virtuous women.

For the Polonez and other dances of the period, this means that they are done with less braggadocio-the stress is on polished behavior and dancing. In military men, exactitude is important. The dancing is crisp and sharp. A special example of this is the Mazur of the time, but some of this we infer colors the Polonez of the period as well.

Also aiding our inference of the existence of an Ułański Polonez are the military and civilian clothes of this time. They are tight fitting trousers worn over high boots or street shoes. The jackets were also tight fitting. The form is a lean one. Most important for dancing are the spurs with the UŁan uniform. They were small spurs that were fastened at the heel of the boot. They are not heavy spurs. They are just right for crisp movements when they may be clicked together.

Stage groups in present day Poland all have a Ułański Polonez as well as an Ułański Mazur. This really means only that it is a general Mazur done in Period costume. The men are dressed in the UŁan military parade dress uniform, and the women in Empire gowns. The Men’s parade dress uniforms included, of course, a tall, heavy hat, gloves and sword. From our investigations we have found no evidence that swords were worn in the actual dance rooms. The same is true for the tall hats. Often, however, dance groups today present the men with their hats on. This would be considered very coarse indeed.

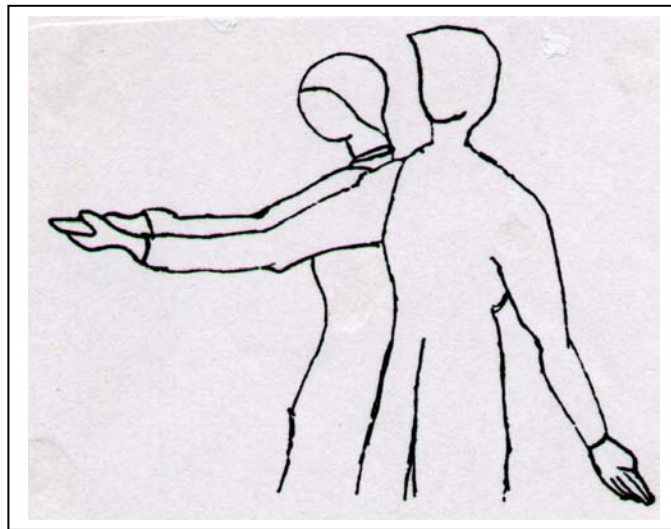
We shall now present our speculative inferences as to what *could* have been authentic in the Ułański Polonez. The guiding elements in rendering judgments are what may have been possible in the substitution of the “Staropolska” spirit with the new military spirit of “everything for the Fatherland,” within the limits of personal Honor, and the clothing dynamics.

COUPLE POSITION

Of the above mentioned couple positions, that is the Taniec Polski and Rococo/Classical, only the Classical may be used. There is a newer position, which we shall call the usual Polonez position. This is the 19th and 20th century social position. The reader will recall how chagrined Polish Social Dance teachers of the latter 19th century were at this 19th century Polonez. They considered it to be a degenerate form of the Taniec Polski.

The partners are side-by-side, rather close to each other. However, the same principles apply as to the Taniec Polski position. The W is always slightly ahead of the M leading and showing constant deference to the W.

As they dance, the free arm of both may be moved in and out: inwardly, with the ins Polonez ft, outwardly, with the outside. The arm, bent slightly at the elbow, appears rounded but not angular. The hd is bent at the wrist, fingers somewhat curved.



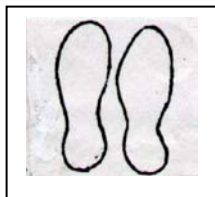
Try to lead the hd from the elbow. The movement is really from the body which twists in and out with head following this motion. The arm is quite rigid. The hds and arms do not come out on a level plain, but dip in, rise out, in a circular path. The twist outward must be enough to turn the attention of the dancers to the other people in the hall. This is one part of the Polonez which is communal in nature. This is also the time to acknowledge and greet the other people present. As the arms go in and out, the hds themselves rotate in (thumb goes down) and rotates out (thumb side up).

BOWS

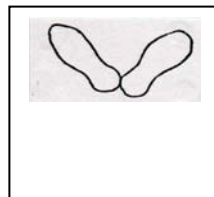
MAN'S BOWS

1. THREE VARIANTS

There are no Staropolska bows in the Ułański Polonez. In keeping with the military training, the man's Bows are of two types: One with feet together: the other with heels together, toes apart.



A)



B)

The M uses this primarily when being introduced to the other persons. There really is no set tempo for this Bow, but in order to practice it we suggest the following rate:

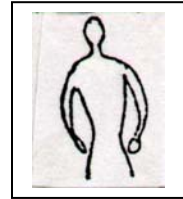
m1

ct1 Step R ft to side, raising head slightly,
ct2 close L ft briskly to R ft, clicking or not clicking heels together,

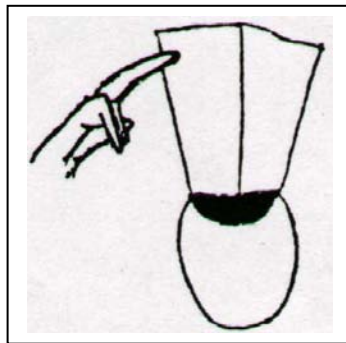
ct3 bowing head,
 hold, raising the head.

A third variant of this Bow, starting from position A, is to swing out the heels (pivoting on the front part of both ft), and back together, clicking heels. This need not be a loud click, but the movement out and in must be crisp.

The arm movements are rather simple here. The arms are brought to the men's side on ct1. The arms are stiff but somewhat rounded as shown below. The long fingers of the hand should lightly be touching the sides of the thigh. The fingers of the hand are all together with the hand forming a slight curve.



As mentioned above, stage groups have the men dance with their hats on. In this case, whenever there is a Bow they often do the Polish military salute. This is a right handed salute with only two fingers extended. The thumb holds the two fingers in a tucked-in position.



Since these bows are often used as Bows of introduction, in order to begin the dance with a Lady, the couple need not take up the open dance position immediately. The man offers his right arm to the Lady, which she accepts and intertwines her L arm with his R arm as shown below.



2. SIDE STEPING UKLON

For the Ułański and general Ballroom Form these are bows of the head which are only done by M. It starts with ft apart.

m1
ct1 close L ft to R ft ast lightly lift head up. Body straight, knees locked,

ct2 not changing body, slowly drop the head fwd, or to either side in whichever side the bow is to take place,

ct3 hold.

3. HAND KISSING UKLON

This is absolutely de-riguer for any and all Polish dancers! Naturally, this is done by the M.

m1

ct1 Bring ft together turning to face ptr, keeping body straight, knees locked, taking up W's R hd with R hd.

ct2 Bow from the waist, kissing W's hd on either her fingers or top of her hand,

ct3 hold.

This may also be done with the man having his feet apart. Of course, this may require two measures and come on different counts as the occasion and feeling demand. When meeting an old friend or very dear acquaintance, the man may raise the woman's hand with both hds. If the woman is relatively short compared to him, then the man will probably find it necessary to bend his legs.

This also must be part of one's everyday life.

WOMAN'S BOWS

Of course, the woman replies with her curtsey. When the couple are then in position in the column of dancing couples-they then take up the couple position and promenade away. We repeat the bows from the Staropolska Section. The physical movements are the same: just less stylized.

1. WOMEN'S UKLON

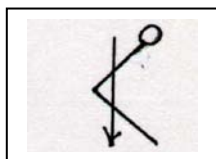
m1 ct 3 W steps fwd with, say, the L ft and,

ct1 rises upon the toes of both ft, wt carried by the L ft,

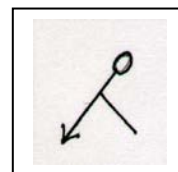
ct2 steps back, in place, upon the R ft, bending both ast bowing the head slightly. L ft remains in place. W picks up the frt of her dress with her fingers as shown below.

ct3 Hold.

The W "settles-down" vertically as shown below. She does not "settle-down" at an angle. (Her backbone can be at a right-angle to the floor.)



CORRECT



INCORRECT

As the W “settles” down her hands holding her dress go up, ever so slightly, moving the wrist first.

m2 Recover closing ft tightly together.

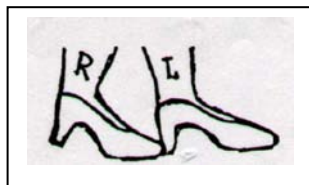


Variation: **A CURTSEY (REWERANS)**⁵⁷⁹

This is a type of greeting that is still in existence today. Thus it has been in use for at least 200 years for educated women with a feeling for Art and Beauty. This, as well as all the other bows, may not be considered as “proper” parts of the dance, as they accompany the man’s initial greeting at the beginning of the dance and that of his thanking the lady at the end. However, as the research shows, it is the bows, poses, and attitude of the dancers that reveal the character of the dance.

W’s R ft free,

ct1 Place R ft to the rear of L ft. R toes close to L heel, R heel not touching floor,



ct2 sinking down, bending both knees, not changing position of feet,

ct3 hold position or rise, depending upon the situation. W hd’s go to sides, as

⁵⁷⁹ The English production of the black and white film version of “My Fair Lady” has a splendid example of how a curtsy may be done—it occurs in the Ballroom scene.

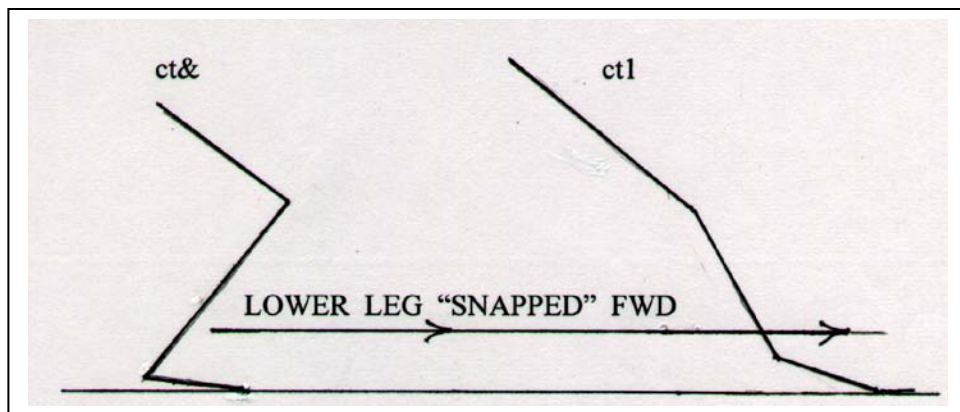
described above in the previous UkŁon. In this movement is the woman's reply to a greeting then she offers her R hd to be kissed if she is not a girl (roughly over the age of 14 or younger if she is mature for her age). If she is still a young girl, then she curtsies, holding her dress to the sides. Women always stand with feet and legs closed together.

FOOT, LEG MOVEMENTS AND STEPS

MAN'S BASIC STEP

The man now does a stiff sharper version of the basic Polonez step as described in "Taniec Polski" section under the stage version of said step. The difference, however, is in the amount of knee bending and brush.

The brush forward is minimal. The man must reach forward with the toes of the leading foot. At the same time, the man is on an almost straight leg and backbone. The foot and leg are snapped forward crisply. His posture is always up.



The attitude of the foot is held somewhat "turned out" so that the outside portion of the toes would brush the floor first.

Variation A **HOLUBIEC**

The spurs on the boots give a new potential for dance movements:

ct& The heel of the ft coming fwd strikes the heel of the supporting leg sharply and very quickly—a sharp rap.

Variation B **KROK W BOK**

This shall be described going to the R side. This is for M only.

m1

ct& Rise up on the balls of both ft and,

ct2 close L ft to the R ft, sliding toes on the floor, raising R arm up and out to R side shoulder-height, palm up.

ct3 Hold!

WOMAN'S BASIC STEP

The woman does her same previously described light-step.

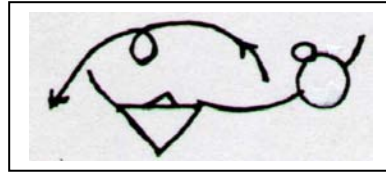
DANCE FIGURES

As with the Taniec Polski and Rococo/Classical-Polonaise, the Ułański Polonez is not a highly figured dance. It consists of all the promenading circling movements. We give only one motif which fits with the Ułański character.

PANI NA DRUGĄ STRONĘ

From cpl pos,

m1 W crosses over, going in frt of M, using 6 small light running steps,



Ptrs keep holding inshds as long as it is comfortable, then release hds,

m2

ct&,1 M takes a step, directly away from ptr, to the side with the outsft. Ast outside arm extended, somewhat rigidly just above shoulder height, hd palm up. Head turned twd W. Ins arm held down at the side.

ct2 Close insft to outsit crisply and pose,

ct3 hold.

Rejoin new inshd hold and Polonez.

The feeling for m2 is that of a bow, as a type of salute.

It should be done sharply. The new hd hold could be taken up after m1. If both ptrs are far apart after m2 then they rejoin hds during m3.

The Ułański salute may be done, with or without a heel click. In any case bring the legs and feet together sharply/smarty. It is not necessary to make a sound.

HISTORICAL SOURCES OF THE BASIC STEP

In this section we only include variants written before WW II. After that time and up to the present (1996) there isn't anything new or different—just poor knowledge or execution on the part of individuals.

We place this section here because it contains material, which bridges the last half of the 18th century on through the 19th and up to WW II. This means that it bridges the Rococo-Polonoise, the Ułański Polonoise and the ordinary Polonez Forms.

We shall only include **explicit** descriptions of the Basic Step for the Polonez from Polish Dance Manuals and selected non-Polish Manuals. Some descriptions are clear: others are not clear. In the case of the Polonez most Polish manuals did **not** give a description of the step but all of the manuals gave figures-sequences, usually with some remarks on how to lead the Dance. Some manuals written by non-Poles have also not included step descriptions—so there are gaps. Some are real curiosities. They are indicative of something. Keep in mind that we do already know from the beginning of the 18th century (Taubert) that the step had been described as a forward moving Pas de Basque. We shall give the author's name, date, and their term for the step if given by the original author. None of these authors explicitly mentioned the “and” count—this is the present author's addition wherever it occurs. We describe the men's step with the right foot moving first.

HÄNSEL (1755) VORPAS

This is probably the most complete description of the 18th century step. What is particularly exciting about this description is that confirms one of the present author's “aesthehical-invention” variants of the Basic Step.⁵⁸⁰ Basically it is a fall-bend, rise and step movement. Hänsel uses all the standard feet positions of Ballet which are described also in the Workbook Section of this book. Now for the actual Basic Step as described or taught by Hänsel.

Von dem Vorpas

*“Man kan solches aus der dritten und andern Position folgender Gestaltt lehren. Wenn man wie bey allen **Pas** auch Porte le Bras zuvor seinen Körper, Arme, Hände und Kopf in wohl regulirte Ordnung gebracht, so stelle man sich 1) in die dritte Position oder in die andere, bey der dritten aber mit den rechten hinter den linken; 2) Hebe man in dem Auftacke den rechten Fuss mit wohl unter sich gestrecker Spitze völlig von der Erde; halte solchen mit gestrecktem Knie in der Luft; und halte den Leib auf dem linken fest. 3) Hebe man des linken Fusses Absatz mit Eingebung oder Schliessung des Knies auch von der Erde; 4) Falle man bey dem ersten Viertheile mit dem rechten Fusse in die vierte Position; 5) Bringe den Leib mit vor, dass solcher auf dem rechten Fusse völlig zu ruhen kommt; 6) Beuge bey der Tombé oder Fall beyde Knien ganz sanft; 7) Streiche in der Tiefe den Absatz noch von der Erde haltend auf dem Ballen und Spitz emit dem linken Fusse in die vierte Position vor; 8) Hebe beym letzten Schritte, so wieder der rechte zu machen hat, den Absatz von der Erde; strecke beyde Knien und mache 9) einen steiffen Tritt in die vierte Position, dass 10) der linke Fuss beym letzten steiffen Tritte mit*

⁵⁸⁰ We only learned about this description in 2004.

*Streckung beyder Knien sich völligwieder in die Luft hebet und beim Niederschlage des Tactes wieder zum andern **Pas** bereit ist.”*⁵⁸¹

About the Forward Step

One can learn this from the third and other positions. For all steps and arm movements one needs to be able to have their body, arms, hands and head in a work together in a coordinated order. One starts by placing themselves

- 1) in third position, with the left foot behind the right foot,
- 2) raise the right foot on the upbeat, keeping it still behind the left, toes still in contact with the floor; holding the knee in the air; the weight of the body supported by the left foot,
- 3) raise the left heel with a suggestion of closing the knee,
- 4) fall upon the right foot, on the first quarter note, forward into fourth position (ct1)
- 5) bring the body forward, so that the right foot is stopped,
- 6) during the fall bend both knees,
- 7) touching the floor with the ball and toes of the left foot, place it forward into fourth position,
- 8) rise upon the left, so that the right foot makes, with its heel on the floor, both knees straighten and make,
- 9) an stiff step forward into fourth position, so that
- 10) the left foot, with the last step straightening both knees, is raised in the air and with the next down beat again is prepared to do another step.

Basically we can see, after much trouble, that his description may be thought of in the following fashion:

- | | |
|-----------|--|
| ct& (2) | bend the left knee |
| ct1 (4,5) | right foot glidingly goes fwd; fallingly, descendingly |
| ct2 (7) | left foot glides fwd |
| ct3 (9) | right step fwd |

This has a rising and falling motion to it as well as the sliding-gliding forward. This then also involves being on the ball of the foot for part of the movement. The rising of the supporting foot is done during the transition from ct3 to ct1.

One is only in the third position at the absolute start and end of the dancing—once one is in continuous motion there is no closing into third position—the feet are passing by each other in, more or less, in a first position.

We now present D. Greenberg’s translation of Hänsel’s description. It sheds a strong light on this step.

“1. an initial tombé falling onto the free leg as it passes to forced fourth to the fore, with the weight of the body transferred onto it and the body bending forward

⁵⁸¹ Hänsel, C. G., *Allerneueste Anweisung...*, pp. 140-141.

slightly at the waist, and the other foot at the same time brought onto the ball in first position disengaged with the heel well lifted, followed by

2. a glissé and relevé, that is, a slide of the new gesture foot on the ball to fourth position in front while the knees are still bent and then a rise with a change of weight, the body straightening again from the initial bend at the waist, ending with

3. a pas marché, or pas tendu to fourth position in front, with another change of weight, executed in one of three ways, that is, with the leg held stretched as it passes through first or second, or with the leg carried into first position bent and then stretched to fourth off the floor before being set down in fourth.”⁵⁸²

She calls this a Bourrée Tombé. At this point I cannot find any reference to bending of the body, as a part of the stepping, which is contained in her translation. (Re-reading Kattfuss’ description we see that there is no mention of bending the body.) We do know from many sources and dance experiences that bending the backbone can occur in Bowing. During the Basic Step the posture is erect; the legs bend in the vertical plane. Having said that, it is to be pointed out that beginners often do bend their backs and may do more than one knee bend as is mentioned above in ct3. How does one fall on ct1? There must have been a rise on ct3 or ct&.

Using her terms we may summarize her description as:

ct1	tombé	R step, “falling” forward
ct2	glissé and relevé	L glide and rise
ct3	pas marché	R walk

The reading of D. Greenberg’s article leads us to wonder why Hänsel himself did not describe the steps with the ballet terms which he knew so well, at least as a short-hand notation. Hänsel also has described other steps—unusual ones. These are placed at the end of this section.

FELDENSTEIN (1772) PAS DE BOUREE

Feldenstein actually referred to the step of the Polish Dance as, “*Der Schritt also der zum pohlischen Tanz. . .*”⁵⁸³ Since he was a dance master in the European tradition, which developed out of the French Classical Dance World, he used the terms associated with that tradition to describe non-Classical Dances, such as the Polonaise. Therefore he states that the basic step is the Pas de Bouree but describes it rather as a variant of the Pas de Bouree. He also does not use the word “Polski” but simply uses, “the Polish Dance.” He, once, refers to the Dance as “Polonoise” in his description.

Feldenstein did not explicitly count out his description. Basically its structure is:

ct1	Take a R bending step fwd,
ct2	take a L rising step fwd,
ct3	take a R rising step fwd.

⁵⁸² Donna Greenberg, “Workshop: An Introduction to the Eighteenth-Century Polonaise,” *Proceedings Society of Dance History Scholars*, Vol. 3, #1, (Philadelphia: 2003), pp.45-46. “Gesture foot” means that foot-leg which is to be moved.

⁵⁸³ C. J. V. Feldenstein, *Erweite und der Kunst nach der Choreographie zu tanzen*, (Braunschweig: 1772).

Note that the above moves fwd on all three steps. It is not completely clear the “bend” and step forward are to be done separately or together. S. Reichart interprets Feldenstein’s description as:

*“The main step of the Polish dance is a pas de bouree , or a bending and two rising steps, only with the difference that the last rising step is more like a falling than a rising step. Since the Polonoise is in 3/4 time and the step also has three parts, it is easy to coordinate each part of the step with one quarternote of the measure.”*⁵⁸⁴

W. Hilton has an extended discussion of the Pas de Bourree in her book dealing with French Court Dance of the early 18th century.⁵⁸⁵ Her survey allows us to say that the Bouree’s Step structure was:

ct& Bend the L knee and then place the R ft fwd,
 ct1 rise upon the R ft,
 ct2 step fwd with the L ft,
 ct& bend the L knee and spring and
 ct3 land upon the R ft bending R knee.

