
— The third Polish collector banknote —

— 200th Birthday Anniversary of Juliusz Słowacki —

The year 2009 marks double anniversary of Juliusz Słowacki: the 200th anniversary of his birthday and the 160th anniversary of his death. For this reason, the Sejm of the Republic of Poland passed a resolution to commemorate those events and proclaimed the year 2009 as the Year of Juliusz Słowacki.

As early as the second half of the 19th century, Słowacki earned one of the top places in the Pantheon of Polish poets of the Romanticism, between Adam Mickiewicz and Zygmunt Krasiński.

Słowacki, along with Mickiewicz, created Polish national poetic drama. He was a precursor of irony and grotesque in the Polish literature, and author of poems as well as reflective and philosophical lyrics. To this day, he is a lasting source of ideological and artistic inspiration.

Born in Krzemieniec, he died in Paris at the age of 40. Still, he was strongly attached to Warsaw, where he arrived on 15 February 1829. In Warsaw, he worked in the Ministry of Treasury of the Kingdom of Poland (when the November Insurrection broke out, Słowacki moved to the insurrectionary diplomatic bureau of Prince Adam Czartoryski). On 3 March 1831, he left Poland and moved to Western Europe with a diplomatic mission, yet, at that time, "praising the revolution". He joined the Insurrection as a signatory of *Akt Jedności* and upon publication of his *Hymn* in December 1830 and January 1831, became the leading poet of the November Insurrection. The two patriotic works: *Oda do wolności* and *Kulik* published together in December 1830 as a booklet, prove that it was Warsaw where Słowacki became the national poet. In January 1831, inspired by Adolf Janusziewicz, he wrote *Pieśń legionu litewskiego* and the first two cantos of the poem *Żmija*.

On exile, Słowacki would often return to the memories of the first months of the November Insurrection which he spent in Warsaw. These memories recur in his letters and literary works where Warsaw of the times of the Revolution is motioned eight times. The poet depicted the city as the centre of ideals and revolutionary fights for independence on three occasions. Warsaw motifs which are most deeply embedded in Słowacki's works can be found in: *Kordian* (1833), *Ofiarowanie z Poema Piasta Dantyszka* (1833) and *Uspokojenie* (Reassurance) (1845-47). The events of the November Insurrection are also mentioned in the poem *Sowiński w okopach Woli* (Sowiński in the Trenches of Wola) (1845).

Uspokojenie (Reassurance) is one of the most poetic visions of Warsaw originating from Słowacki's philosophy of Genesis, according to which all the history and the universe develop exclusively due to violent changes of material forms. This magnificent description of the city precedes other urban motifs which appeared only several dozen years later, like, for example, the ones present in Arthur Rimbaud's works.

Juliusz Słowacki was very sensitive to the developments both in Poland and in Europe, therefore, in his literary works, he commented on them in the spirit of political revolutionism and the Polish reason of state. Starting with *Lilla Weneda*, through *Sen srebrny Salomei* (The Silver Dream of Salomea) and *Zawisza Czarny* up to *Król Duch* (King the Spirit), Słowacki depicted the greatness and tragedy of the nation whose independence was lost, but which would be reborn politically, as this is imposed by the logic of the genesis of the universe development. Even in his early great dramas like *Kordian*, *Balladyna* or *Horsztyński* he pursued his idea of national poetry.

This idea is also present in *Beniowski* (1841), a digressive poem, which proves to be the height of Słowacki's artistic abilities. The poet, using literary motifs and conventions in a masterly manner, engaged in polemics with his opponents on exile. Already at that time he was Adam Mickiewicz's antagonist and 25 years later Słowacki was placed right behind him in the hierarchy of the national bards of the Romanticism.

It is worth mentioning that Słowacki, for a short time, had contact with the banking sector when, for over a year, he worked as a legal trainee in the Ministry of Treasury of the Congress Kingdom of Poland. Although this fact did not influence his poetry, it helped him in his life. The poet always kept scrupulous accounts and in Paris played the stock market, often with success. This is why he could afford a one-year journey to Greece, Egypt and Palestine. Such famous poems as *Hymn o zachodzie słońca* (Hymn at Sunset), *Podróż do Ziemi Świętej z Neapolu* (Voyage to the Holy Land from Naples) or *Anhelli* were created there.

