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WHAT HIDES BETWEEN THE LETTERS? AN ANALYSIS OF ADAM MICKIEWICZ'S WRITING*

In 2023, the project titled "The Philomath's Archive – digital edition", headed by Wojciech Kruszewski, was completed. The most important result of his team's efforts will be to make available (after encoding in TEI) to researchers and all interested readers documents which, although described, have been shrouded in mystery for many years. The main point is that, as a result of various circumstances, the Philomath's Archive was divided and dispersed. This is significant insofar as amongst the dispersed materials were also priceless manuscripts by Adam Mickiewicz. Members of the research team used these for philological, archival, literary or genealogical criticism analyses. However, the possibilities for their study are much greater. In this article, I would like to attempt to analyse Mickiewicz's manuscripts using graphological and scribal tools. This will allow us to observe the most characteristic features of the handwriting of Poland's most important poet.

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PEEPING AT THE ARTIST

George Orwell, in one of his "As I Please" columns published in the Manchester Evening News, lamented to his readers that it was increasingly rare to see pretty handwriting. He pointed out that, for centuries, scribes had written beautifully, and then this art died out and was only revived in the 19th century with the invention of the steel pen. Awareness of these facts led him to reflect more deeply on the possible relationship between the nature of writing and literary ability. However, he ironically noted, at the outset, that this connection was probably not very strong. He supported his words with examples:

H. G. Wells's writing was pleasing to the eye but sloppy. Carlyle scribbled like a hen's claw, so much so that a typesetter reportedly left Edinburgh permanently simply because he no longer wanted to work with his manuscripts. Bernard Shaw puts in tiny letters, and his handwriting is admittedly pure and clear but not very exquisite (Orwell 2021, 244-245).

Orwell's observations and conclusions were not professional. However, they point to an area of research already well-developed at the time. I am referring here to graphological studies of handwriting. If we have the correct material for graphological research, the results of our analyses can yield surprising results.

Manuscripts of the most eminent Polish poet, Adam Mickiewicz, can be excellent material for research in this area. He left behind a collection of manuscripts that offer deep insights into his creative process and the evolution of his poetic vision. Mickiewicz's writing is known for its elegance and precision. It might seem that the fluidity of his pen reflects a disciplined and thoughtful approach to his craft. Instead, it contains numerous corrections that illustrate his efforts to achieve the perfect form of expression. Graphologists often analyse the slant, size and spacing of letters to gain an insight into the writer's personality. The presence of marginal notes and corrections in Mickiewicz's manuscripts offers valuable graphological insights. Analysis of these annotations can reveal the poet's thought process, moments of hesitation and the dynamic relationship he had with his work. Symbolism is also important. During graphological analyses, attention is drawn to specific elements of handwriting. Mickiewicz's use of certain strokes, loops or embellishments can have a symbolic meaning, providing additional layers for interpreting his manuscripts.

The speed and rhythm of the handwriting is also of great importance. A graphological examination can reveal moments of urgency, contemplation or calm in Mickiewicz's writing, shedding light on the pace of his creative process. Graphology intersects with the content of the manuscripts. Analysing how Mickiewicz's handwriting integrates with the thematic elements of his works can provide a holistic understanding of the interaction between the poet's mind and the written word. Gra-

phology delves into the emotional tone conveyed by the handwriting. Mickiewicz's manuscripts can reveal fluctuations in emphasis, the intensity of strokes and overall style, providing clues to the emotional states he experienced when writing particular passages. However, such inquiries are not the main focus of my article. Rather, I would like to focus on scribal inquiry and highlight the benefits such observations can provide.