This is rather subtle and difficult. The stepping forward is not done upon the entire foot. This is done on the toes. This movement was called the Pas Marches. It was the preferred manner of a “walking-step” for a dance. (This is still today a part of the Polonez Step.) Since the Bouree does have an affinity with the Polonez Step it is no wonder that dance masters of this time saw fit to describe it in terms of the French Dance Vocabulary in which they were trained. The problem with this lies not in any inadequateness of the French Dance Vocabulary but rather to its superficial application. The Polonez Step is “Bouree-like” but it is not the Polonez Step.

It is noteworthy that there is no mention by Feldenstein of any sliding on count 1. Is this just an oversight of Feldenstein’s? Not at all likely. The Bouree was stepped and not slid upon. This is a tentative “proof” that the sliding variant came later in time.

The Polonase Step according to Feldenstein is the same except for count 3, which he states is a falling, or descending step. Now this falling is done from the height obtained on the second count. This means that the amount of descent is greater than it normally would be. This variant has a great potential for expression (as is described in a latter section of this Workbook).

PETROVSKI (1825)

The only Step for the Dance consists of three walking steps.

ct1 Move the R ft fwd into 4th pos,
 ct2 place the L ft next to the R ft [into 1st pos],
 ct3 move anew the R ft fwd into 4th pos.⁵⁸⁶

An additional remark that Petrovski made was that, “always at the time of the second step [ct2] in the first position, elevate and go down a little bit, but for the other two steps [ct1,3] your legs have to be straight.” This seems to be contrary to many other descriptions and the contemporary version (1997) as well. So is this a mistake? Yet other descriptions

⁵⁸⁴ Sarah Reichart, *The Influence...*, p. 113. Note how similar this is to Rameau’s Pas de Menuet.

⁵⁸⁵ Wendy Hilton, *Dance of Court & Theater*, (Princeton: 1981), pp. 159,183-184.

⁵⁸⁶ Petrovski, *Pravila...*, p. 55.

also close feet on ct2—but more about this later. Of course this is repeated with opposite footwork on the next measure and so on.

TSCHETTER (1828) POLONAISE-PAS

For the Polonaise-Steps
[there are]three to be made [done].

*“Die Polonaisen-Pas werden auf
dreierlei Art gemacht.*

The first Step consists of doing
in one measure, three steps,
whereby the first is
a half Coupe forwards,
and the other two steps
are two Pas ordinair[steps],
whereby,
as they freely move,
one foot following the other
continuously placed,
only with the exception
that it here is more
[done] upon the toes must be done.

*Bei der ersten Art werden
in jeden Takte drei Schritte gemacht,
wovan der erst
ein halb Coupe vorwärts,
und die andern zwei Schritte
zwei Pas ordinair sind,
wobei,
wie bei dem gewöhnlichen Gehen,
ein Fuss nach dem andern
fortgesetzt wird,
nur mit der ausnahme
dass es heur mehr
mit der Spitzen geschehen muss.*

Tschetter, like many other dance masters of his time, included descriptions of all the steps contained in their books. In any case the descriptions of the “half Coupe” and “Pas ordinair” were agreed upon by their contemporaries. Tschetter is generally the same as Feldenstein’s Pas de Bouree: a Bend-step, and two steps on the toes, going forward.

For the second Step bend and
stretch the right foot
well forward,
then stretch the left [foot]
to the side [moving] ahead,
and then the right [foot]
behind the left foot is moved,
whereby one must well
upon the toes rise.

*Auf der zweite Art biegt und
streicht man z.G. den rechten Fuss
gut auswärts vor,
dann wird der linke gestreckt,
seitwärts vorgestellt,
und dann der rechte
hinten an den linken Fuss angefügt,
wobei man sich gut auf
den Spitzen heben muss.*

This second Step is not to clear but it probably is for a side-to-side balance or maybe a bow. At any rate Tschetter explicitly gives a Balance as his third Step which includes the well-known dance term “ronde jambe.” To most people this reflects the influence of the Rococo.

The third Step is more is more
of a Balance,
which requires an entire measure
of music.
One makes with the right foot
a round circle (ronde jambe) and
stretches it forward;
by stepping upon the toes
of the right [foot].
If again the dancing continues,
like so [one] starts
the following Step with

*Die dritte Art ist vielmehr
ein Balance,
wozu ein ganzer Takt
von der Musik erfordert wird.
Man macht mit dem rechten Fusse
ein runden Kreis (ronde jambe) und
streicht denselben vor;
indem man sich auf der Spitze
des rechten gestellt.
Wird weiter vorwärts getanzt,
so wird der Anfang
des folgenden Schrittes mit*

the left foot.

dem linken Fusse gemacht."⁵⁸⁷

HELMKE (1829) PAS POLONAISE

There is no doubt that the basic Polonez step is three forward walking steps. Then how could anyone describe it thusly?

ct1 Take a R step fwd,
ct2 close the L ft to the R ft,
ct3 place the R ft (out to the) side.⁵⁸⁸

One can "make" this correct, but it forces the given description too much.

WEINER (1829)

Weiner does mention one feature of the Step which is still done by many people today.

The slow tempo allows,
as as in most other dances,
so also here, . . .
all [of this done] with a careless dragging
of the foot, going without the measure
and [yet] a necessary decorum, . . .

*"Der langsame Takt gestattet,
wie in den meisten Tänzen,
so auch heir, . . .
als ein nachlässiges Schleppen
der Füße, Gehen ohne Takt
und nöthigen Anstand, . . ."*⁵⁸⁹

He surely does not mean that one should not dance it within the measure of music. There is a "dragging" variation but it is not to be slovenly done, not carelessly done—that would be contrary to decorum.

HÄCKER (1835) POLONOISEN-PAS

One moves with the right foot
into the 4th position,
place then the left [foot also]
into the 4th position,
and [then] pull the right
foot first behind,
then in front of the left
into the 5th position.
Now goes the left foot
into the 4th position,
then the right foot likewise
goes into the 4th position,
thereby will the left foot
first go in back of, then
in front of, the right foot
[being] pulled into the 5th position.
This will [use] two measures
of Music;

*"Man streicht mit dem rechten Fusse
in die vierte Position,
setzt dann den linken
in die vierte Position,
und zieht hierauf den rechten
Fuss erst hinter
dann vor den linken
in die funfte Position.
Nun geht der linke Fuss
in die vierte Position,
dann der rechte ebenfalls
in der vierte Pos.,
hierauf wird der linke Fuss
erst hinter dann
vor den rechten
in die funfts Position gezogen.
Hierzu werden zwei Takte
Musik gebraucht;*

⁵⁸⁷ Tschetter, *Terpsichore*, p. 45.

⁵⁸⁸ C. Helmke, *Neue Tanz und Bildungschule*, (Leipzig: 1829), p. 188.

⁵⁸⁹ Weiner, *Gründliche . . .*, p. 78.

it comes therefore
to one Quarter-Note [of Music]
for a [single] Step.

*es kommt sonach
auf jetes Viertel
ein Schritt. ”*⁵⁹⁰

This description of course, does not explicitly state that all steps are done moving forward which we know they are. It is important to note that the word “ziehen”, which means, “to draw,” or “to pull,” and its grammatical variant, “gezogen,” occurs only on the 3rd count of each measure. Schematically it looks like this:

m1
ct1 R ft moves fwd into 4th pos,
ct2 L ft moves fwd into 4th pos,
ct3 R ft is dragged-pulled from behind the L ft to finish in frt of the L ft, into
the 5th pos,

m2 rep m1 oppftw.

Even more noteworthy is the absence of any mention of leg/knee bending by Häcker. So this is just a walking into the 4th position with the measure finishing on ct3 with sliding/dragging of the ft. This ct3 is the accent of the measure. Eliminating the bending of the knee does make this an “easier” step.

Häcker, in the figure-sequence which he described for the Polonaise does state that the entire Polonaise can be danced with this step. But he also stated that:

One can however,
[if it is] to one’s liking
the Pas ordinaires, graves
or glisses do . . .

*“Man kann jedoch
auf beliebige Art
die Pas ordinaires, graves,
un glisses anwenden . . . ”*⁵⁹¹

Häcker does have descriptions of the Pas ordinaire, Grave and Glisse. They, considered as a unit, have knee-bendings, risings, (and therefore descents) slidings/glidings upon the toes, drawings/draggings of the feet, alternate moving forward into the 4th position and closings of the feet into 5th position.⁵⁹²

In his remarks about his given figure-sequence for the Polonaise Häcker also has the going of couples under the upraised arms.

Now we come to the first extant Polish Dance Manual. This is a revelation and since it is unknown to most we include it in its original language.

STACZYŃSKI (1846) *PAS SIMPLE DO POLONEZA*⁵⁹³

m1
ct1. The R ft slides fwd into
the 4th pos.
& the ft is placed.
ct2. L ft slides fwd into the 4th pos.

“ 1. Prawa noga wysuwa się
do pozycji 4tej
zwyczajnej i ustawia stopę.
2. Lewa noga wysuwa się do pozycji 4tej

⁵⁹⁰ Häcker, *Der...*, p. 60.

⁵⁹¹ Häcker, *Der...*, p. 237.

⁵⁹² Häcker, *Der...*, pp. 15,17,19-20.

⁵⁹³ Staczyński, *Zasady...*, pp. 65-66.

& toes are placed
 ct3. R ft reps ct1
 ct3& [the R] knee-bends,
 ft is placed.

odwrotnej i ustawia palcami.
 3. *Prawa noga wysuwa się do pozycji 4tej*
zwyczajnej i robiąc plie,
ustawia stopę.”

m2 Rep m1 oppftw.

The terms “pozycji 4tej zwyczajnej” and “ustawia stopę” are significant. The Staczyński’s defined them earlier in their book. They mean respectively, “the usual 4th position, that is, one ft in front of the other at a distance of one ft [somewhat crossed, as in the standard Ballet’s 3rd position], toes sliding on the floor, ft turned-out” and “to place[to put weight on it]: to be positioned.” The term “odwrotnej” here means that the L ft, which was behind the R ft, now comes forward and is placed in front of the R ft.

So this is a balletically-shaped, continuous walk forward. Note that the knee-bend is done on ct3&. But this is the same mechanically as the ct& before ct1. Most beginners do find it easier to walk first and thereby having gained momentum, bend.

The toe motion on count 2 seems to contradict the foot remark on 1 and 3. It probably is an oversight-they probably meant to stress that the foot advances with the toes sliding forward. Woman does the same movements.

KURTH (1854)

J. Kurth, a dance teacher from Erfurt, Germany has also described the Polonaise in the usual way. But he does mention two interesting features which are interesting.

“Die Polonaise ist eine führung mit einfachem Schritte, mehr tanzend auf den fusspitzen ale gehend.”

*“Der Vortänzer hüte sich ‘in die Polonaise Touren zu bringen mit **porte d’ honneur** und Durchkriechen und derbl.’ ,er könnte es dadurch mit den Damen verderben, denn zu Anfange des Balles sehen diese ihren Kopfputz am wenigsten gern in Gefahr kommen.”*⁵⁹⁴

The Polonaise is a leading [a parade of couples] with a simple step, more a going, a walking upon the toes.

The Director/Leader must guard against ‘ in the Polonaise, the figure **port d’ honneur** and such, other bending-actions, [which take place]’, that he, with these figures can [inadvertently] ruin the coiffure of the Ladies, in any case, there should be no danger of this.

So here the dance is done upon the toes or with the toed leading the foot. How far up on the toes and by whom this should be done is not explicitly stated. As we know this is related to 18th century-schooled dance practice and can be beautifully done. This is one variation of the Basic Step. When there are too many couples in the dancing-space, crowding occurs and therefore, proper execution of the figures cannot be done and the Pleasure of the

⁵⁹⁴ J. Kurth, *Der gewandte Ball und Vortänzer*, (Vienna: 1854), pp.27-28. I do not know how popular this manual was but its first and second editions were published in 1851 and 1852.

dance is lost. Some figures require people to bend their bodies; in small spaces this both ungainly and unpleasant.

ZORN (1887)

*“The usual step for the Polonaise is the alteration of the feet in the 4th, 3rd, and 4th positions as in the Polka, but in a different rhythm (3-4 measures). The step usually commences with the right foot.”*⁵⁹⁵

What could be clearer and simpler than this? Zorn gives the impression that he saw and knew everything. His work does have substance. He can't be simply dismissed. So here we can think of the Polonez Step as a Polka Step in 3/4 time and done without any sliding, risings or bendings since Zorn does not mention this salient feature of the Polonez. This is not therefore The Polka Step but rather the flat-footed Two-Step. (Zorn gives the dance 88 beats per minute.) Schematically it looks like this:

- m1
 - ct1 R step fwd into 4th pos,
 - ct2 close the L ft behind the R ft into 3rd pos,
 - ct3 R step fwd into 4th pos,
- m2 Rep m1 oppftw.

We know that on ct2 the L ft closes behind the R ft because that is what happens in the Polka. For many other dances Zorn did give detailed explanations of the steps. Zorn probably considered that the Polonaise to be so simple that there was no need for a detailed description. Either that or he only observed lack-luster dancing of the Polonaise.

Among Polish sources Mestenhauser breaks a silence of almost 35 years.

MESTENHAUSER (1888) KROK POLONEZA⁵⁹⁶

- m1

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ct1 R ft slides fwd, placing the full wt, on that [R] ft; ct2 L ft slides ,[closes] next to R ft &, ct3 R ft stamps, in place. 	<p><i>“na raz-noga prawa wysuwa się posuwisto naprzód, osadzając się całym ciężarem ciała na tejże nodze; na dwa-noga lewa dosuwa się do prawej i na trzy-noga prawa uderza się w miejscu.”</i></p>
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- m2 Rep m1 oppftw.

Now isn't this count 3 strange?

<p>As in the music of the Polonez, so also [in dancing it] the dance's accents are done, that is strongly begin on 1.</p>	<p><i>“Tak w muzyce poloneza, jako też i tańcu akcentowanie, czyli mocne zaznacza na raz.”</i></p>
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⁵⁹⁵ F. A.Zorn, *Grammer of the Art of Dancing*, trans. by Alfonso Sheafe, (Boston: 1905). Originally published in the German language in Leipzig in 1887. He taught dancing in Odessa, Russia.

⁵⁹⁶ Karol Mestenhauser, *Szkola tańca w 3-ch częściach: Cz. 2.* (Warszawa: 1888), pp. 179-180.

on 3-after the stamp,
[do] a slight knee-bend or a pause,
conforming to the rhythm
and feeling of the dancer's spirit.

*na trzy-przy uderzaniu noga,
lekki przysiad lub też pauza,
a to stosownie do rytmu
i usposobienia ducha tancerza."*

Woman does the same movements only quietly and without explicit accentings.

This is astonishing: from a forward moving three step to a two step; forward, close, forward, close and with a stamp in place for the men and women! (Is this some kind of echo of Hänsel?) Certainly, there are occasions when one cannot move forward. Then one can dance in place. It is during these non-moving instances that the man does those Staropolska, Szlachta gestures as in the "Taniec Polski" Form. We note that both Staczyński and Mestenhauser knew that the Polonez of their time was a very pedestrian affair (as described by many of the 19th century, e.g., Liszt). It could be that this stamping was an unconscious effort to suggest the vigor of the Old Dance. This description is one of continual, repetitive, every measure stamping and not an occasional stamp-variant (which we have described elsewhere in the present work).

But we do bring to mind that even in some of Mestenhauser's Mazur step-descriptions there are unclear remarks. If only he (and others) would have realized just how quickly life passes away then perhaps they would have taken greater care with their instructions.

Let us turn now to the mysterious J.H., writing at the end of the 19th century.

J.H. (1897) ⁵⁹⁷

m1

ct1 [R] ft *s l i d e s*
fwd,
ast with this movement,
[L] knee-bend,
this is done,
st the dancers step
is freely, nimbly done.

ct2 [L] ft closes-slides
to the first [ft]
so that, the heels are even.

ct3 [R] ft, does same as for ct1,
but a shorter step,
not sliding.

*"Jedna noga robi krok p o s u w i s t y
naprzód,
podczas tego ruchu
drugą noga zgina się w kolanie,
a to dlatego,
aby chód tancerza
był swobodny, giętki.*

*Następnie drugą noga przysuwa się
do pierwszej
tak, aby obie pięty zrównały się.
Trzeci krok, robi znowu noga pierwsza,
ale krok krotki,
nie posuwisty."*

m2 Rep m1 oppftw.

Note that J.H. has deliberately stressed (by inserting spaces in between the letters of the word *posuwisty*) that ct1 is a slide. J.H. tells us more about count 3:

The Men, . . . , may not,
because of the music,
deviate from the division
of the Polonez
into three parts, [they] mark ct3,

*"Mężczyźni, . . . jakkolwiek nie mogą
z powodu muzyki
odstąpić od podziału
taktu polonezowego
na trzy części, markują trzecie tempo,*

⁵⁹⁷ J.H., *Taniec...*, pp. 4-5.

with a light knee-bend-
 what often do the older [men]-
 or on the third ct
 do a complete pause, or
 according
 to the fantasy of the moment,
 do all three movements,
 that is, [the] knee-bend, pause
 or a third step,
 directly fwd, with the same ft,
 which began the first ct.

*albo lekkim przysiadaniem-
 co stale czynili starsi-
 albo na trzecim tempie
 zupełnie pauzują, albo używając
 według
 fantazyi chwilowej,
 wszystkich trzech sposobów,
 to jest przysiadania, pauzowania
 lub kroku trzeciego,
 prawidłowego naprzód, ta sama noga,
 która pierwsze tempo zaczynała.”*

Note that this is the men’s step. This last paragraph contains basically two variants for 1897; one a modified Mestenhauser (1880), and the other a modified Staczyński (1846).

A modified Mestenhauser? The stamp has disappeared. It is still a Mestenhauser variant because of the closing together of the feet on ct2.

How can it be a modified Staczyński? Because of the step-forward on ct3 and knee-bend on ct1. Yet, in both cases it retains the closing together of the feet on ct2!

J.H. does seem to explain that the knee-bending is done by the old men-meaning perhaps that they do not possess the energy of Youth or **maybe** that knee-bending is a “old” custom or the way that the previous generation danced it.

How can one explain the differences between continuously stepping forward and closing-stopping on ct2? Could it be the influence of the Waltz which closes on ct3 and of the Polka or Two-Step which closes on ct1&?

But when people walk or run they do not bring their feet together. What can it be? Could it be that, maybe, it is easier for some people to bend both knees simultaneously, which is easier to do when the feet are next to each other compared to bending only the supporting leg while the other leg-foot is in motion?

J.H. Woman’s Step

What does J.H. have to say about the woman’s step? The step is the same as for the man except its manner of execution is different.

. . . on 1, the Lady begins with R ft-
 pardon me – her little [dainty] ft,
 glides it on toes, not the entire ft,
 fwd: meanwhile, the other little ft,
 as described above bends at the
 knee – pardon me – at the little knee.

*. . . na raz, dama zaczyna prawa noga –
 przepraszam – nóżka,
 wysuwając ją, na palach, nie cała nóżka,
 naprzód: podczas tego, drugą nóżka,
 jak już powiedziano zgina się w
 Kolanie – przepraszam – w kolanku.*

The second count is the same as it is for the man: the feet close.

In particular for the third count:

. . . the first ft takes
 a small step fwd.

From the men fantasy,
 temperament [spirit],
 from the Ladies modesty,
 constancy
 in the [music’s] tempo, elegance.

*. . . pierwsza nóżka robi
 mały krok naprzód.*

*U mężczyzny fantazyja,
 temperament,
 u damy skromność,
 stałość
 w tempie, elegancja.*

Again we see that the woman glides, that the man slides. His movements are heavier. She should be light and elegant. The woman's step on ct3 may explain the men's closing on ct2. The woman is on the right of the man. Since the nature of the Polonez is the circling of couples this therefore places the woman at a greater distance, than that of the man, from the center of the circle. She, therefore, has a greater distance to cover in the same measure of music.

She can do this by stepping forward on count 3. Thus the man can, optionally, retard his forward motion by not taking a step forward on count 3—this might, at least, explain Mestenhauser's variant and part of J.H.'s. However, count 2, is still a puzzle.

Forty years past and three Polish Dance Manuals are published within a year of each other. Their step descriptions are consciously made to be mechanically clear.

WAXMAN (1937) *KROK ZWYKLY*⁵⁹⁸

Waxman's term or name for the step is "krok zwykly" which means "ordinary step [as in walking]." The step is the same as Staczyński's in one respect—3 continuous steps forward. It differs in two ways however. One is that the knee-bending takes place on ct1, for Waxman. Second the manner of execution is different. Waxman wants all the steps to be done on the entire foot, that is, flat-footedly. This means that the entire sole is placed on the floor when stepping. The steps are also of the same length. For all practical purposes this is mostly just walking. Waxman, a Physical Education teacher, in Poland, wanted the easiest step to be done by a mass society—therefore, it is not Elegant. In the 3rd edition of his book he used photographs to illustrate the step-sequence. This is the only Polish Dance manual to do so. Unfortunately the photographs are very small—one cannot see very much. We reproduce them here enlarged along with his instructions for Historical Record.

Step description is for the man: woman does opposite footwork

m1

ct1 L ft fwd
and R knee
slightly bend,
ct2 R ft fwd
ct3 L ft fwd

" 1. *L n w przód*
i prawe kolano
nieznacznie ugiąć
2. *P n w przód*
3. *L n w przód*"



ct1



ct2



ct3

⁵⁹⁸ Józef Waxman, *Tańce Narodowe*, 3th ed., (Poznań: 1937), pp. 16-17. This contains sequential photographs of step instruction. The abbreviations are explained in Waxman's book.

