

Summary

The dissertation is an attempt to monograph the novel *Whirlpools* by Henryk Sienkiewicz, which tells the story of the 1905 revolution. In the dissertation I make an attempt to study the circumstances of the creation of the work. For this purpose, I analyze the writer's private correspondence from the first decade of the 20th century, both those addressed to family members and friends or acquaintances. The letters provide an opportunity to learn about the writer's worldview and his opinions on the current socio-political situation. They also provide insight into the various emotional states that the aging novelist felt while writing his novels.

No less important is the question of whether the novel was commissioned by the National Democracy. I give various arguments that could support this, but it should be remembered that the relationship between Sienkiewicz and Roman Dmowski's party is still not well researched today.

In the remainder of the paper, I review the critical reception of the work from the time of its publication to the present day. Judgments on *Whirlpools*, like the rest of Sienkiewicz's novels, have become polarized. Researchers with a conservative orientation saw in them confirmation that Sienkiewicz was a penetrating visionary and foresaw the horrors of 20th century totalitarianisms. Those adhering to views of a more leftist nature accused the writer of misunderstanding the ideals of the revolution and unwillingness to participate in the changes necessary in the modern world.

The next part of the work deals strictly with the problems of the work. Analyzing the construction of the main characters of the novel, I also look at the construction of its depicted world. I pay special attention to the main character, Agnes Anney, who emigrated to Great Britain in her youth as a poor peasant girl, and there was adopted by a wealthy factory owner. Now she returns to Poland, to the manor house of the Krzycki family. A young nobleman, Władysław Krzycki, falls in love with her. Years later, he does not recognize in her the young peasant girl he once seduced.

In addition, I look at the creation of the student Laskowicz, analyzing his construction in the context of 19th-century pseudo-science, such as physiognomy.

The penultimate chapter of my dissertation looks at how *Whirlpools* implements the tenets of the political novel. I point out the models from which Sienkiewicz drew, as well as the differences that emerge from comparing Sienkiewicz's variety of the political novel and the one we know today.

The last part of the dissertation deals with the literary contexts in which *Whirlpools* is set. I analyze the works of other writers from Sienkiewicz's generation, who represented the entire spectrum of attitudes towards the revolution. Here I pay particular attention to works by Andrzej Niemojewski, Bolesław Prus, Stefan Żeromski, Aleksander Świętochowski or Stanisław Brzozowski.