Janusz Odrowąż-Pieniążek
Director of the Adam Mickiewicz
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The 200th birthday anniversary of Juliusz Słowacki, poet and playwright, one of the most eminent authors of the Romanticism in Poland, will be commemorated by the National Bank of Poland by issuance of a collector banknote of PLN 20. It will be the third banknote of that type, following the banknote of PLN 50 issued in 2006, dedicated to John Paul II and the banknote of PLN 10 issued in 2008, commemorating the 90th anniversary of regaining independence by Poland. The banknote will be put into circulation on 23 September 2009.

On the face of the note, on the right-hand side, there is Juliusz Słowacki's bust. In the centre, there is a stylized image of the manor house in Krzemieniec, which, for the past few years, has served as the Juliusz Słowacki Museum. This side of the note depicts the State emblem of the Republic of Poland.

On the back of the note, on the left-hand side, there is a fragment of King Sigismund (III Vasa) Column at the Castle Square in Warsaw. At the top, there are images of flying cranes. In the middle, there is reproduction of a fragment of an autograph from the poem "Uspokojenie" (Reassurance) and, at the bottom, a fragment of the St. John the Baptist Cathedral in Warsaw.

Author of the designs is Maciej Kopecki, chief graphic designer at the Polish Security Printing Works (PWPW).

Author of the banknote's steel engraving matrix design is Przemysław Krajewski.

Under the ordinance of the President of the National Bank of Poland on establishing the specimen and volume of issue of the banknote with the face value of PLN 20, commemorating the 200th birthday anniversary of Juliusz Słowacki, and the date of putting it into circulation, the banknote has been legal tender since 23 September 2009.

Volume: 80.000 pcs.

Dimensions: 138 x 69 mm

Security features:

Paper security

- watermark – portrait of Juliusz Słowacki in profile,
- security thread with microlettering, with a recurring sign composed of the marking of the face value: 20 ZŁ and its mirror image.

Printing security

- Intaglio printing on the front and the back of the note – identifiable by touch,
- Microlettering: offset and steel engraving – the inscriptions: "JULIUSZSŁOWACKI20ZŁ", "NARODOWYBANKPOLSKI20ZŁ", "NBP" and the titles of Juliusz Słowacki's works,
- Serial number printed horizontally on the back of the note, at the bottom on the left-hand side and at the top on the right-hand side of the note,
- Optically variable ink – on the back of the note, at the bottom right-hand corner, marking of the "20" zloty denomination and at the top on the left-hand side, an image of a crane, changing colour from golden into green, depending on the angle the note is viewed at,
- Opalescent ink – on the back side of the note at the top, in the middle, an image of a crane,
- Recto-verso – fragments of an image of an inkwell and a quill pen printed on both sides of the note, combining perfectly to form a complete image
- Single latent image – on the front of the note, on the right side of the portrait a sign "2009" printed vertically, visible depending on the angle the note is viewed at,
- Raised image – on the front of the note, in the top left-hand part, an image of a crane, identifiable by touch,
- Ultraviolet security features – serial number printed on the back of the note, at the bottom on the left-hand side, and images of ten flying cranes in the centre,
- "XX" feature for the visually impaired – on the front of the note, at the bottom left-hand corner, identifiable by touch.

The National Bank of Poland

holds the exclusive right to issue the currency in the Republic of Poland.

In addition to issuing **coins and banknotes of general circulation**, the NBP issues **collector coins and banknotes**. The issue of collector items is designed both to commemorate events, anniversaries and well-known personalities and to disseminate knowledge about Polish culture, science and tradition.

All coins and banknotes issued by the NBP are legal tender in Poland.

The banknotes have been manufactured by the Polish Security Printing Works (PWPW).