If one follows the instructions as given for count1 one would first take a step forward then bend the knee. This is in reverse order to how it is to be done. Unless, of course, one did ct2 as ct1 and ct3 as ct2, then do ct1 as written. (Please note that men who have their hand at their hip are men who do not “understand” this Dance or they may be tired or lack spirit.)

KWIATKOWSKI (1937) PAS MARCHER POLONEZA ⁵⁹⁹

Kwiatkowski, who was a private school Dance Teacher, has a slightly more elegant step than Waxman. His description is 3 steps, of equal length, going forward, feet parallel to each other (not turned-out): with the supporting leg doing a knee-bend after ct3.

The Lady, just like the Gentleman,
takes two steps fwd,
but beginning with the L ft,
and **after** the 3rd step,
does a slight knee-bend
on the R leg [knee], doing
a slight bow [going] fwd.

*“Dama, tak samo jak kawaler,
stawia dwa kroki naprzód,
lecz zaczynając z nogi lewej,
i po trzecim kroku,
musi wykonać lekkie plie
na prawej nodze, czyniąc
lekki ukłon naprzód.”*

So the knee-bend is on ct3-this is the same as for Staczyński and Mestenhauser. However this is only a description of the very first measure of music-in order to get started from a standing position. In real, practical life the bending is on the ct& and not on ct3 or ct1! After starting, ct3& is equal to ct&1.

Kwiatkowski’s step is a little lighter than Waxman’s because he states that the toes are in contact with the floor and the heel is not. His term is the Ballet term, “Pas Marche” which means to march. Recall that this is the influence of the Pas de Bouree of the 18th century. One reaches somewhat with the foot and takes the weight firstly upon the toes. This has a touch of elegance to it. But there is not an **explicit** sliding or gliding, except if one chooses to interpret “toes on the floor” as a “gliding.”

KWAŚNICOWA (1938) DWÓRSKI KROK POLONEZÓWY ⁶⁰⁰

Strictly translated, “Dwórski Krok Polonezowy” means, the Polonez Step of the Court. Practically it denotes a learned, an elegant movement.

On “1” of the 3/4 measure
step onto the R ft
and do a slight bending
of the [R] knee
as the moving
L ft goes fwd,
not touching the floor.
The L ft is rotated to
the outside [clockwise] with
the toes pointing downward just
above the floor.

*“ Na ‘raz’ w takcie trzycwiciowyn
ze stąpnieniem prawa stopa
i z niewielkim ugięciem
nogi w kolanie
należy skojarzyć wysuniecie
lewej nogi w przód,
Nie dotykając nią podstawy.
Stopa lewa skierowana na
zewnątrz z opuszczonymi
palcami w dół znajdować
się winna nisko nad podstawa.*

. . . , on “2”, step [fwd] upon
the L ft, that is, step on it.

*. . . , na ‘dwa,’ należy postawić
Lewa nogę, czyli wykonać nią krok.*

⁵⁹⁹ Czesław Kwiatkowski, *Szkoła Tańców Polskich*, (Warszawa: 1937), pp. 13-19.

⁶⁰⁰ Zofia Kwaśnicowa, *Zbiór Płásów*, Vol. II, (Warszawa: 1938), pp. 220-221.

On “3” – take a R step [fwd].

It is necessary to ensure that the bending in no case is done before the ft has all the weight upon it.

The stepping is to be done onto the flat foot, touching the floor first with the toes, then with heel of the ft.

The Polonez Step is [to be done] slidingly and fluidly.

As we know the term. “posuwisty” usually denotes a heavy-sliding motion. A better term would be the French term, “glisse,” which is a lighter-gliding motion.

Suppose we examine the illustration “Polonaise” of Stanisław Rejchan shown below. As was stated previously it appeared in the year 1900. Clearly we are able to see that both of the knees are bent. The first two men seem be behind in their timing compared to the last two men who are ready to sweep their left leg forward.(Or it may just be the reverse.) And, yes the men are carrying their top-hats in their left hands. This was an old custom. It really does not fit with tophats of the 19th century.

Na “trzy” – wykonać krok noga prawa.

Trzeba zwracać uwagę na to, ażeby ugięcie to w żadnym wypadku nie wyprzedzało stąpięciu stopa.

Stąpać należy cała stopa, dotykając podstawy najpierw palcami, potem pięta stopy.

Krok polonezowy jest posuwisty i płynny.”



Listing our Historical Step descriptions in a table let us try to look for any patterns which might lead us to some conclusions.

COMPARISON TABLE FOR THE VARIOUS HISTORICAL DESCRIPTIONS OF THE BASIC STEP				
	ct 1	ct 2	ct3	“Two-Step-Polka”
Taubert (1717)	bend-step	step	step	
Hänsel (1755)	fall-step (4th)	glide-step (4th)	step (4th)	
Feldenstein (1771)	bend-step	step	step	
Petrovski (1825)	step (4th)	close -step (1st)	step (4th)	*
Tschetter (1828)	bend-step	step	step	
Helmke (1829)	step	close	side-step	*
Häcker (1835)	step (4th)	step (4th)	pull (5th)	
Staczyński (1846)	slide (4th)	slide (4th)	slide-bend (4th)	
Zorn (1887)	step (4th)	close -step (3rd)	step (4th)	*
Mestenhauser (1888)	slide	pull-close	stamp-bend	*
J. H. (1897)	bend-slide	slide- close	step	*
Waxman (1937)	bend-step (4th)	step (4th)	step (4th)	
Kwiatkowski (1937)	step	step	step-bend	
Kwaśnicowa (1938)	step-bend	step	step	

From this table we see that most of the German-Saxon authors described the Polonez-Step as a bend and three steps going forward. Staczyński, Waxman and Kwaśnicowa and all Polish dancers since then and as of 1997 agree with the bend and three forward steps. This testifies to its long History as a Bourree-type-Step. As mentioned in the first Section of this book there is some musical evidence that a heavy sliding character of Polonez music comes about in the 19th century. Maybe this is due to the influence of Waltz dancing which is easily slid? There is also some corroboration for this transition from stepping to that of sliding at the beginning of the 19th century. In an article⁶⁰¹ which compared Minuet Steps in the first quarter of the 19th century, among some German dance masters, a trend existed wherein sliding or gliding was introduced into the step descriptions by these dance masters in order to make them more acceptable to contemporary dancers. It was a time to slide?

More Poles mention the sliding character. (Of course, these two apparent contradictory aspects can both be done-and has been and is done.)

⁶⁰¹ Elizabeth Aldrich, “The Menuet Alive And Well In 1800: Four German Dance Manuals,” *Proceedings 7th Annual Conference*, (Townson: 1984), pp. 55-57. Zorn in his latter book also has glides in his description of Minuet steps but he was probably just recording earlier authors.

We do have confirmation of the sliding from a book of Etiquette at the end of the century:

With the dances [which are] sliding
(for example, the Polonez,
the Quadrille etc.) . . .

*“Przy tańcach posuwistych
(np. w polonezie,
kadrylu itd.) . . . ”*⁶⁰²

The Quadrille uses the ordinary flat-footed two-step slidingly done. The analogy is clear.

But why are there descriptions of bringing the feet together on count 2? This is what the present author has called, “The Two-Step” or “Polka” type of movement as did Zorn. Since the manuals were written by professional dancers and teachers they probably did observe this, in particular Zorn and Mestenhauser, so we must accept the probable reality that it was done, that it existed. But Why? How? This variant slows down the forward movement and in doing so allows the dancer to pause in place to bow, to turn to their partner, to show Respect—all features which we know are part of the Polonez. These features prevent this from being just a marching forward. We also know that the space where dancing took place was comparatively small, that is to say, it was crowded. This easily leads to “closing-steps.” A “closing-step” also very easily becomes a sliding or a dragging or a pulling, which **is** one feature of this step.

In the “Polka” version the closing is done on count 2. In the non-Polka version this action or something similar to it occurs on count 1 or count 3. Could it be that some teachers just misplaced the counts? This seems incredible. Therefore we have to accept all of these variants. So one variant of a Dance-Step has become two or three or more. The Dance is that much richer.

HÄNSEL’S OTHER STEPS

Hänsel mentions some other steps besides the forward: some of these are curious indeed. As we know there are bowings which often require steps done to the side. These are entitled by Hänsel, “Seitenpas.”

“Von dem polnischen Seitenpas rechter Hand

*Die Vorpas Tempo werden ebenfalls da beibehalten, nur dass solches aus der dritten Position seinen Anfang nimmt, ist auch einerlei, ob der rechte vor oder hinter den linken stehet, wenn er den Anfang machen soll. Beim ersten Schritte aber fället er in die zweite Position, der linke so den andern Schritt macht, streicht in die dritte hinter den rechten, und der rechte so den dritten Schritt macht, schreitet wieder in die andere.”*⁶⁰³

About the Polish Sidestep to the right side

As the forward step is done from the third position so also this step is done, whether the right foot is in front or behind the left, it can be done. With the first step one falls

⁶⁰² Piotr Paliński, *Prawidła grzeczności i przyzwoitości dla wszystkich stanów*, (Poznań: 1897), p. 109.

⁶⁰³ Hänsel, C. G., *Allerneueste Anweisung...*, p. 142.

into the second position, the left foot then makes a striding, extending step to the rear of the right foot and the right makes a third step, ready to do another.

We see that this is a balance step which steps to the side (second position) starting from and finishing with one foot behind the other (third position). I take the last phrase to mean that the left foot starts a second balance to the left side. There is some doubt here about the meaning of “falling” into place. Hänsel then has a second paragraph dealing with this.⁶⁰⁴ Of course, this extending of the free leg and foot can be done as an elegant pointing of the leg and foot.

Hänsel points out how this is related to the Bow.

*“ . . . wenn ich den Reverenz gemacht in der dritte Position mit dem letzten Schritte hinter den linken Fuss zu stehen gekommen bin . . . ”*⁶⁰⁵

. . . I make the Reverenz [Bow] when I come to stand in third position with the last step behind the left foot . . .

Hänsel then mentions, or even invents perhaps, some variations or other steps which can be used e.g., Ballone, Contretems, Battement. In his description some of these steps require “springing” from one foot to the next.⁶⁰⁶ This is leaping! Our entire study of the dance as well as dancing it easily leads us to state that there is no leaping in the Polonaise. For many people the “simplicity” of the Basic Step becomes boring. This often prompts dance teachers to invent or import steps or movements from other dances.

Here is one of his unusual step ornamentations—the beating of heels!

*“Wie das polnische **Pas** mit Schlagung der Absätze nach heutiger Art gemacht werden muss.*

*Wenn man solches mit dem rechten Fusse anfangen will, so halt man den Leib auf den linken feste. Man hebet 2) des rechten Fusses Absatz von der Erde, ziehet 3) solchen ganzen Fuss zum Ausholen des Schlages mit Beugung des Knies hinter sich; Und schläget 4) mit des rechten Fusses Absatz entweder vor oder seitwärts; 5) Strecket man den Fuss noch in der Luft haltend mit unter sich haltender Spitze, das Knie ebenfalls nach und nach; 6) Tritt man beym andern Schritte steif vor sich hin, und machete 7) mit dem linken Fusseden dritten ordinariren Schritt.”*⁶⁰⁷

How the Polish Step, with the beating of the heels according to today’s Manner, is to be done

⁶⁰⁴ See the Donna Greenberg article, “Workshop: . . .,” for a fuller explanation of this, based no doubt, on a better translation than mine.

⁶⁰⁵ Hänsel, C. G., *Allerneueste Anweisung* . . . , p. 143.

⁶⁰⁶ Hänsel, C. G., *Allerneueste Anweisung* . . . , p.145. Could it be that Hänsel may have conflated the springing Mazur dance with the Polish Dance? He may have seen an early version of this.

⁶⁰⁷ Hänsel, C. G., *Allerneueste Anweisung* . . . , pp.146-147.

If one will begin with the right foot, then one has their weight upon the left foot.

- 2) one raises the right foot's heel off of the floor, and pulls
- 3) the entire leg bending the knee, and beats
- 4) the heels together either in front or sideways,
- 5) holding the foot in the air, supported by the toes, knee bent,
- 6) step upon the right foot, leg straighten and make an
- 7) ordinary step with the left foot.

By today's Manner, Hänsel means that of 1755. Keep in mind that this is to be done in a measure of Polonaise music. Here we repeat our translation of a fragment of Kattfuss' description of the Dance.

To admire the real beauty of the Polonaise, one must see it danced by a Pole; then one sees the grace in the turning-actions, that one is amazed. The Pole has, moreover, in the beating together of the heels an admirable skill, [especially] since he usually is wearing small boots and spurs, and one notices how skillful [he is], not to stumble or to collide with the Lady.

Can we assume that Kattfuss actually saw Poles dancing the Polonaise or did he just copy Hänsel? Remember that in the latter 18th century the unique capital of Poland was again in Poland, at Warszawa, with a native Pole as its King.

Also by this time urban upper-class Poles were generally not wearing the Staropolska-Kontusz clothing. Hänsel mentioned the spurs and heel-clicking but he also mentioned the Kontusz clothing—note that Kattfuss did not. And what does he mean by “small boots”? He cannot mean “civilian” shoes or low boots since they are not worn with spurs. He probably means boots which reach to the upper-calve in contrast with boots which reach to the middle-thigh. In any case there seems to have been a certain amount of heel-clicking or spur contacting. Very loud heel-clicking and stamping is generally not condoned in the Polonaise. This would be considered as boorish behavior. It can be tastefully done under certain conditions. These movements are described in the Workbook Section of the present work.

Now we come to one of the most curious of Hänsel's steps.

*“Wie das polnische **Pas** mit einem Battement zierlich zu machen.*

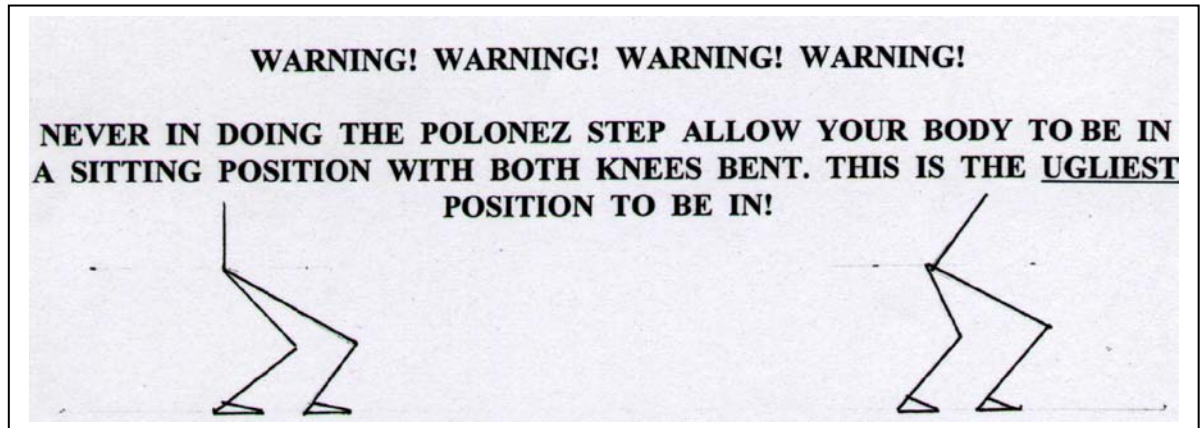
*Man halt den Leib auf dem rechten Fusse fest, und hebet b) den linken Absatz von der Erde; c) beuget man beyde Knien; springet d) auf dem rechten, wirft e) im Springen den linken Fuss, welches wir oben ein Balloné oder gesprungenes Contretems nenneten; strecket man f) das Knie nach und nach; g) Battiret man mit den linken, der immer noch in der Luft ist, erstlich vorne, hernach hinter in der dritten Position, mit unter sich gestreckter Spitze; h) Setzet den linken Fuss gerade vor sich, und machete i) mit dem rechten dem dritten ordinären Schritt.”*⁶⁰⁸

How the Polish Step with a Battement may be embellished

⁶⁰⁸ Hänsel, C. G., *Allerneueste Anweisung...*, pp.148-149.

- One holds the weight on the right foot, and lift
- b) the left heel off the floor;
 - c) bending both knees; spring
 - d) upon the right [foot], flinging
 - e) onto the left foot, which is, a Ballonné or springing Contretems, called; stretching [straightening]
 - f) the knee little by little;
 - g) beating with the left, still in the air, first in front, then the rear in third position, with stretched toes;
 - h) place the left foot in front and make
 - i) with the right an ordinary step.

The directions seem to be the opposite of what they should be. But what he means by this is that the free foot, being held close to the ankle of the supporting leg, beats front, back or vice versa of the supporting ankle. This would be done in going from ct3 to ct1. However this is very curious in the Polonaise! This is the only citation, the only mention of this in the Historical record.⁶⁰⁹ So did this really exist? Did the Poles generally do this? I believe that this was simply an invention of Hänsel. Certainly movements of this type, the rising and falling, the keeping of the foot near the other ankle, were part of some 18th century dances such as in the Minuet, Courant and constituent steps such as the “demi-coup,” which is described in the Rococo-Polonaise chapter. Perhaps this was Hänsel’s attempt make the Polonaise more of a Court-like Dance—but I really do not know.



⁶⁰⁹ That the present author knows of.

HISTORICAL SOURCES OF UKLONS (BOWS)

Some European Dance manuals of the 19th century contain drawings or even photographs of Bowing. None of the Polish manuals do. However from a Polish satirical periodical, *Kłosy*,⁶¹⁰ we have at least one drawing illustrating the Carnival Season of 1884 which includes a bowing Scene, shown below. It was intended to be humorous. The men's Bowing is realistic for this time-dull and not elegant. At least their legs are straight and their feet are together. Notice that the men are holding their folded top-hats. We see that the men are being presented to the woman who apparently is the mother of the younger woman.



While this shows the men's Bow clearly it does not do the same for young woman's Curtsy. So we shall give a description of a 19th century Curtsy.

"This slight curtsy shows the development from the curtsy of the later eighteenth century, in which the foot was drawn behind to the fifth position...but with the introduction of heel-less slippers in the nineteenth century, the foot, instead of closing in the fifth position behind, was taken backwards to the fourth. The curtsy begins with a step to one side, the weight of the body being transferred to this foot; the other foot slides, passing close to the supporting foot, by moving through the third position behind, continuing without a pause to the fourth position behind, diagonally across behind the supporting foot. As the foot moves, the knees bend. The weight of the body remains on the supporting leg until the moving foot reaches the fourth position behind, when the weight is transferred onto it. The knees are straightened and the body is raised. The front foot remains on the toe, in order to continue walking. If the person wishes to remain standing, the front foot is drawn backwards, with the feet close."

In 1838, 'in order to make the Courtsy formally', the same directions as those in the 1828 manual are given, except that these are more specific about bending the body. In former periods the lady kept her back straight making only a very slight inclination forward. Now she curves her back. The bend of the body commences when the foot begins to slide near the supporting leg, and remains until the weight is transferred to the back foot- 'when the spine is sufficiently curved, retires on the slidden foot, above which it is completely elevated, and the courtsey is finished'.

⁶¹⁰ This reprint of the Carnival is contained in B. Ogrodowska's, *Święta Polskie Tradycja I Obyczaj*, (Warszawa: 1996), p. 118.

Exactly the same movements are described for the curtsy in 1860, the only addition being that, at the end of the curtsy, the weight of the body is transferred to the front foot, closing the back foot to the first position.

*On ordinary occasions, the curtsy was still made in a similar manner to the 'passing' or 'walking' curtsies of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. 'On entering a room, for example, the lady sinks in the **first position**, and slides one foot forward to the **fourth**; she then bows, leaning slightly on the foot upon which she has sunken; and **with the body bent** she advances to the slidden foot, upon which she finishes her courtsey, by rising in the **fourth position**. On taking leave, and on some other occasions, the lady sinks, **and slides** backwards, bends the body as formerly, and retires to the slidden foot, on which she finishes her obeisance."*⁶¹¹

Below we now only include those Bows from Polish manuals which are fully described for the Polonez Dance.

STACZYŃSKI (1846) UKŁON⁶¹²

The Staczyński's only give instruction for doing Bows in static positions: upon entering a Ballroom or asking for a Dance. There are no separate instructions for Bows or bowing as part of the dancing except that when the knee-bend is done a bowing of the head is done.

J.H. (1897)⁶¹³

J.H. gives us two Bows used at the ending of the Polonez: the normal Bow of his time (which is still ours today) and a beautiful example of a Bow which was done in the Staropolska Dance.

At the end, cpls are standing
in one line [column],
a row of Ladies and a row of Men
turned to face each other, about
2-3 steps apart, and all [in] the cpls,
giving their R hands [to their ptr] –
turn in place once;
returning to their orgpos,
head bow to each other
[thereby] ending the Polonez.

In the old days, the Poles, instead of bows,
placed their hat in their palm,
the lady then placed her hands upon the hat,
which the man kissed,
took the lady by the arm
and returned her to her place.

*Przy zakończeniu, staje kolumna
polonezowa w równej linii,
szeregi dam i mężczyzn
zwracają się ku sobie twarzami
w odległości 2-3 kroków i wszystkie
pary naraz, podając sobie prawe ręce –
robią jeden obrót;
wróciwszy do pierwszej pozycji,
kłaniają się sobie
i polonez skończony.*

*Dawni Polacy, zamiast ukłonu,
podawali na dłoni czapki,
damy kładły na czapki swoje rączki,
które mężczyźni ucałowawszy,
pod ramie damy
odprowadzali na miejsce.*

Of course those who have the knowlegde of what the Polonez History is can do the beautiful variant today.

⁶¹¹ Wildeblood, *The Polite World*, p.273-274.

⁶¹² Staczyński, *Zasady...*, pp. 45-51.

⁶¹³ J.H., *Taniec...*, p. 7.

KWIATKOWSKI (1937) REVERANCHE⁶¹⁴

After a series of Polonez forward steps the man and woman make a quarter turn toward each other and mutually bow. This takes two measures.

M

m1

ct1 R step fwd,
 ct2 L step fwd,
 ct3 R step fwd
 ct& R knee-bend & begin to turn twd W,

m2

ct1 L step fwd but completing turn twd W (rising-up from the knee-bend)
 ct2 close R ft to the L, ast doing a bow from the waist, crossing one or both hds across his chest as a sign of Respect for the W.
 ct3 Hold and or recover from the bow.

W

m1 Same as for the man but oppftw.

m2

ct1 Same as for the man but oppftw,d fst facing M,
 ct2 L ft glides to the rear of the R ft (away from the M),
 ct3 L knee-bend, sink down with a slight head bowing ast straightening the R leg, keeping only the R toes in contact with the floor.

Depending on the tempo the ptrs distance, how and when this bow is done is variable as is the length of the holding of the bows. Remember that Kwiatkowski thinks that the knee-bend is to be done on ct3&. If one thinks of it as occurring on ct &1 the feeling and timing is not exactly the same. The hand hold is usually released by m2,ct1.

⁶¹⁴ Kwiatkowski, *Szkola...*, pp. 20-21.

WAXMAN (1937) *UKŁON*⁶¹⁵

The footwork is exactly the same as Kwiatkowski's except that only head bows are done on m2,ct2 and the woman does not sink-down in her bow-it is all very ordinary, very common. On ct3 straighten up.

ct1



ct2



⁶¹⁵ Waxman, *Tańce Narodowe...*, pp. 16,24. If you notice the young lady has apparently change her dress between ct1 and ct2.

THE CONTEMPORARY SOCIAL BALLROOM POLONEZ

Now we come to the last variant form of the Polish Walking Dance, which is very much alive today. This form is less elegant, less sharp than the preceding forms. It also lacks the Staropolska character. We must point out again that Polish Dance Masters (as well as the present author) consider this to be a degenerate form, and not very much dancing fun.

This is especially true of the dancing done after World War II. Primarily, this is true because of the lack of formal elementary dance training by this generation, and the decline of human relationship of Respect and Gentility in our highly materialistic civilization. It is the function of the new generation of Polish dance teachers to turn the tide of this new Barbarism.

For this age or generation, which did/does not have the characteristic organic lifestyle expressed by a particular movement, they must learn it in schools. They literally must be taught Aesthetic appreciation of music and movement-the Art of the Dance. Then the dance will give them pleasure.

The only **new** elements, coming from the late 19th century, are the rich forms of new figures. However, as pointed out by this time, the Polonez functioned only as an opening dance and was rarely done as a dance enjoyment for itself.

Although we have several Polish dance figure books with a number of Polonez figure sequences, there is nothing unique about these "new" figures. These books were written for the late 19th and 20th century Polonez.

The figures chosen depended only upon the leader's imagination. As for leading a Polonez interested readers and potential leaders of the Polonez must read the present author's more detailed work on the nature of Polish Figure Dancing.

STEP AND BOW REMINDERS

Here we give some of the previously described variants of the Basic Step, which one does see in the Contemporary Polonez. Since however, the Contemporary Polonez is truly a lack-luster affair we suggest that one learn and do Taniec Polski elements in the present and future forms of the Polonez. For those that choose not to do this they still can derive personal pleasure and make the dance a more expressive instrument for community solidarity even of spirituality by doing the Basic Step with a definite knee-bend and slight risings upon the ball of the feet, as well as bowing, at least to the degree that the dance is not just a plain walking step.

SOME BASIC STEP VARIANT REMINDERS

Variant A

m1

ct1 The R ft slides fwd into the 4th pos & the ft is placed.

ct2 L ft slides fwd into the 4th pos & toes are placed

ct3 R ft reps ct1

ct3& [the R] knee-bends, ft is placed

m2 Rep m1 oppftw.

Variant B

The Lady, just like the Gentleman, takes two steps fwd, but beginning with the L ft, and **after** the 3rd step, does a slight knee-bend on the R leg [knee], doing a slight bow [going] fwd.

Variant C

On “1” of the 3/4 measure step onto the R ft and do a slight bending of the [R] knee as the moving L ft goes fwd, not touching the floor. The L ft is rotated to the outside [clockwise] with the toes pointing downward just above the floor . . . ,on “2”, step [fwd] upon the L ft, that is, step on it.

On “3”—take a R step [fwd].

It is necessary to ensure that the bending in no case is done before the ft has all the weight upon it. The stepping is to be done onto the flat foot, touching the floor first with the toes, then with heel of the ft. The Polonez Step is to be slidingly and fluidingly done.

Variant D The “**MOST ELEGANT POLONEZ VARIANT OF THEM ALL.**”

Stand facing LOD, R ft to the rear of the L ft, wt mostly on the R ft. This is actually the position at the end of ct3.

ct& Do exercise (k), of the previous Foot And Leg Movements of the Generalized Taniec Polski section, transferring wt to L ft, freeing R ft, which goes fwd and quickly, but smoothly rise-up upon the L ft (by pushing the weight of the L ft, down into the floor: first, from a flat-foot, then with the ball of the ft, then with a portion of the toes. Heel is off of the floor.) finally reaching a height where you are momentarily still—balancing upon the frt part of the L ft. The R ft is held off of the floor, suspended in air, in front, away from the L ft in the LOD.

m1

ct1 step fwd onto the ball of the R ft, keeping R leg stiff. This first step is the longest within the measure. However its length must be one that is comfortable for the dancer to bring the heel off the floor. As always, the final criterion is how beautiful it feels to the dancer and how it looks to the others. After the step is mastered going directly fwd, then do it by stepping with the ft slightly “turned out.” In this case, diag R.

ct2 Step L ft fwd onto the frt of the ft. This step is shorter than the first, and its length is the same as that of a medium walk step. The leg is more or less straight and stiff.

ct3 Rep ct2 oppftw,

ct& rep ct& oppftw,

m2

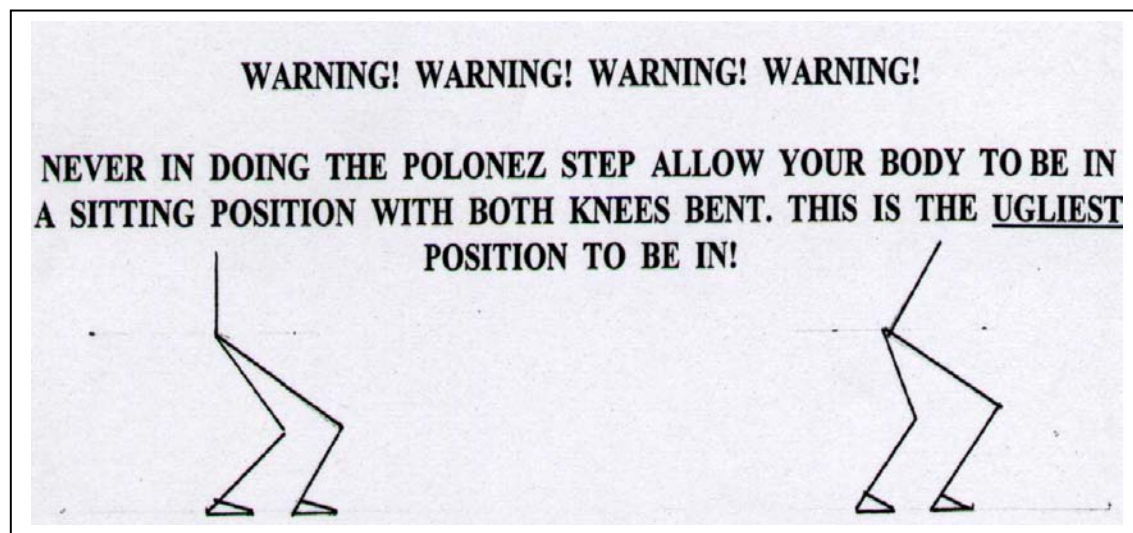
rep m2 oppftw.

Keep in mind that this is actually a continuous action that can start from the previous ct3 through ct& and part of ct1. What has been described above for ct& can be extended into part of ct1 so that the wt is placed upon the R ft at the end of ct1.

There are a number of ways in which the free R ft can make the transition from ct3 to ct& to ct1. It can be completely off the floor sweeping fwd quickly. Or the big toe can be in contact with the floor as the ft goes fwd. The toe can be sliding or gliding along the floor. The sliding may be heard or it may be silently done. The ft can be strongly turned-out. The transition from ct3 to ct& can also be done from the typical knee-bending-this gives a “pumping” type action. All these differences! It is quite amazing!

One can make this a very feminine step movement. Never overdo it. Perhaps men should not do this at all.

You may want to look at Variant E of the **CONCLUSION: VARIATIONS OF THE BASIC STEP** section of this book, in particular, the arm and hand movements.



SOME BOW VARIANT REMINDERS

Variant A

At the end, cpls are standing in one line [column], a row of Ladies and a row of Men turned to face each other, about 2-3 steps apart, and all [in] the cpls, giving their R hands [to their ptr] turn in place once: returning to their orgpos, head bow to each other [thereby] ending the Polonez.

Variant B

After a series of Polonez forward steps the man and woman make a quarter turn toward each other and mutually bow. This takes two measures.

M

m1

ct1 R step fwd,

- ct2 L step fwd,
 ct3 R step fwd
 ct& R knee-bend & begin to turn twd W,
 m2
 ct1 L step fwd but completing turn twd W (rising-up from the knee-bend)
 ct2 close R ft to the L, ast doing a bow from the waist, crossing one or
 both hds across his chest as a sign of Respect for the W.
 ct3 Hold and or recover from the bow.

W

- m1 Same as for the man but oppftw.
 m2
 ct1 Same as for the man but oppftw,d fst facing M,
 ct2 L ft glides to the rear of the R ft (away from the M),
 ct3 L knee-bend, sink down with a slight head bowing ast straightening
 the R leg, keeping only the R toes in contact with the floor.

Elements from the Stage Version, (which follows below) may also be introduced into the Contemporary Social Ballroom Polonez. Try the basic Step given in the Stage Version.

Steps are not the Dance; there are other features to a Dance. Take for example how to bring a woman to the dancing area: an introduction to the Dance as it were. The manner of taking the woman to the Dance. The man offers his arm to the woman, palm down. She then places her hand, palm down, on the man's lower arm, wrist or hand. They do not join palms: both are palm down. This is very Polite and Beautiful! A real thrill.

We have tried to separate the authentic from the inauthentic in our work. From the standpoint of our contemporary times, the dancer, leader, or choreographer is free to use whichever elements the dancer, leader, or choreographer prefers. The dancer may mix or disregard elements, but what the dancer cannot be, is to be ignorant of the different forms of the Polish Walking Dance in its Historical Setting: to know which is which. The dancer should now be acquainted with all the research on the dance, and the difficulties of obtaining evidence in determining the nature of these forms. A well-informed dancer/artist will be better for having this knowledge. Likewise, Polish dance masters will realize that the essence of these Dances lies in their Social Usefulness and in their Beauty.

THE POLONEZ STAGE VERSIONS ⁶¹⁶

In regard to variety, the stage version draws from the techniques of classical Ballet and Folk Character dance, using balletically trained dancers. In conjunction with this are the needs of choreography for stage-visualness.

This usually means that the choreography stresses uniformity of motion—that is, everyone does the same step and motions at the same time. Figures are curtailed or many figures succeed each other, very rapidly. All this is not authentic.

As stated above, the *Taniec Polski* entered upon the stage at the end of the 18th century. It probably existed as an informal choreographed form at Court and great Family Balls, as did many other dances in Europe. But we have no factual evidence of this.

It is with the opera “*Halka*” (1845) which features a Polonez (along with other dances) that a “tradition” of Polish dances develops which we can trace. In this opera the music is very important.⁶¹⁷ Both the Polonez and Mazur music are perfect pictures of the *Taniec Polski* “*Staropolska*” character. The entire first act of this opera portrays the *Staropolska* atmosphere. The Polonez music is heavy, bombastic, and grand. How did this tradition get started?

The recent balletic tradition in Poland centers on the capital, Warszawa and the Great Opera Theatre there. The school supplied the dancers for the theatre and the theatre supplied teachers for the school. The same is true today. The “tradition” of the stage “*Taniec Polski*” is centered on the opera “*Halka*.”

The biggest change or what may be better described as a balletic extrapolation of already existing authentic or semi-authentic forms is to be seen in the basic men’s step and arm movements.

ARM MOVEMENTS

Stage dancers have their lovely arm movements from the many “port-de-bra” arm exercises that they do. Consult any standard Ballet text⁶¹⁸ for these exercises and do them to Polonez music: some Polonaises of Chopin, in particular, the “Military Polonaise” are good for these exercises. When done slowly these are suitable for women only. These exercises have to be modified for men. Men beginners should do these exercises with absolute strength and a closed fist. Do the exercises quickly: opening arms with a snap.

WOMAN’S CHUSTECZKA MOVEMENT

Here is a very beautiful hand movement. As a preparation exercise, the W holds a handkerchief in her hand and holds this hd close to her face, covering her face somewhat. This is a coquette motif. The palm is turned to the face, fingers bent at the knuckles. The handkerchief may be suspended from the two inside fingers.

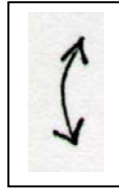


⁶¹⁶ There has always been “performances” of Social Dances often by dance pupils (not professional dancers) as a graduation exercise. These performances are usually choreographed and as such are not really a free-form Social Dance—they are somewhere in between the Stage and Social Form.

⁶¹⁷ The reader will recall that beginning in the 1830’s heavy “sliding” Polonez music was composed. This characteristic music was used as a conscious symbolization of the *Szlachta* past. The heavy step-movement belongs to the 19th century. Of course, stage groups use it today thinking that it is “authentic” for every Polish Historical Epoch, which they may be depicting.

⁶¹⁸ Try the six standard Port-de-Bra exercises of the Russian System described by Vaganova.

Practice moving the fingers, holding the handkerchief down and up. This is done in a “flitting manner.”



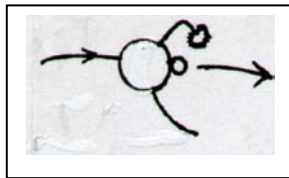
Try to work up to 9 motions per measure-then settle just for 6 full finger-handkerchief motions.

Practice this holding the hand at different heights and distances from your face and eyes so that you are comfortable and the motion is natural.

Now practice this movement as you walk forward on the balls of your feet. The free arm is out to the side.

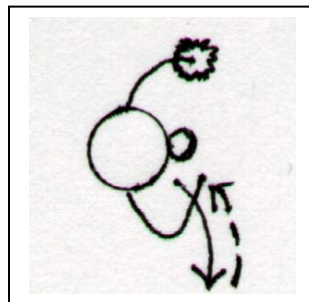
Now a specific combination.

Start feet together, L hd holding the handkerchief.



m1 Do small, walking steps (6 steps per m fwd), ast L arm unfolds from his chest height and to the L side (head also turns to the L side),

m2 rep m1 for the R arm head turning to the R step, arms finishing st the handkerchief is in frt of the face, hiding it somewhat



m3 moving fwd, L hd flutters in frt of face, flirtingly, W lowers eyes.

m4-6 rep m1-3.

1. MAN'S AND WOMAN'S BASIC STEPS

The basic step is the same as described, regarding footwork, in the Taniec Polski section. However, the emphasis on grandeur makes ct& quite different. Starting with wt on L ft, R ft to rear of L,

- ct& and sharply bending L knee bring R ft fwd, as the R ft clears L ft, thrust it with a sharp kicking motion fwd, even off the floor,
- m1
- ct1 step on frt part, toe and or ball of the R ft,
- ct2,3 same as description in "Taniec Polski," (either version may be used).
- m2 Rep m1 oppftw.

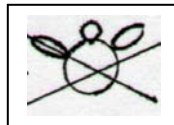
The kicking forward can result in a leg which is so high as to make an angle of 45 degrees with the floor. This is usually done to fast Ballet music and is therefore seen on the Ballet Stage. (It can also be used as a preparatory exercise for the teaching of the normal Polonez step.)

Variation A

The basic M's Staropolska step may be done but with a very heavy strong slide with the ft snap on ct&.

On ct& before m1 the L hd, which is straight out to the L side, is snapped across (as described in the Taniec Polski section) and to the R side. On the ct& before the second m, the L hd is snapped back to its orgpos. Of course, arms may alternate. The other arm, if free, may be held out to the side or strongly placed on the hip or thrust into the sash. The elbow in these positions are fwd of the body-never straight to the side.

Ladies never place their hands on their hips.



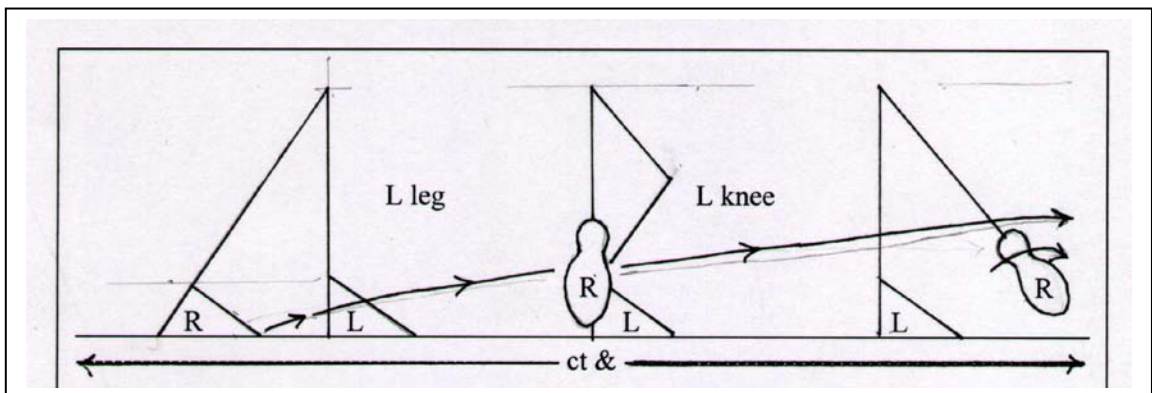
NEVER!

W do a less snappy version and only not snap their arms, but flow delicately.

give a "hint" of the kick. W do

2. AN "ORNAMENTAL-DEVELOPE" BASIC STEP

The author has "created" this step by simply extending or exaggerating various components of previous variants. The step can readily be used when the musical tempo is slower



than usual. It is an artificial step—until one gets use to it.

It is really just another variation. The difference is in the way in which the free ft goes from ct3 to ct& to ct1. The movement of the ft is the same as what is known by the Ballet terminology as “develope.” The instep or the inside of the ft is rotated to the “outside” as the free ft goes fwd: the R ft rotates CW, the L ft rotates CCW. It looks like this for the free R ft. You are trying to “curl” your foot so that the heel comes forward.

Finish by ct1 with the wt on the R ft. You are “presenting” your ft: you are “showing” it. (It is as though you are going to shake hands but with your ft!)

On cts2,3 just step fwd as usual.

There are **different** ways in which this can be done. The amount of rotation can be varied. The toes of the R free ft can be kept in contact with the floor or not during the entire time as it comes fwd. The path of the ft through space can be traced as an arc.

The supporting leg can be bending or not.

This can be done as a variant of the “MOST ELEGANT VARIANT OF THEM ALL” discussed previously. This means that the L supporting leg involves the rising-upon the toes.

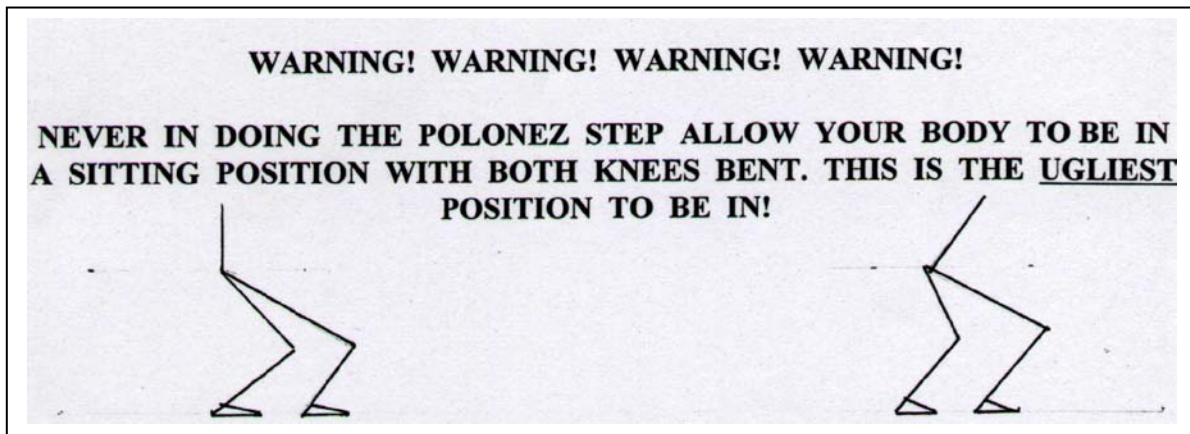
This variant does have a feminine feel to it. Women may flirt with this movement. It does s give AESTHETIC Pleasure.

At any rate it does show the malleability of the Step or of human invention.

To the arm and hand motions may be added that of the body. You may take delight in adding a twisting-motion of the upper body for this step (as well as others, as you wish). Upper body twists in a counter-clockwise direction for measure 1 and the opposite for measure 2: this motion takes the head with the body. Do not make this a sudden jerky motion.

The second source of made-up material for the stage comes from the many amateur and professional dance groups in Poland, especially those existing after World War II in Socialist Poland. There is a great deal of competition among these groups and also among their teachers and choreographers. This leads to invention: some very inauthentic and some very beautiful. For these we may be thankful. Now we shall list all the steps, positions, and couple motifs, which our researches have uncovered. As for figures, the reader is directed to our figure research that is codified in a different Volume of the present series of books.

If there are any disagreements with the present author’s classification of these dance forms in any detail whatsoever, we hope that this will stimulate further research, so that the truth will be uncovered and lead to practical results for the coming centuries.

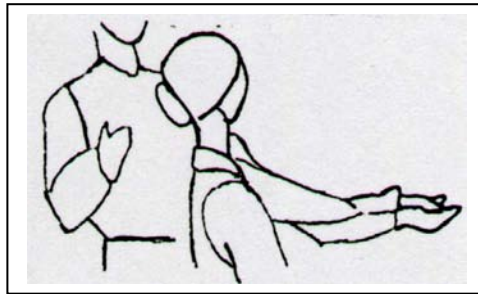


COUPLE DANCING ELEMENTS, MOTIFS AND COMBINATIONS

STAGE COUPLE POSITION

1. “PROTECTIVE” POS

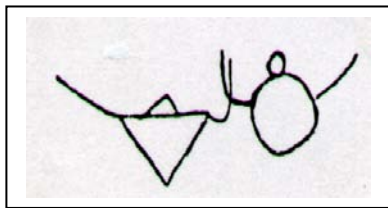
M holds W ins hd with his outs hd. M palm up, W palm down. M ins hd protectively trails W, palm down. W’s free hd holds skirt. M’s ins hd trails W, palm down. The trailing arm may also be parallel with W’s shoulder. The arm is bent at the elbow and points up. When viewed from the frt, the M’s hd may be seen above the W’s outs shoulder.



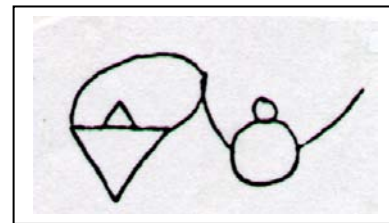
The “protecting” may be raised to a higher position even higher than W’s head. This arm must not hang limp, but is to be an indication of sweeping straightness. It must be held from the backbone and shoulders as a locked upper arm unit.

2. ARM IN ARM POS

Ptrs have ins arms comfortably interwoven. M’s free arm may be on hip, in motion or holding W’s ins hd.

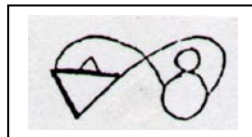


or



Variation A **PROMENADE**

Ptrs have hands joined crossed in front.



These all have the easy feel of the late 19th, and early 20th centuries. Recall the upraised arm and hand position in Stanislaw Rejchan’s illustration, “Polonaise.”

ARM MOVEMENTS

See the descriptions contained for the previous variant forms contained in the book which accompany the steps.

3. POSE

M walking or posing alone with one arm raised upwards.

BOWS

MAN'S AND WOMAN'S UKŁON

All the bows have been practically exhausted, except that they may be preceded by pirouettes or turns/spins upon one leg. In the Polonez, this is usually done by women. Viewed from the side, the relative positioning of the legs is as shown here.



4. UP-DOWN

To end a musical phrase, dancers may merely raise up upon the balls of both ft and slowly sink down, keeping legs straight. This can be reversed; first, do a “down” by bending the ankles and knees, then straighten to recover.

5. UKŁON POPREZEDZONY OBRÓTEM

m1

ct1 Step to the R side upon the R ft (ct&) and pivot one full turn CW,

ct2 L step upon ball and toes of ft, putting wt on it keeping R ft on floor,

ct3 place all wt upon R ft, L ft still on floor, body slightly leans fwd, settle down bending knees and bow head. Arms at sides or rounded fwd.
W hold dress.

Be ready to take up hand hold to dance. This is more easily done with 2m. Take a small step to the side and pivot quickly.

6. CO DRUGI TAK!

Here the step is done every second m. There can also be a **CO CZWARTY**. Then in this case the step which is the 2nd m below would be done every 4th m.

m1 One lw KROK POLONEZA fwd, R ft free,

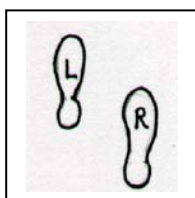
m2 Begin a pw KROK POLONEZA

- ct2 transfer wt to L ft, body gently swinging up and fwd from the dip, that is body “rocks” fwd and
- ct3 “rock” back onto the R leg which is in back. This is done quickly in order to begin the next R Polonez step.

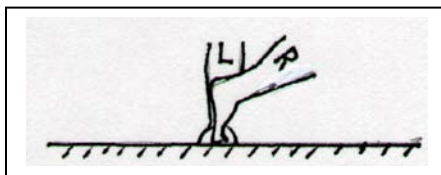
On the second m, when the “rocking” back and forth is done, a slight head bow is done to your partner.

7. UKŁON “COUPE ”

We chose the title for this from the foot pos of ballet. This is for W only. Start standing upon both ft, L in frt of the R ft:



- ct& Transfer wt to L ft, rising upon it(head also rises),
- ct1 place R ft behind L ft, R ft not touching floor but close to it, toes pointing down,



- ct2 reach back and place toes of R ft straight back on the floor, head dropping,
- ct3 step back onto R ft, st toes of L ft remain touching floor.

Of course, arms go to the sides as W “sinks down” into pos on cts 2,3. The sinking downwards means that the knee of the supporting leg must bend.

8. POLONEZ BALANS

Here is a very beautiful type of balancing which is done.

Starting with wt upon the L ft:

- m1
 - ct1 step back upon R ft, L ft coming off the floor or only toes remaining, rise upwards on R ft and,
 - ct2 drop fwd onto L ft (remains in same place), R ft coming off floor or

ct3 touching,
rep ct1.

Notice that it is a step-and-rise each time. The legs are straight with knees locked. There is a rocking motion back and forth. At any ct a hold may be done, the Step may be done starting fwd.

Variation A Z **OBRÓTEM**

As each step is taken, any part of a turn may be done: usually a 1/4 or 1/2 turn. When turns are done, the steps are done close to each other.

Variation B

Starting with wt on the L ft, moving R ft to rear:

m1

ct1 step onto R ft, transferring wt to R ft ast raising L ft off the floor,
keeping both legs straight,
ct2 rise up on toes of R ft,
ct3 hold;

m2 Rep m1 oppftw,d.

This ends the formal Bowing section. Head Bows may be done anytime during the dancing.

9. pw **PRZEKATNA, LEWO! (CROSSOVER)**

Do a series of Polonez steps to the R, going fwd on a R diagonal. Change direction with a R Polonez step by stepping with the R ft in frt of the L, going in the new direction, along the L diagonal.

10. **KROK ZANOGA, pw!**

The knee bend (ct&) is more important here than a straight leg on ct1:

m1

ct& L Polonez, crossing L ft over R,
ct1 L step to R side,
ct2 R step to R side,
ct3 L step behind R,

m2

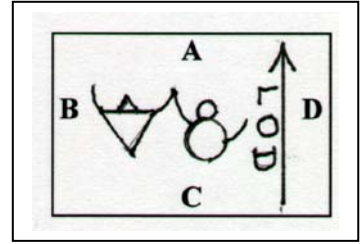
(rep starting R ft to the R)

ct1 R Polonez and step R ft to R side,
ct2 L step ft in front of R ft,
ct3 R step ft to R side.

Rad.

11. BALANS W KWADRACIE

This is an 4 m sequence, using step number 10 above. The sequence is a type of square figure, or KWADRAT. Of course, it can be varied in many ways. Partners start holding ins hds. Step description will be for M. W follows suit. This can easily be extended for a longer m sequence.



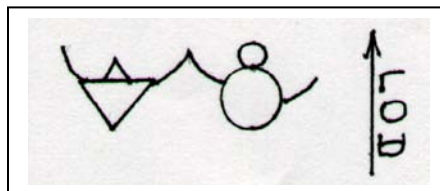
- m1,2 2 Polonez steps in LOD, M starting R ft, L ft,
- m3
 - ct1 with a sweeping gesture of L arm to W and out to his L side, then diagonally to L frt ast leading W in a CCW turn all done by making a R step back twd D,
 - ct2 continuing with a L step bwd, twd D, facing B,
 - ct3 step back onto R step, twd A (ptrs not face RLOD)
- m4
 - ct1 M changes hd hold to "Protective" pos ast taking a L step fwd twd D, and turning 1/4 CCW,
 - ct2 R step bwd, twd B, continuing the turn
 - ct3 L step fwd, twd A.

Woman's part: As M goes back on m3, ct1 W goes fwd with a L step, twd B: on m4,ct1, W goes R step fwd, twd B.

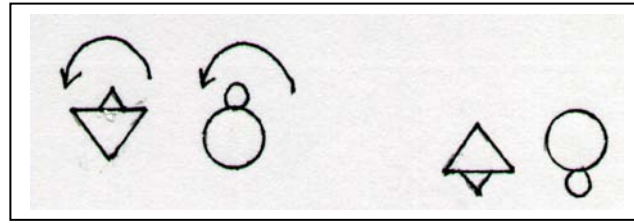
This balance turn may be done without changing the couple position. The turning above was done in quarter turns. It may be 1/3 or 1/2, or even a complete turn. The beginning of the turn should be done sharply. Arm changing should have big and wide sweeping motions. In turning, the W must stay slightly ahead of the M. On the ct& the M should take a good, sharp knee bend. This turn may be started by stepping fwd ast turning with different ftw.

12. KROK I PÓŁ-OBROT

Start pos

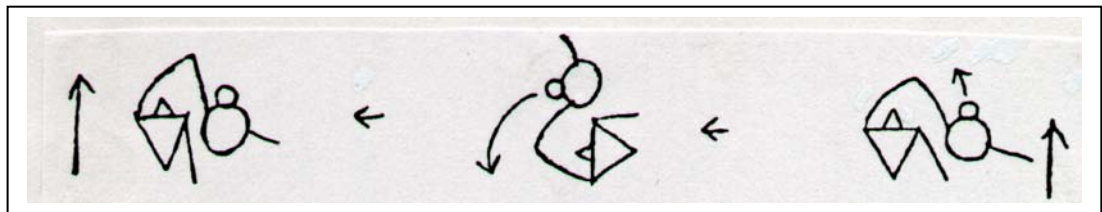


- m1
 - ct1 Step R ft fwd,
 - ct2 step L ft fwd, releasing hds, do a 1/2 turn on L ft, finishing RLOD, as



ct3 R ft goes fwd, touching floor, and bow joining inshds again.

13. PARY OBRÓTY



M stands to L of W. M takes W's hd out frt—approximately chest or waist high. W's hd just rests lightly on M's hd. It is not a heavy grip or lean. M's R hd trails, palm down, protectively behind W. W's R hd holds skirt or holds handkerchief out to side. Both take a R Polonez step, walking in circles, M acts as a pivot, W steps fwd, M almost dances in place or may even go bwds. Make a complete turn. Whenever the M acts as a pivot the W should take a bigger step to get "out" and make a large circle around the M. In fact, the M's doesn't have to move fwd at all, but simply dance in place.

14. PANI! ZMIANA POZYCJU NA pw, lw STRONĘ!

Here are two ways for the W to change from one side of her ptr to the other. M's outs hd, palm up, is joined with W's ind hd, palm down. W free hd holds skirt or handkerchief out to side. M's free ins hd bent up around behind W.

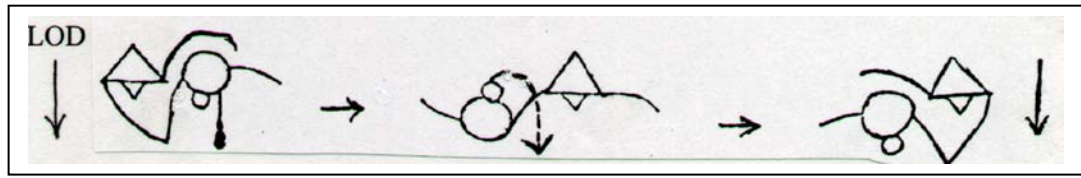
m1

ct1,2 W starts outsft and takes 3 steps crossing in frt of M st at finish she is facing RLOD, and is on the other side of her ptr. M dances in place but sweeps W around, and
ct3 on 3rd ct also release hd,

m2

On m2, W takes an ins Polonez step turning in twd M to face LOD,

ct3 Ptrs join hds and position.

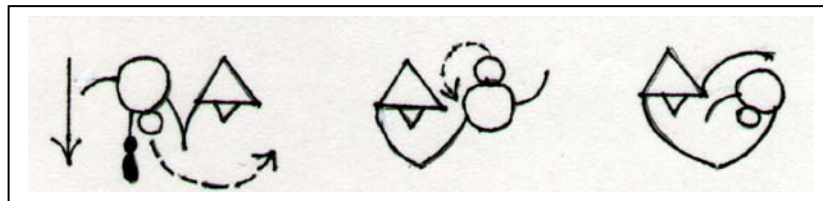


m1,ct1

m1,ct3
just before hd
release

m2,ct3
M's free
hd comes
up briskly
but elegantly

A second way is the following. Ptrs are holding ins hd fwd; m1 is the same as above but without a hd release. On 2nd m W turns as above holding her dress with her free hd. As W 1/2 turns to LOD, joined hands are held shoulder high. Or W can turn under M's upraised hd. On 3rd ct M's free hd comes up behind W above and joined hds are thrust fwd.



m1,ct1

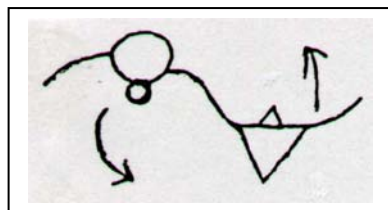
m1,ct3

m2,ct3

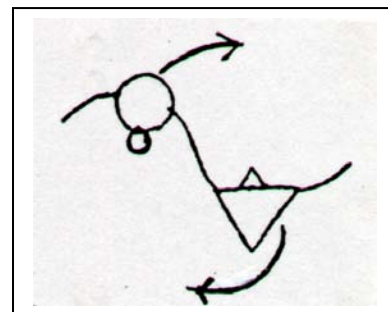
These *Zmiana Pozycji* elements may be done as follows. Do the *Zmiana*, then Polonez fwd. With two remaining m's of music *Zmiana* back to orgpos.

15. Iw **MŁYNEK!**

Ptrs facing standing side by side. Ptrs hold ins hds at waist or chest high, ptrs go fwd and turn.



or



Variation A **OKNO-OBROTÓTY**

This is a variation of the Allemand motif.

Ptrs are facing, standing side by side. Ptrs hold ins hds high, st a window in formed. Ptrs go fwd and turn, looking at ptr through window.

16. PARY KÓŁKA W PRAWO!

Ptrs face and join both hds straight across. Arms may be rounded. Each ptr goes to his on R in the turn.

17. CHUSTECZKA-OBROTÓTY

This is a typical Żywiec theme as well as part of folk dances. This is a cpl pos, where the W turns under M's upraised arm. It requires use of a handkerchief of an embroidered delicate beauty. Ptrs face LOD. M's outs hd may be joined via the handkerchief with either the W's outs or ins hd, held aloft st outs hd holds handkerchief with W's ins hd. W may turn underneath. M's ins holds W's outs hd dwn in frt.

18. OBRÓT BŁYSKAWIĆ

See the present author's Mazur work under the Błaskawica section for this and the following positions. Dance in a formal, but pleasant manner, with delicate Polonez styling. Make the transition into the turn big and wide, and relatively slowly. Remember that when the M brings his free arm up and over he must do so with grace.

19. OBRÓT BŁYSKAWIC-REŃKE POD

See the Błaskawic section in the "Mazur" volume. M places his hd under W's arm. See remarks above (#18).

20. PRAWA WHIRL, WALK!

m1

ct&1 Break knees, at same time turning about 1/4 of the way CCW and extending R ft,

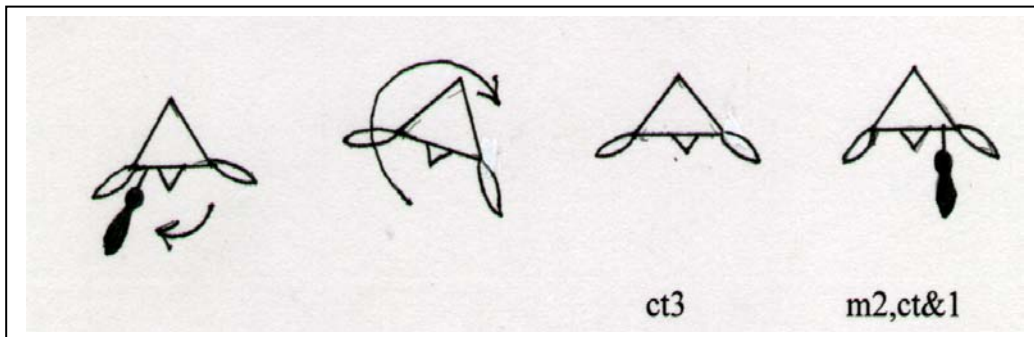
ct2 step R turning CCW,

ct3 step L turning CCW, so the person is now in orgpos,

m2

ct&1 step R and L Polonez.

This may be done by individual or cpls where they may whirl in the same sense or in opp senses. This step should be done in a pirouette fashion by spinning on the balls of the feet.



21. NA PARY!

Ptrs facing, inshds joined, wt on outsft.

m1

ct& Both extend insft well fwd in LOD, dipping down with the knee of the outs leg. M extends ft with a wide movement.

ct1 Step on the insft in LOD,

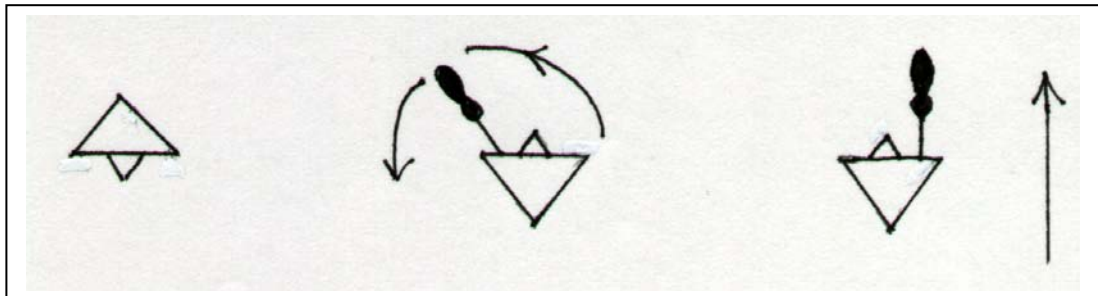
ct2 Step on outsft in LOD, beginning to turn in twd your ptr. Outs hds are switched with an elegant flourish.

ct3 Step on the insft, finishing to face ptr.

m2 Rep m1, oppftw to RLOD

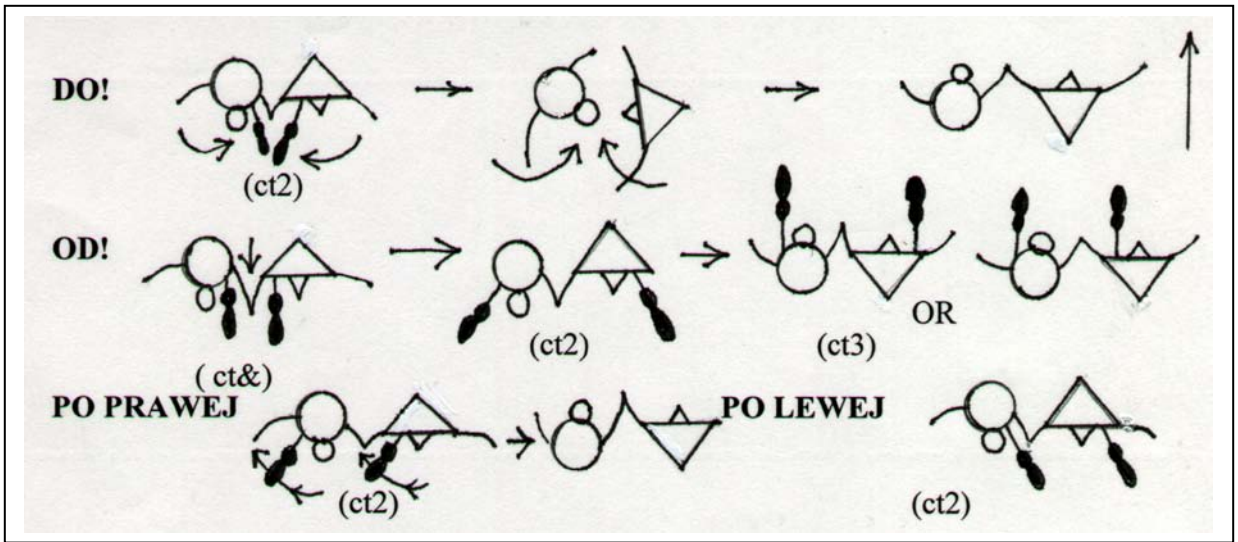
22. ODWROCIĆ SIE! (Reverse)

This reversal dramatically changes direction from LOD to RLOD. After a series of Polonez steps in LOD, do an **outs ft Polonez**, break fwd in LOD and sweep around on the insft and step on it (ct1): now the outs ft fwd in RLOD in place and step on it (ct2): now the outs ft fwd in RLOD in place (ct3). Actually, the direction change need not begin with an outs Polonez step. There are 3 cts after the break to which 3 steps can be taken to turn 1/2 way. M leads W.



23. PARY, ODWROCIĆ SIĘ!

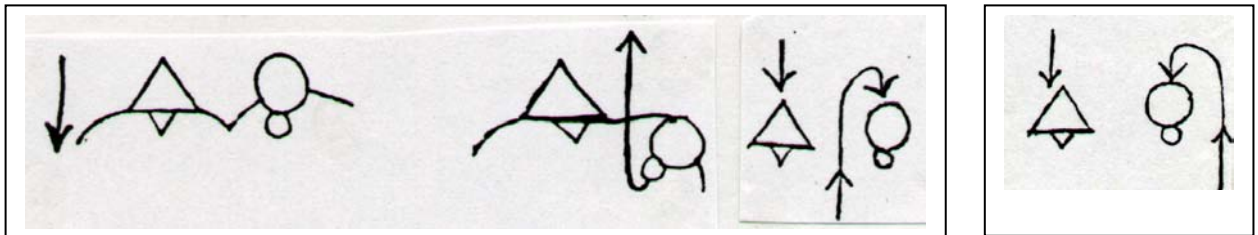
Cpls in any of the Polonez pos. Both do a 1/2 whirl to face RLOD and retake Polonez pos. Both turn in the same sense. M must initiate the sense of the turn. This is done by the M "pushing off" his ptr in the direction of her turn.



24. PANIE DO TYŁU POD RĘKAMI

Cpls form an arch with their ins hds (a). The W turns under the arch to face RLOD and passes to the M behind her (b). M dances fwd. W may turn in two different ways in order to get into pos.(c).

(a) (b) or (c)



25. PANIE DO PRZODU DO DRUGIEJ PARY, PANOWIE POD RĘKAMI!

M's ins hd holds W's outshd. Person holding with outshd may pass through under the arch.

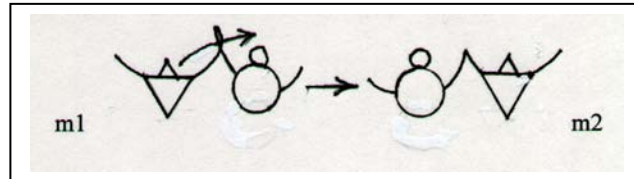


Remember to do Ukłons when meeting your ptrs.

26. PANOWIE ZMIANA POZYCJI POD BRAMA

Here is a good example of how strongly the M may dance the Polonez. This is used to change position. Cpl faces LOD. Inshds joined, chest high, in frt.

- m1 As joined hands are raised high, M goes under the joined hds with three stamping steps, starting insft. Free arm out to the side.
- m2 Ptrs take up new pos on opp sides, joining new inshds.

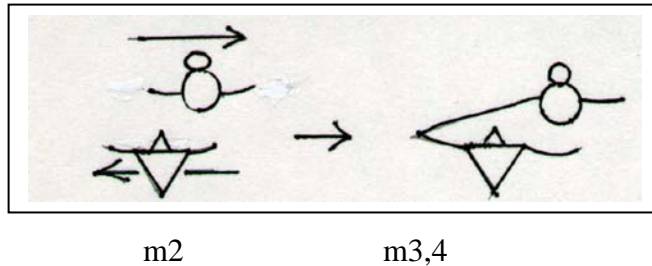


m3,4 **NA SWOJE MIEJSCA**

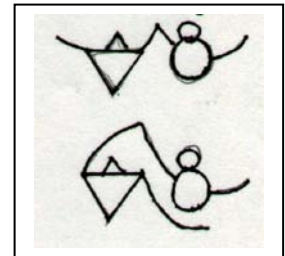
M returns to orgpos by repeating m1,2 oppftw,d.

Variation A Z **OBRÓTEM**

- m2 Both ptrs take 3 steps. M crosses in back of W, W crosses in frt of M, releasing hds.
- m3,4 With hds as shown below both turn as illustrated. W does the Osemek step, M 2 Polonez steps, or 6 walking steps to finish in orgpos.



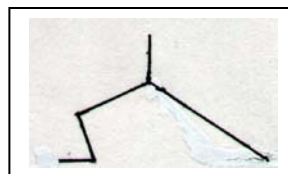
OR



27. **WYPAD I PANIE DOKOŁA PANÓW**

Here is a cpl figure which involves a stamp for the M. Cpls have inshds joined, both facing LOD.

- ct& M transfers wt to insft thus freeing outsft and rises up on the insft,
- m1
 - ct1 to fall diagfwd in the direction of the outsft on the outsft. M does not bend over but his upper body is erect with the trailing leg straight out behind him. M lands with a stamp with the knee of the outs leg bent. The M's pos is as shown below.

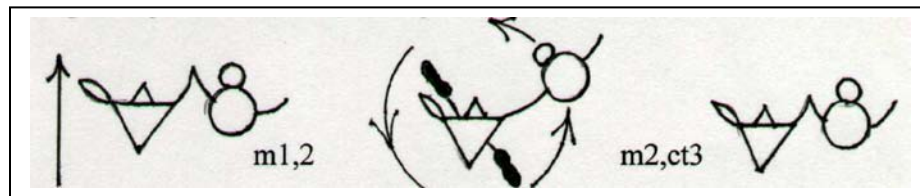


Ptrs raise joined hds, M's free hd on hip or out to side and W begins to circle around the M with Osemek steps for 2m. Ptrs try to maintain eye contact as long as possible. M may also use his free arm to "lead" W around.

ct2,3 continues as M holds;

m2

ct3 M springs up by closing the outsft to the insft. W by this time is in org pos or just ahead of it. M may close with heel click.



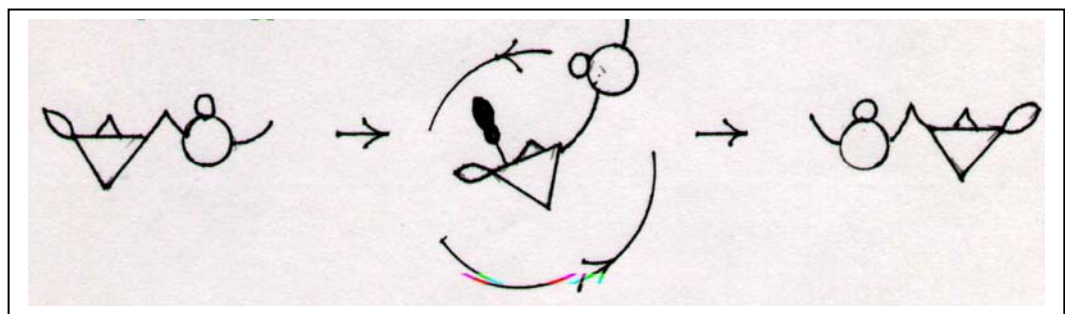
This may be done starting from different cpl pos. Remember the M determines which hd hold to take. Here is one way that this may be used. Cpls face LOD, inshds joined. For this sequence M starts outsft,

m1-4 Ptrs dance 4 Polonez steps fwd.

m5,6 Wypaki I Okólo but goes 1-1/2 times around to finish on other side of M. Ptrs join new inshds.

m7-12 Rep 1-4 oppftw,

m13-14 rep m5,6 oppd.



m1-4

m5,6

m7

Of course, the m sequence may be different—that is, each action may be 4 m long.

28. POLONEZ ANNOUNCEMENT

To be done by a couple. Take a series of Polonez steps down ctr of the hall. Make a slight Uklon and change hds, M L holding W L. Take a number of Polonez cross-over steps, stepping to L side. Uklon and change hds (M's R holds W's R) and take a Polonez cross-over

step to R sight-throughout this crossing the M is slightly to the leading side of W, and slightly in back of her. Perform a deep Ukłon *to the assembled people* in an even side-by-side position. Rise and M announces: "Proszę Panstwo, bardzo proszę do Poloneza!"
Polonez away.

Variation A

This is an opening "figure" to start a Polonez. The leading cpl, after circling the room, dances to another cpl, both cpls bow to each other, then 2nd cpl join in behind them and all dance away. Lead cpl goes to 3rd cpl, and repeat above bows and 3 cpls join behind, etc.

29. PANOWIE! KŁĘK! OR PANOWIE NA KOLANO!

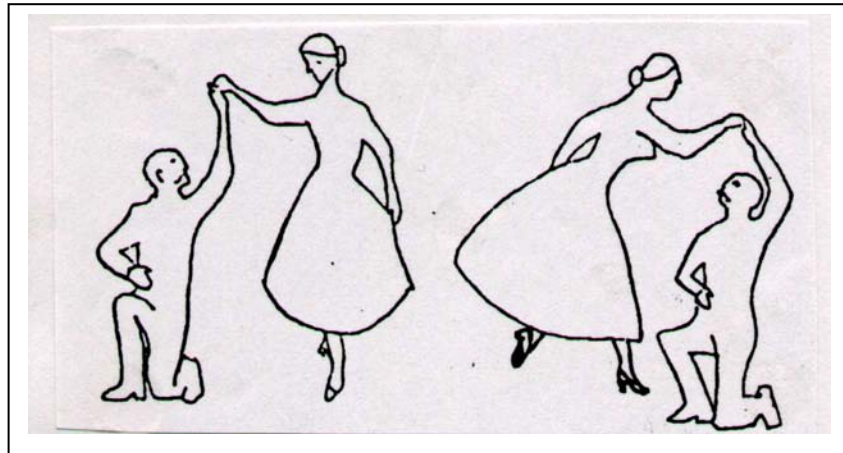
As we now know this does appear in Helmke's manual of 1832, so for those who believe in historical precedence, its use is thereby justified. This is also a typical Mazur cpl motif which has been appropriated by some choreographers for the Polonez in order to make the Polonaise a more "interesting" Dance for spectators. (But then what shall be done in the Mazur?). M drops to one knee and poses, with one arm raised, other on hip. W may then circle M holding his hd. M may also lead W around with his other hd. See drawing.

Variation A

Often to end a Polonez the M kneels and gently kisses the delicate hand of the W which he is holding. After the kiss, M may do a Ukłon. Or the M may rise and bow.

Variation B PANOWIE! KŁĘK! PANIE DOKOŁA PANÓW W PRAWO I W LEWO

Here the W circles the M, going to the R, and immediately after to the left.



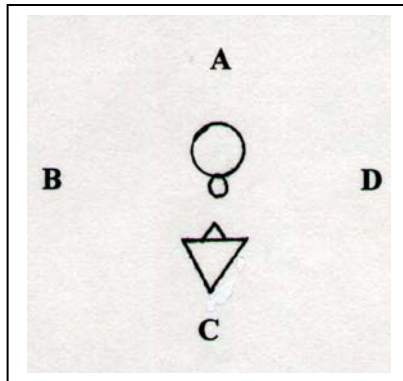
ADVANCED MOTIFS, FRAGMENTS AND COMBINATIONS

30. KWIATY POLONEZÓWE

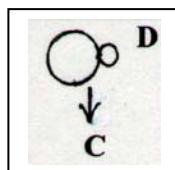
The author has included this figure, which is usually associated with the Mazur, to illustrate how figures may be “borrowed” and modified. From the KWIATY formation (See the Mazur Figure Section), both M and W do 2 Polonez steps, bwds, starting R. Hds motions must fit the Polonez, so M holds out their R, then L hds in front of them as they do each Polonez step. W hold dress with both hds, or one hd holds handkerchief. All do a Polonez R turn in place to face ctr (m3). UkŁon m4. Here the UkŁon corresponds to the Mazur pose. Rep m1-4 once more. This could also be done as a ODWROCIC KWIATY starting with M and W facing out.

31. _____

Starting pos is with cpls facing each other. W has hds out to sides or holding sides of dress: M optional. This is W’s “solo.”



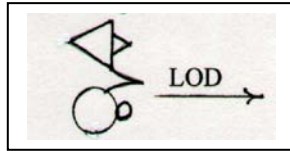
- m1
 - ct1 W steps back, twd A, onto L ft doing 1/4 CCW turn fst faces B,
 - ct2 R step, fwd, twd B,
 - ct3 L step, fwd,
- m2
 - ct1 R step fwd, pivoting 1/4 CW, fst face A
 - ct2 L step to rear, twd C, knee bends, head bows,
 - ct& Pivoting 1/4 on L ft, CW fst facing D,
 - ct3 take a R step directly to R side, all the time remain facing D,



- m3
 - ct1 close L ft next to R ft,
 - ct2 keeping both ft together, bend knee bow, and
 - ct3 recover, straightening up.

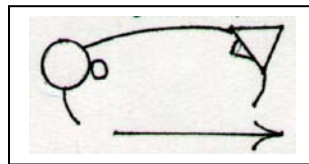
32. PAN PROWADZI PANIA

Here the man “pulls” his ptr. Start with wt on outst: M’s L, W’s R, both go fwd with the insft.

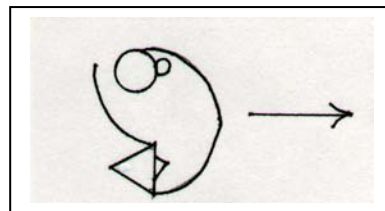


m1 M, starting R ft does a R Polonez step fwd half-turning fst by ct3 is ahead of W and faces her,

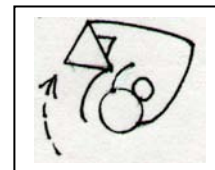
m2 M does a L Polonez step in LOD, W R Polonez step in LOD (here M uses some force to “pull” W along in LOD). This is playfully done.



m3 M crosses over to R side of W with a R Polonez step as L arm comes down in back in the “Protective” cpl pos.



m4 ct1 With a long L step diagonally L fwd, the M crosses in back of W to her R side ast with a sweeping movement M changes hds. (This hd change is done by bringing the L arm up and over and down to front. W does not raise her hds.)



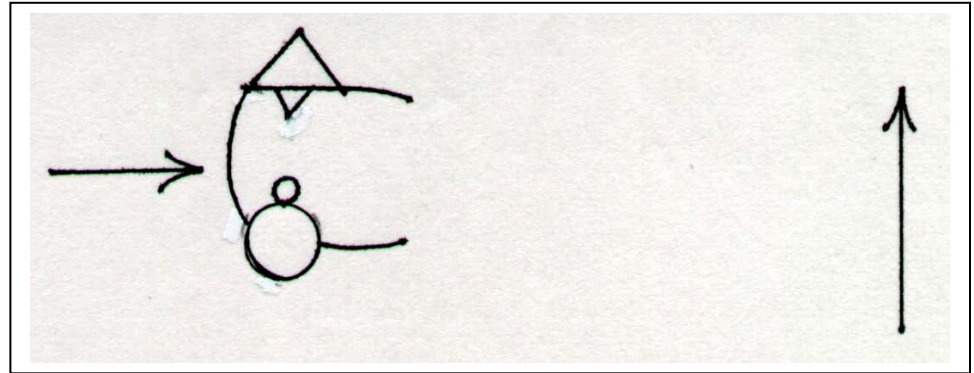
Remember both ptrs are moving fwd all the time.

33. Z OBRÓTEM

This is a variation of the above.

m1 Same as #32 m1 above,

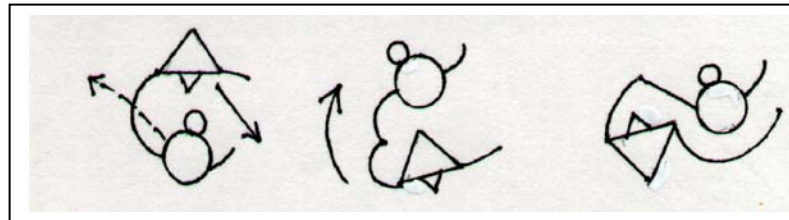
m2 Same as #32 m2 but M goes directly to his L side, pulling W. On ct1 with a L step bwds, M must make a sharp 1/4 CW turn,



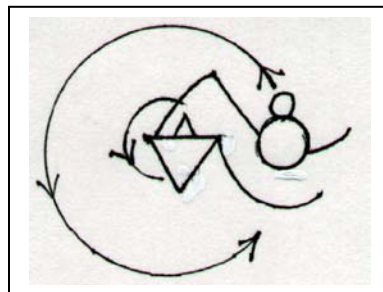
m1

m2

m3
 ct1 M with a R step goes fwd twd W, as W comes directly twd M with a L step and passes under up-raised joined hds (M does a deeper knee bend than usual, so as to avoid bending over—bad posture!),
 ct2 M taking L step, W R step, releasing hds pass further under M beginning to turn as indicated below,



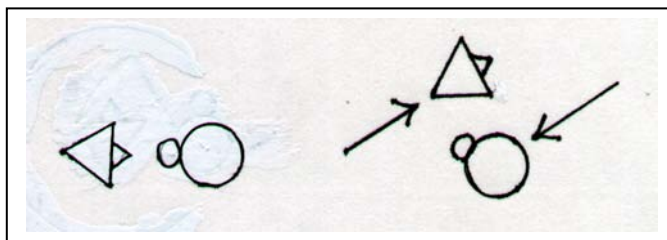
ct3 taking new hd hold for the “Protective” cpl pos fst pos is as shown,
 m4 With one Polonez step turn in place one full time.



m4

34. DOS-A-DOS

Cpls start facing each other.



m1

- ct1 Take a long R step, slightly diagonally L, st ptrs are back to back, passing R shoulders,
- ct2 step on L ft and 1/2 pirouette turn CCW st R ft is free,
- ct3 shift wt onto R ft freeing L ft,

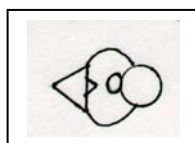
m2

Rep m1 oppftw,d returning to orgpos.

Remember to do the knee bend on ct& before each m.

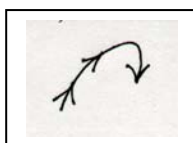
35. PARA KOLECZKO

Start ptrs facing, holding joined hds chest high.Both have ft together.

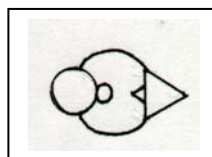


m1,2 M, starting L ft, does 2 Polonez steps (ptrs keep holding hands).

The M's path is



Cpl finishes st their pos is

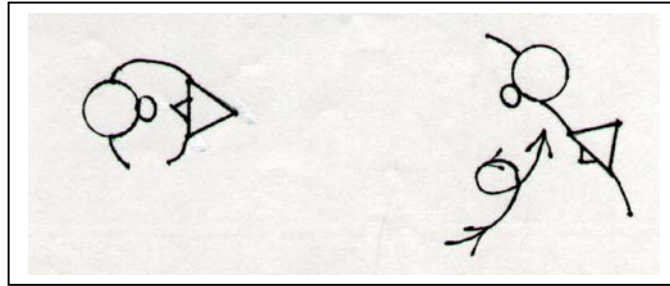


As M does his two Polonez steps, W bends knees on m1 and then rises on m2 pivoting in frt of ft. Here arms are held and the feeling is one of W leading the M.

m3,4 Rep m1,2 but with W making the 1/2 circuit. This may also be done in only 2m.

Variation A

After repeating this a number of times and cpl is in pos, then W passes under the M's upraised R arm with a measure of music fst.

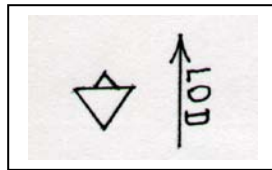


The next two combinations are good examples of typical "stage choreographies."

36. _____

This is just a combination: it has no special name.

Starting

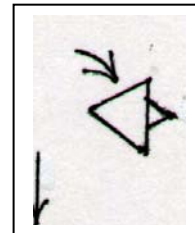


ct& with the R ft do and ct1 of the "UKŁON COUPE" contained in this section,

m1

ct2 L step to rear ast 1/4 turn CW, fst

ct3 R step to R step, that is in RLOD



m2

ct1 L step L side, beginning to turn CCW,

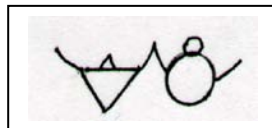
ct2 R step still turn (actually moving twd LOD)

ct3 L step fwd and finish the turn.



Here is an example of how this could be used as a stage combination.

Start with outs ft:



m1

Both do 1 Polonez step fwd,

- m2,3 do m1,2 sequence above,
 m4 with insft Polonez fwd,
 m5-8 rep m1-4

37. POLONEZ-WALCA OBRÓT

Here is an adaptation of the waltz-turn of ballet for the Polonez. The step may also be done solo, usually to fast music. W steps are gentle without hops.

- m1 M does a pw Polonez step but on
 ct2 L step diag R fwd, turning 1/8 to 1/4 CW, and
 ct3 continue CW with a R step fwd st M faces RLOD. This 1/2 turn must be done quickly but not roughly,
 ct& and extend free leg straight, L ft back in LOD with a snap and do not allow the upper body to lean RLOD very much),
 m2
 ct1 step on the R ft in L d,
 ct2 L step, turning 1/4 CW, and continue with a
 ct3 R step, turning 1/4 CW, finishing to face LOD.

The turn on m2 may be started on ct1. W on ct3& may just turn with three steps and not with the leg extension. There are different variations of turns, away from your ptr, toward, etc. Hd holds may be of various types with a change on the turn.

Variation A

This is a cpl turn which makes use of the Polonez w Tył stylę step. Cpl faces LOD.

- m1 Same as m2 above. Wt is on insft,
 m2
 ct& Bend ins knee extending outsft somewhat to RLOD. This extension depends upon the relative positions of the free ft on m1, ct3.

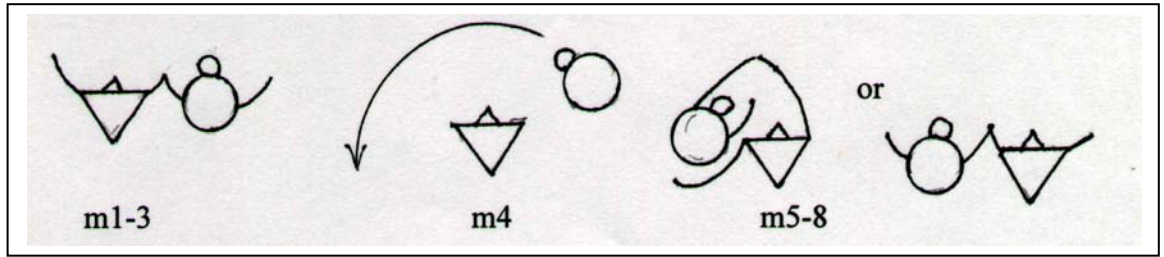
Continue this Polonez w Tył in LOD, turning away from ptr to finish facing LOD and rejoin hds.

38. PANOWIE! PROWADZENIE PAN NA DRUGĄ STRONĘ!

This figure action is based on the real Social Ballroom Form.

- m1-3 Both dance fwd in LOD. W starts outsft, M's insft is free on m4,
 m4 W takes 3 long steps to other side of M, M takes small steps almost in place,

m5-8 Rep m1-4 oppftw,d.



Variation A

m1-2 Same as m1,2 above

m3-4 W crosses with 2m,

m5-8 rep m1-4 oppftw,d.

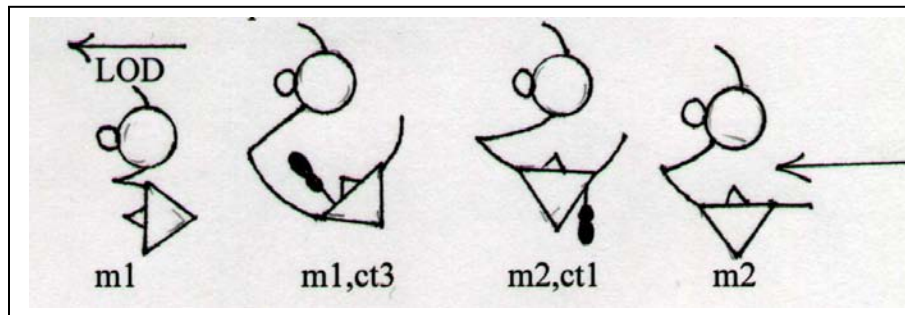
39. POLONEZ “ODWRACANY”

Here is an analogy to the Mazur Ordracany movement. Cpl join inshds, face LOD.

m1 Both do an outs Polonez step in LOD but on ct3 M turns 1/4 twd W with a step on outsft, joining his outshd to W’s inshd, M’s trailing hd is RLOD,

m2
 ct& knee-bend on former outsft and sweep-cross former insft in back of old ft,
 ct1 step on this crossing ft, M still face each other,
 ct2 step on the former outsft to the side in LOD, facing ptr,
 ct3 rep ct1 in LOD changing to org pos, M starts to turn away from ptr,

W does an ins Polonez step in LOD both turns head to M.



Rad

Variation A On m2 steps onto ball of ft oncts 1,2,3.

Variation B Stamps down on m1, ct3 and m2, ct3.

Variation C Rep m1,2 but M turns back to back. Do not change hands for this one.

CONCLUSION: VARIATIONS OF THE BASIC STEP

The following section is a type of summation for “the” Basic Step of the Polonez. Different dancers, teachers, and researchers have in the course of time not exactly agreed about which variant is the correct one. (Keep in mind that the present author has **also** evaluated the step-movements for their **BEAUTY**, for their **ASETHETICAL VALUE** in the previous sections.) The present study should reduce the disagreements because of its chronological presentation and by finding evidence that showed the existence of a particular variant or revealed its character.

Be that as it may here we have merely repeated some of the different ways in which the Polonez Step may be done. We have not given all of the details here about a particular variant. For that, the reader must find the appropriate section wherein the variant step occurs in its complete context.

The title for each variant indicates the section where it was originally described, except for the “JUST A WALK” variant. (Women find their variants in the original sections.)

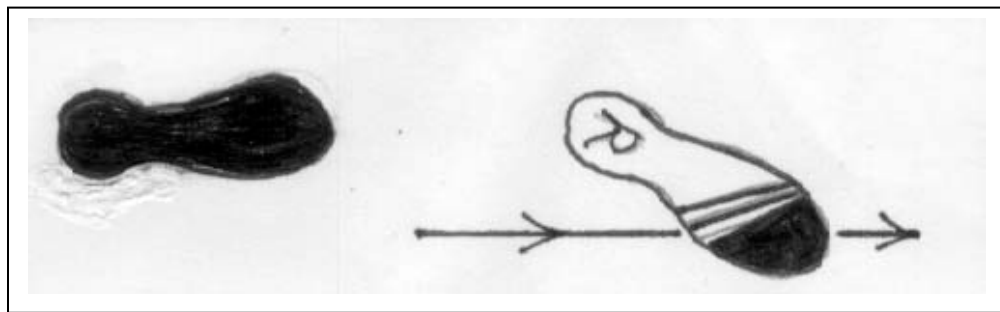
These variants are not all those which are described in this book. (The Short List kept getting longer and longer.)

1. THE MEN’S “STAROPOLSKA” VERSION-POSUWISTY

Standing with wt on L ft,

ct& bending the L leg-brush-slide the R ft fwd with the front part of the

R ft touching the floor, R ft is turned out st the dancers feels the resistance with the floor; the body may also lean into this sliding ft,



m1

ct1 at the finish of the slide, step onto the R ft, transferring all the wt to this R ft,

ct2 step onto the L ft going fwd a shorter distance than in ct1,

ct3 step onto the R ft as in ct1

ct& rep ct& oppftw,

m2

rep m1 oppftw.

Remember that the sliding foot can be “dragged” from behind.

2. NEWER STAGE VERSION OF THE STAROPOLSKA MOVEMENT FOR MEN

There are at present two “newer” stage versions of the Taniec Polski step for men.

The *first one* is hard to pin down as to its origin. We include it here because many Polish amateur groups use it. Because of this, one can speculate that this may have been done, although both seem to be a cross between elegant Polonez and the demands of the Staropolska character. As it stands, it also is the description of a very refined 19th century Polonez step, and by inference suitable for both the Rococo-Polonaise and the Ułański Polonez.

This version of the basic Polonez step is an attractive variant. (Perhaps the most “elegant” of the Basic Polonez variants, which is itself a variant of this one, is described in the The Contemporary Social Ballroom Polonez section (Variant D) of this Workbook. This version is what the author has chosen to be the second of the “newer” stage versions.) Both involve a stepping-up, upon the balls of the ft.

Stand facing LOD, ft together, wt equally distributed:

- | | |
|-----|---|
| ct& | Do exercise (k), contained in the Foot And Leg Movements of the Generalized Taniec Polski section, transferring wt to L ft, freeing R ft, which goes fwd and |
| m1 | |
| ct1 | step up onto the ball of the R ft, keeping R leg stiff. This first step is the longest within the measure. However its length must be one that is comfortable for the dancer. It should not be so long a step that one cannot “step up.” The amount of “step up” is generally not very great, but enough to bring the heel off the floor. As always, the final criterion is how beautiful it feels to the dancer and how it looks to the others. After the step is mastered going directly fwd, then do it by stepping with the ft slightly “turned out.” In this case, diag R. |
| ct2 | Step L ft fwd onto the frt of the ft. This step is shorter than the first, and its length is the same as that of a medium walk step. The elevation of this step is the same as that of the first. The leg is more or less straight and stiff. |
| ct3 | Rep ct2 oppftw, releasing the ankle st you are on the entire ftat of the R ft, |
| ct& | rep ct& oppftw, |
| m2 | rep m2 oppftw. |

3. “JUST A WALK”

Standing with wt on L ft,

- | | |
|-----|--|
| ct& | NOT bending the L leg begin to take a ordinary walking step with the R ft fwd |
| m1 | |
| ct1 | step onto the R ft, transferring all the wt to this R ft, |

- ct2 walk onto the L ft going fwd a shorter distance than in ct1,
- ct3 walk onto the R ft as in ct1
- ct& rep ct& oppftw,
- m2 rep m1 oppftw.

4. THE BASIC ROCOCO-POLONAISE STEP

The following description is a reconstruction. It represents one possible way in which the Polonez Step could have been done in the “Rococo manner.” The description is from the year 1772 by C.Feldenstein. (See the Historical Source section for a fuller explanation.) We may certainly do it this way now.

FELDENSTEIN (1772) PAS DE BOUREE

Feldenstein actually referred to the step of the Polish Dance as, “ *Der Schritt also der zum pohnischen Tanz...*” He did not use the word “Polski” but simply uses, “the Polish Dance.” He, once, refers to the Dance as “Polonoise” in his description.

Feldenstein did not explicitly count out his description. Basically its structure is:

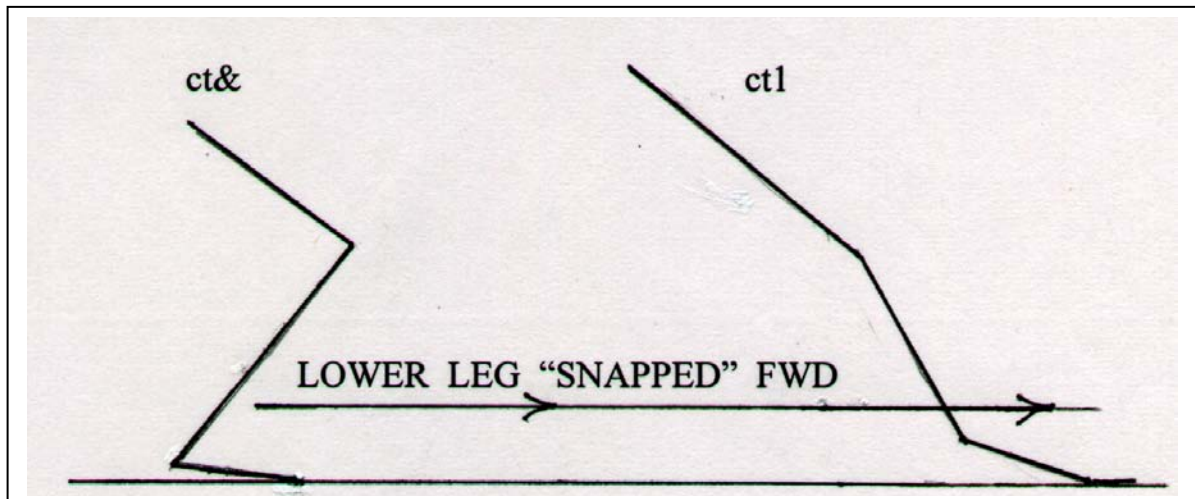
- ct1 Take a R bending step fwd,
- ct2 take a L rising step fwd,
- ct3 take a R rising step fwd.

5. ULANSKI

MAN’S BASIC STEP

The man now does a stiff sharper version of the basic Polonez step as described in “Taniec Polski” section under the stage version of said step. The difference, however, is in the amount of knee bending and brush.

The brush forward is minimal. The man must reach forward with the toes of the leading foot. At the same time, the man is on an almost straight leg and backbone. The foot and leg are snapped forward crisply. His posture is always up.



LOWER LEG “SNAPPED” FWD

The attitude of the foot is held somewhat “turned out” so that the outside portion of the toes would brush the floor first.

6. SOCIAL BALLROOM

Variant D The “**MOST ELEGANT POLONEZ VARIANT OF THEM ALL**”—**PART I.**

Stand facing LOD, R ft to the rear of the L ft, wt mostly on the R ft. This is actually the position at the end of ct3.

ct& Do exercise (k), contained in the Foot And Leg Movements of the Generalized Taniec Polski section, transferring wt to L ft, freeing R ft, which goes fwd and quickly, but smoothly rise-up upon the L ft (by pushing the weight of the L ft, down into the floor: first, from a flat-foot, then with the ball of the ft, then with a portion of the toes. Heel is off of the floor.) finally reaching a height where you are momentarily still—balancing upon the frt part of the L ft. The R ft is held off of the floor, suspended in air, in front, away from the L ft in the LOD.

m1

ct1 step fwd onto the ball of the R ft, keeping R leg stiff. This first step is the longest within the measure. However its length must be one that is comfortable for the dancer to bring the heel off the floor. As always, the final criterion is how beautiful it feels to the dancer and how it looks to the others. After the step is mastered going directly fwd, then do it by stepping with the ft slightly “turned-out.” In this case, diag R.

ct2 Step L ft fwd onto the frt of the ft. This step is shorter than the first, and its length is the same as that of a medium walk step. The leg is more or less straight and stiff.

ct3 Rep ct2 oppftw,

ct& rep ct& oppftw,

m2 rep m2 oppftw.

Variant E The “**MOST ELEGANT POLONEZ VARIANT OF THEM ALL**”—**PART II.**

MAYBE this is the most Elegant Variant! It involves the coordinate movement of the arms, head and hands with the leg movement. It is here described for the “Staropolska” Version—Posuwisty Step, wherein on ct& and ct1 the ft going forward slides/glides upon the floor. Here the R hd is free.

THE HEAD MOVEMENT

m1

ct& As the supporting left leg bends a head-bow is begun. This continues through to ct1—even throughout ct2 (it depends on the tempo). On ct3 the headbegins to recover from its bowing.

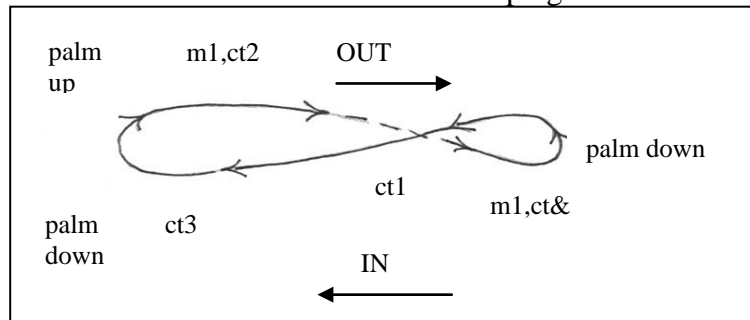
m2

The head continues to recover, all the while the face is turned toward the R side, finishing with the chin slightly raised.

THE ARM AND HAND MOVEMENTS

m1,2

Viewed from the front, the free right hand mostly describes or traces out a figure-8 motion. It first starts with the wrist going upwards on ct&,m1. It comes in toward the body making a downward spiral on cts1,2,3. Then, as the hd rotates (from the wrist) finishing st the palm is facing upwards, begin to move the hd and arm outwards in a sweeping motion on m2,ct1. Continue

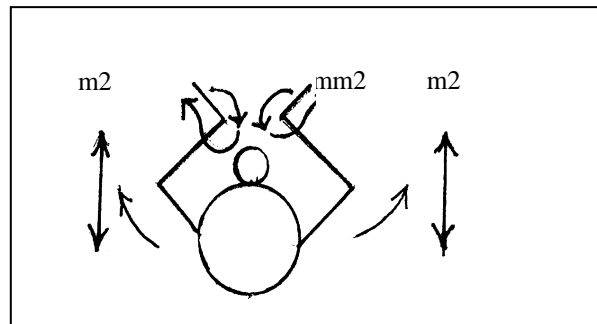


throughout m2,ct2 and m2,ct3.

Prepare to repeat this 2m sequence by rotating the hd st the palm is facing downwards.

Women initiate this movement with the wrist and hd: the arm and elbow merely follow or trail in the wake of the movement of the hd. Contrary to this the men initiate their movement from the elbow and arm as one stiff unit and not with a fluid wrist-movement as the women do (even though the W’s movement is Beautiful!)

This may be practiced or done with both arms and hds free. Here, as a practice exercise both elbows may be drawn-in toward the body on m1, then out from the body on m2, all the while the hds are making their “figure-8” movement. Viewed from the top the elbows’s motion is as shown here. Note how the wrists work: they also fold-in and fold-out on m1 and m2.



Practice this as you are moving forward with the Polonez Step. Do it so that the complete movement is accomplished in m1 m1 2. Do it alternating arms: with a R Polonez use the R arm and hand movement. Practice the movement of the hand in the transition from ct3 to ct& to ct1, rotating the hands as the arms fold in and out. Lean the upper body and head to the right as you do this. Do this as an “invitation” or “acknowledgement” to people.

Different dancers will do this differently. Some compress this into one measure. And some consider that this is properly only a W’s hd movement.

Variant F “JUST A MORE ELEGANT WALK”

Maybe its just this? This may be the most elegant variant. You do Variant D but in conjunction with the “JUST A WALK” (number 3 above). This means that there is neither a knee-bend nor rise-up on ct&. You do the transition from ct& to ct1 upon the toes, with the toes sliding fwd, heel coming off of the floor. As the foot goes fwd it is rotated (“turned-out”) so that the toes are pointing diag R, for the R ft.

Your posture must be very erect with the upper chest open and expanded with the shoulders and arms held widely out to the side.

Remember variants are not to be done the majority of the time. Of course there is always someone who can make variants be the main dance step of the dance.

Since we are in the “ELEGANT WORLD” we can go a step further by taking up an elegant hand position. The man presents his right arm to the woman. She then places only the fingers tips of her left hand atop the man’s presented arm. This has the character of delicacy and respect.⁶¹⁹

7. BALLET STAGE VERSION

MAN’S AND WOMAN’S BASIC STEP

The basic step is the same as described, regarding footwork, in the Taniec Polski section. However, the emphasis on grandeur makes ct& quite different. This is usually done to faster music.

Starting with wt on L ft, R ft to rear of L,

	ct&	Sharply bending L knee bring R ft fwd, as the R ft clears L ft, thrust it with a sharp kicking -motion fwd, even off the floor,
m1	ct1	step on frt part, toe and or ball of the R ft,
	ct2,3	same as description in “Taniec Polski,” (either version may

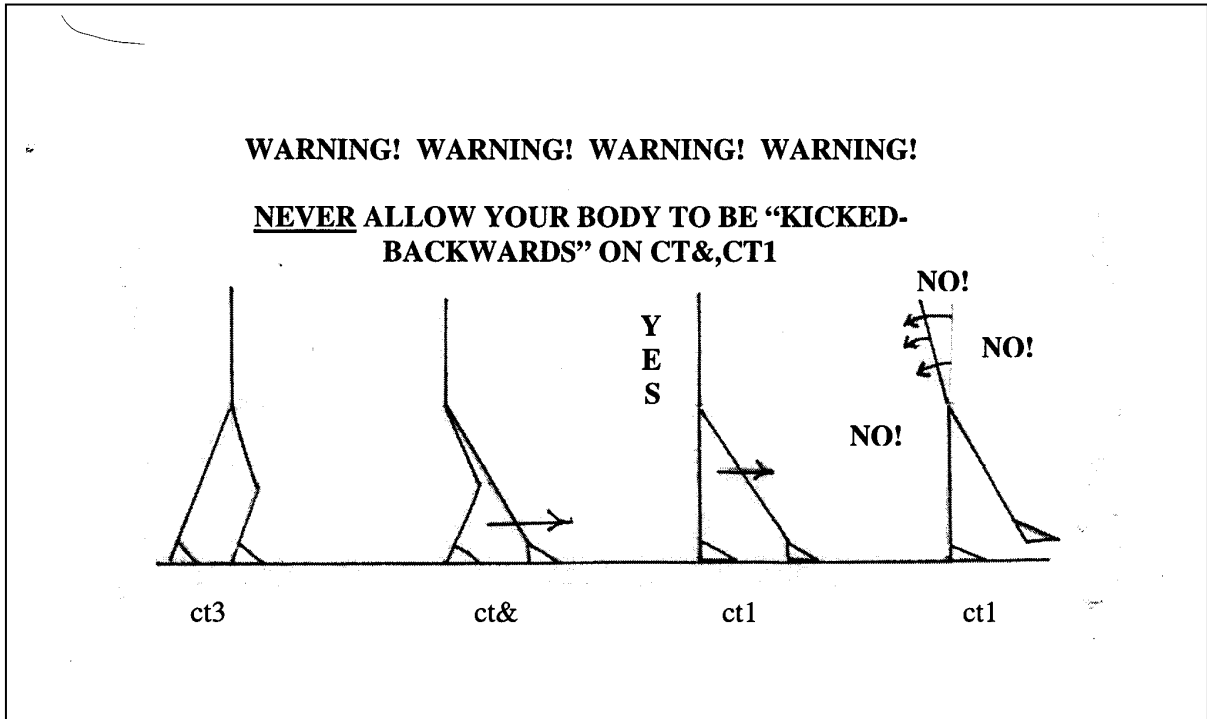
⁶¹⁹ Londonderry, *More letters from...*, p. 40. This is from the standard practice of Court Presentations at Vienna.

be used).

m2

Rep m1 oppftw.

You may take delight in adding a twisting-motion of the upper body for this step (as well as others, as you wish). Upper body twists in a counter-clockwise direction for measure 1 and the opposite for measure 2: this motion takes the head with the body. Do not make this a sudden jerky motion.



THE ŻYWIECKIAN POLONEZES

The following inclusion is an example of a still-living tradition of the Social Ballroom Polonez, as done in the small city-town of Żywiec in southern Poland.

SOME BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON THE ŻYWIEC DANCES ⁶²⁰

The area of Żywiec centers around the city of Żywiec. It is complicated as an ethnographic region and, at the same time, of enormous interest to folklore tradition by its economic and geographic conditions. At one time, Żywiec belonged to the Duchy Oświęcim and during the 15th century was a nest of highwaymen. Since 1477 it belonged to the Komorowski family. After this date, the family built a castle and founded the town of Żywiec.

In 1627 the Komorowski family sold their Żywiec estate to the wife of King Zygmunt III, Queen Konstancja. After the death of King Jan Kazimierz, the Wielkopolski family bought Żywiec. In 1838 it passed into the hands of the Hapsburg's of Austria.

The Żywiec area borders upon Podhale, Kraków, Orawa, Śląsk and Slovakia. For some time it bordered upon Hungary. Apart from this, one should not forget about the influence of nomadic tribes of Wallachian herdsmen, which, from the second half of the 16th century, visited these areas and settled at Żywiec abandoning their nomadic life.

The chief trade route, which connected Kraków with Śląsk, Moravia and Hungary, passed through Żywiec.

Thus, whatever the original Żywiec culture may have been, it is safe to say that it was very much influenced by all these factors. This is reflected in many aspects of the Żywiec area culture, especially in the style of dress, music, and dances. In the field of dance, Żywiec was influenced more by Śląsk, particularly Cieszyń Śląsk, than that of Kraków or Podhale. The culture of the middle class townspeople was formed under the influence of the wealthy nobles of Żywiec and of Poland in general.

Under the Komorowski family, the town of Żywiec received several privileges, which gave it wealth-besides economic and cultural independence. It follows that many factors, both of inner organization and outside activities, influenced the formation of the Żywiec townsmen. A citizen of the Royal town of Żywiec inherited the feeling of being a noble person, but with the worse qualities-pride, stubbornness, obstinacy and relentlessness. A townsman of Żywiec liked to "puchować,"-to dominate over strangers, very often treating his close neighbors with disrespect and contempt.

Another factor which influenced the traditions and social life of the Żywiec, was the formation of the various trade guilds, along with their many customs and ceremonials. Thus, not only do we have the "occupational" dances, but also many occasions to dance.

The town dances of Żywiec may be divided into two groups. The first group consists of old dances that are the transmitters of an old dance tradition. These were done from generation to generation. There are three types of dances: those connected with ceremonial rites, occupations, and "social" dances. These dances are still done and are a living memory of older times.

The dances, which we are interested in, fall into the second group. These are the National Dances and the dances of foreign origin. In time, these dances were modified to suit the Żywiec taste. Although the dances were first introduced in the 18th century, they only came to full flower in the mid-19th century.

⁶²⁰ All the information on the Żywiec dances from the work of Jacek Tomasik and Maria Romowicz, *Tańce Mieszczan Żywieckich*, CPARA, Warszawa, 1967. These dances are so wonderful that it is a shame they are not done outside of Żywiec!

Of the Polish National Dances only the Polonez and Mazur became Żywiec dances. The Polonez is danced with nobility. Extra flavor is added to the Polonez by the elegant fashions of the Żywiec townspeople.

The Żywiec townspeople's forms of the National Dances represent an intermediate dance form—a middle class, or “bourgeoisie” form.

It is only in the Żywiec Mazur that we meet those interesting step combinations: the Koguciki steps. These are done only by men when they show off in front of their partners. There were also other modifications of the National Dances of figures, steps, and couple positions.

The most popular foreign dance to find acceptance was the Quadrille. This French dance was firmly implanted at Żywiec by the end of the 19th century. It was very popular and was danced with great skill. It must be kept in mind that the Żywiec dances are quite varied and rich in form, so they are ideally suited for personal self-expression. The dances start slowly, and increase in tempo. The lyrics, which accompany the dances, illustrate the improvisational nature of these dances.

An analysis of the dance steps reveals two types; the first, the flat-footed, so called “two step” done without hops. The second group of steps occurs in those dances that use figures, or couples standing opposite each other. The steps are executed going forward, backward and sideways. Into this group fall the Polonez Calowany, Polonez and Mazur. The Żywiec fashions also conditioned the couple positions and feeling of the dance.

Originally the dances were done in a circle, square, or in rows. However, they came to be done in a circle with the exception of the Quadrille, whose form became crystallized in the “Żywiec mode,”—rows or files of couples. The “character” or “feeling” of the Żywiec dance is difficult to describe in words. Words cannot describe the many movements of these dances. Suffice it to say that words cannot describe spiritual qualities. The dances begin calmly, but with vividness. Now and then the men would move with a certain pugnacity. But we must not forget the spirit of “respect” and “precedence,” which the men show to the women.

There is no jumping in the dance, even at a fast pace. The steps are always flat. The dynamic elements of the dances are also exhibited by the men who may stamp, nod the head, or clap hands, etc.

Singing, music, and dancing are all popular forms of amusement for the townspeople of Żywiec. Song and music were heard, not only at entertainments, but also on the streets and in the homes.

The “polite” society of the townspeople would meet several times a year at important celebrations such as weddings and religious holidays. The orchestra was composed mostly of strings and wind instruments. There was never any music without singing.

Next follows a short account of a typical ball or dance party. The party would begin relatively late in the evening. A half-hour or so later, before the official beginning of the ball, the orchestra would strike up a combination of marches, waltzes or polkas. At some propitious moment the dance party would start with a Polonez, which would usually last thirty or forty minutes. Next, a waltz would be done, to be followed by a ten-minute food break. “Stand for the Mazur!!!” At this call, around 20 couples would do a Mazur until midnight. At midnight, another waltz, then a Women's Cotillion, which is then followed by the various occupational dances interwoven with more waltzes.

At five in the morning the famous “Biały Mazur” would be done, with the men doing their “Koguciki” steps. According to our sources of information, at the turn of the 20th century the order of the dances to be done was printed in a program.

POLONEZ CALOWANY

This is a dance, which is mainly done at weddings. The melody, in 2/4 time, takes up 12 measures of music. The verses are always sung during the dance. Rather, the singing is part of the dance. We have included the translation of the verses here because they illustrate the feeling of these Żywiec dance variants. Any number of couples may dance.

Marszowo ♩ = 98 (21,5")

Mam chusteczkę haftowaną pięknie wszystkie cztery rogi
 ko-go ko-cham i sza-nu - je rzu - cam mu ją po - pod no - gi

I.

*Mam chusteczkę haftowaną
 Pięknie wszystkie cztery rogi ,
 (Kogo kocham I szanuję)
 (Rzucam mu ją popod nogi.) rep*

I've an embroidered handkerchief
 Pretty are its four corners,
 (To him whom I love and respect,)
 (I'll place it under His feet) rep

II.

*Mamulka ją haftowała,
 Kiedyś jeszcze była mała.
 (A dziś mi ją podrzuciłaś,)
 (Boś mnie szczerze pokochała) rep*

My Mother embroidered it
 Yet when she was small.
 (But today I throw it)
 (Too whom sincerely loves me.) rep

III.

*Wszystkieście tu urodziwe,
 Każdą z wszystkich was szanuję,
 (Ale za to wyróżnienie,)
 (Ciebie tylko pocałuje) rep*

All of you are handsome,
 And each of you I respect
 (But because You show Me favour,)
 (I only will kiss you.) rep

IV.

*Tej nie kocham, tej nie lubię,
 Tej nie pocałuje.
 (Mam chusteczkę haftowaną,)
 (Tobie tylko ja daruję) rep*

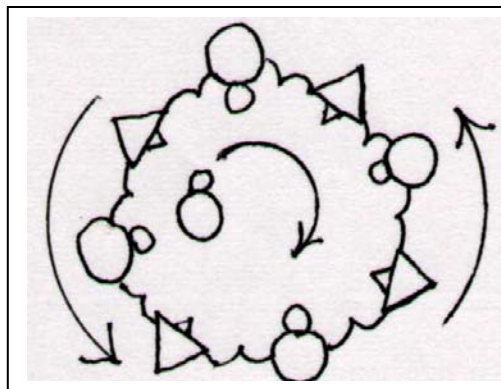
Neither do I love this nor that one,
 Nor shall I kiss this one.
 (I've an embroidered handkerchief)
 (and only to You will I give it.) rep.

quasi marziale

The dance may be done in different ways. Here are two variations.

Variation A

The dancers form a Kolo with hands joined and circle R or CCW. One of the W goes in the Kolo dancing CW and sings the first verse.



When the mood is right, the W takes out her handkerchief and drops it before her ptr (the koło having stopped at this point). The M picks it up ceremoniously, and completely unfolds it on the floor. He then kneels, on one knee, on a corner of the handkerchief. The W, his ptr, kneels, on the opp corner. In this position they kiss. The W returns to her place in the koło which then dances as before. The M, still in the koło, sings verse 4. The M dances opp the koło. After singing this verse, in possession of the handkerchief, places it before a different W who then repeats the same procedure as the first couple did. After the kiss, the M then rejoins the koło. The new W is left inside.

Repeat as desired.

Variation B

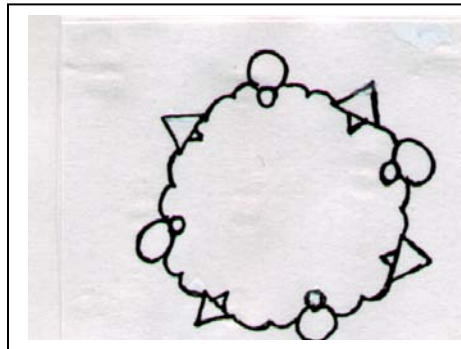
One of the W enters the inside of the koło and sings verse 1. She then drops her handkerchief in front of whatever M she chooses. He picks it up, enters the inside singing either the 2nd or 3rd verse. M then places the handkerchief down, ptrs kneel and kiss, W then joins the koło, W steps inside singing the 4th verse. He then gives the handkerchief to his opp ptr. They exchange places. She is now on the inside.

At times, all the singers sing the verse or they repeat what the inside person has sung.

ELEMENTS OF THE DANCE

1. UJĘCIE ZA DLONIE W KOŁE

Ptrs face center, hands joined waist high.



STEPS

2. KROK CHODU W PRZÓD

This, the only step in the dance, is a flat-footed march:

m1

ct1 Step R forward

ct2 Step L forward, ahead of R

THE DANCE

Here is a specific example of how the dance is done.

m1-12 Koło dances, CW, sings 1st verse. A W is already in the koło. Often she

dances in the opp direction. When the words "*popod nogi*" are sung, she drops her handkerchief before a M. M unfolds the handkerchief, kneels and kisses her. After that, W joins the koło, M remains inside. The melody is repeated. During the "handkerchief incident" the music ceases and the koło stops.

m1-12 Koło changes direction. M goes opp direction. The dancers or the M alone sings the 4th verse. With the words "*tobie ja daruję*" M picks a W and "handkerchief incident" is repeated.

POLONEZ ŻYWIECKI

This is the National Dance of Poland to which the townspeople of Żywiec gave their own characteristics and was danced at all celebrations and dance parties. A leader directed the dance. The leader called the figures to be done, which were often to be repeated. At a dance in Żywiec, the Polonez was done in between other dances. At times, the dance was done as a ceremonial procession with the dancers leading the orchestra through the streets and to the main market-square, where they then formed a circle around the wall and danced.

The music is done in 3/4 time with a melody of 12 measures.

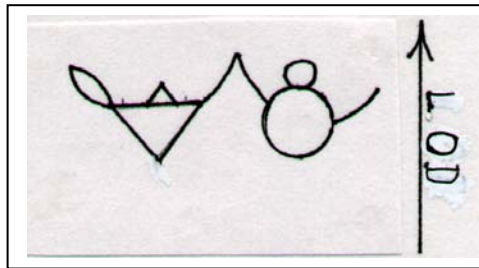
As with the common Polonez, the leader calls the figures-the dance was not choreographed. The information contained below is from the living memory of informants of Żywiec.

MUSIC FOR THE POLONEZ ŻYWIECKI

The image displays a musical score for the Polonez Żywiecki, a 3/4 time piece in G major. The score is written for piano and is divided into four systems, each with a treble and bass staff. The tempo is marked 'Maestoso'. The first system begins with a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a 3/4 time signature. The second system includes a dynamic marking of 'mf'. The third system includes a dynamic marking of 'ff'. The fourth system concludes with a double bar line and repeat signs. The music features a mix of chords and melodic lines, with some passages in the bass staff showing a change to a 2/4 time signature.

ELEMENTS OF THE DANCE

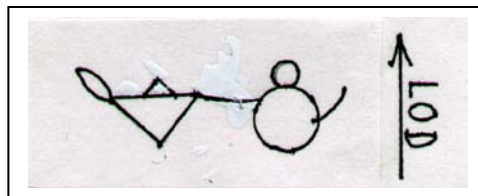
1. UJĘCIE W PARZE ZA UNIESIONE RĘCE



The arms of the joined hands are bent at the elbows. Joined hands are held forward. M's free hand is on hip, thumb inside of M's sash or belt. W's free hand is held out and down to the side, holding her handkerchief or holding her dress. The hand does not rest on her dress.



2. UJĘCIE ZA RĘCE OPUSZCZONE W DÓŁ



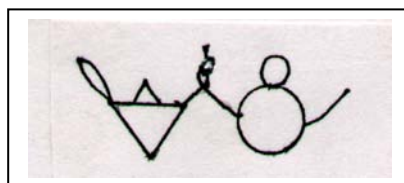
Joined hands are held loosely down in between each other. The M holds his hand by the end of the W's fingers.

3. "BRAMKA"

Illustrated below this one is often done by couples.

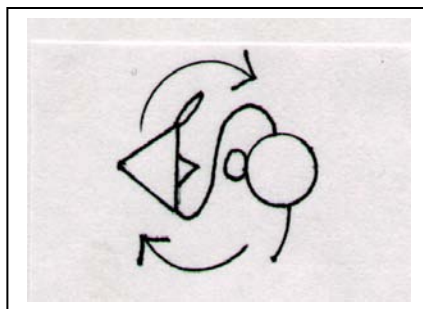


4. UJĘCIE W PARZE POD RĘCE



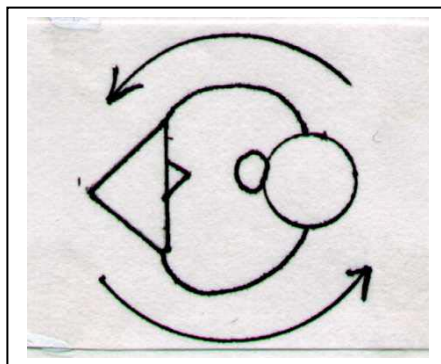
W holds M's forearm with her left hand.

5. "pw MŁYNEK"



6. "KÓLKA"

Joined hands are held chest high.



7. OGOLNE KOŁO

This is actually a figure, a circle of couples. Hands are joined and held freely about waist high.

THE DANCE STEPS

1. KROK PODSTAWOWY

The description of this step is the same as the Chodzony contained in the Chodzony section. The step is done calmly but augustly. A normal bend-slide Polonez step can be done.

Ptrs turn toward and away from each other.

BOWS

2. MEN'S UKŁON

Stand with a space between the feet. Hands at sides.

m1

ct1 Close the L ft to the R, body completely straight, knees not bent. After closing begin to bow the head forward and,

ct2 without changing position, bring the head up,

ct3 hold.

3. WOMEN'S UKŁON

Stand weight upon both feet.

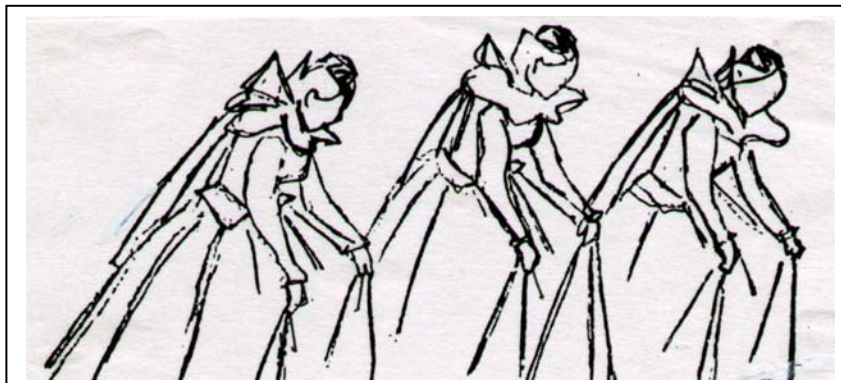
m1

ct1 Place the right ft in front of the left ft, standing wt equally upon both feet, and bend knees slightly, leaning fwd and bowing the head and,

ct2 straighten the knees, lifting the head,

ct3 hold.

Arms may be freely extended down at the sides.



DANCE FIGURES

The following figures have not been proven to be really unique in the region of Żywiec. They are simply the most popular figures for the Polonez, as remembered by the living inhabitants of Żywiec. Unless there is something special about these figures, just names shall be given. See the figure section for their detailed descriptions.

1. PO KOŁE

This is the same as “*Para za Para Dookoła sali.*” On the call **ZMIANA KIERUNKU**, partners do not release hands and do a half turn twd each other, and dance in the opp sense. However, it may be easier to release hands, turn and rejoin the new pair of inside hands. There is a problem here, because the authors do not say anything about not changing the handhold-whether it is pure Żywiec or anything else.

2. PARA W LEWO, PARA W PRAWO

3. WĘZE

4. KÓŁKA PARAMI

See #6 of the elements.

5. KÓŁKA CZWOREKAMI

Two couples form a closed circle.

6. MŁYNEK

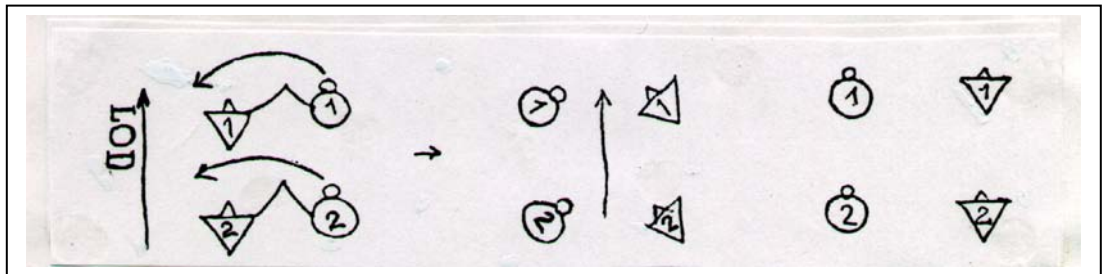
See #5 of the elements.

m1-4 pw MŁYNEK, changing hands on 4th m,
m5-8 lw MŁYNEK

7. PRZEJSCIE “POD BRAMKI” W KOŁE

8. DWÓJKI

A Dwójki is either 2 M or W dancing together as a couple. The author stated that this is formed while the dancers are going fwd in LOD.



The passage states to form a “Dwójki” but does not mention anything about joining hds.

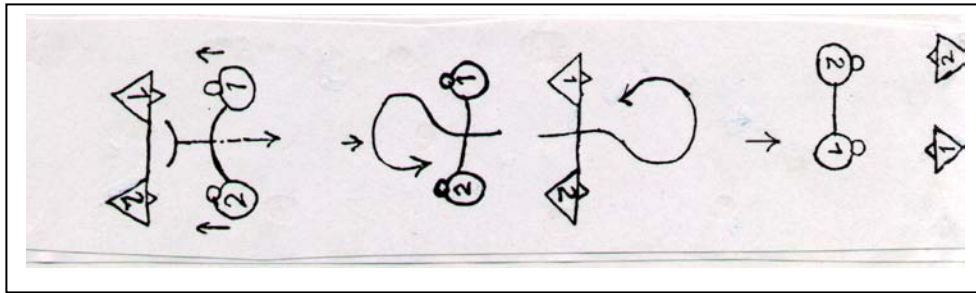
9. PRZECHODZENIE PAN POD "BRAMKAMI" W CZWORKACH

2 Dwójki stand opp each other.

m1,2 M joins hds and goes under W's Bramka. W dance fwd,

m3 Both Dwójki make a half turn to face each other,

m4 Dwójki Ukłon bow to each other.



m5-8 Repeat m1-4.

10. WYMIANA PARTNEREK W SZEREGACH

11. KOŁO PARTNEREK

This is a Gwiadza Koło, with W in the ctr with M's R hd holding his ptr's R hd from underneath.



At the call "pw" or "ZAMIANIE KIERUNKU", the M does a half turn twd his ptr, and supports her L joined hand with L. W merely turns her head and dances "pw" or CCW.

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We have repeated this section (from Part I) at the end of this Part II because it is customary to do so.

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