Fortunately, Adam Mickiewicz's manuscripts contain a variety of works, including poetry, plays, prose loose notes and numerous letters. This type of collection provides a comprehensive picture of his artistic development, from his early experiments to the masterpieces that secured him an important place in literary history. When analysing Mickiewicz's scribal manuscripts, it is necessary to consider that his education included the study of calligraphy. This effectively nullified certain individual features of graphia. Despite this fact, Adam Mickiewicz's manuscripts can be successfully subjected to scribal analysis, and interesting observations can be made on their basis. It is worth mentioning that Adam Mickiewicz's manuscripts were subjected to graphological analyses in the past, but these were psychologically oriented. In 1987, a book was published by the Canadian psychologist Jean-Charles Gille-Maisani, titled "Adam Mickiewicz – the Man. A psychological study" (Gille-Maisani 1987). It is worth mentioning that he also dealt with the psychological analysis of other poets, including George Byron and Charles Baudelaire. By carefully analysing the various stages of the poet's life, the nature of his writing and his family medical history, Gille-Maisani created a psychological portrait of the poet that many readers may find surprising. It turned out that Mickiewicz was a man with a paranoid personality. The volatility of his moods caused a whole spectrum of morbid psychosomatic symptoms. This type of research, although fascinating, is not the subject of my interest in this article.

THE PHILOMATH'S ARCHIVE

The basis of my analysis will be Adam Mickiewicz's manuscripts stored in the Library of the John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin, which are part of a larger whole. I am referring to the Philomath's Archive – a remnant of the Society of Philomaths (lovers of knowledge). This was a secret society of students and graduates of Vilnius University active between 1817 and 1823. The group's aims were noble: first and foremost, self-education, mutual assistance in study, methodical preparation for the creation of literature, and – most importantly – the shaping of moral and patriotic attitudes. Members of the association included Adam Mickiewicz, Jan Czeczot, Tomasz Zan and Onufry Pietraszkiewicz. The end of the Philomath's activity was

connected with the investigation into the secret associations of young people and students at Vilnius University conducted by the hated curator Nikolai Novosilcov. After 1824, the group's members were exiled deep into Russia (Piechota 2003, 18-19). The entire archive of the association was gradually dispersed (Jańczyk 2020), and its intricate history then became the subject of many analyses (e.g., Czubek 1913; Świrko 1972; Mańkowska 1983, 109-110; Sudolski 1997; Borowczyk 2014; Oleiniczak 2023). As a result of complicated operations, part of the described archive ended up in the University Library of the Catholic University of Lublin (Mańkowska 1983, 109) and remains there to this day. I would like to separate from it a bundle of a dozen or so pages of Mickiewicz's manuscripts for graphological analysis. I am thinking here of the contents of the signatures: Rkps 731: "Dziady. Part II", a copy of the work made by Jan Czeczot but containing Mickiewicz's handwritten notes, a speech to "Dziady" with a letter from Adam Mickiewicz to Jan Czeczot dated 5/17 February 1823, Kaunas, and Mickiewicz's autograph; "The Phantom" with Adam Mickiewicz's letter to Jan Czeczot, 8/20 February 1823; Rkps 728 – manuscript of the ballad "Romantyczność" in Adam Mickiewicz's hand; Rkps 725 – "Universal Jambs", handwritten by Mickiewicz; Rkps 726 - "The Maiden of Orleans", a translation of the fifth song of Voltaire's poem "Pucelle d'Orléans", handwritten by Mickiewicz.

It is my conviction that graphological identifications of this kind can open up new research perspectives and contribute to the study of the poet's biography and interpretation of his works. They may also support publishing ventures. Above all, the way forward needs to be established.

METHODOLOGY

Writing research requires appropriate material to be analysed and an appropriate comprehensive research method. The difficulty of handwriting research lies in the fact that we do not have precisely described criteria for the assessment and formulation of the research result. Therefore, each handwriting analysis has a different assessment process. It is fundamental to be aware of the elements that are subject to analysis and evaluation at further stages. I am referring here to the layers of writing, among which the following should be mentioned: the graphic layer (graphic features of the writing), the content and language layer (information content, style, vocabulary), and the technical layer (features of the ground, ink and writing tool). In a nutshell, it is these features that are analysed (Zieniewicz 2015, 143). It is worth noting that scribal studies emphasise that the graphic layer is of key importance, as it has a unique character (Koziczak 1997, 9, 14). At the same time, attention is drawn to the fact that the value of a graphical feature in the analysed material is the greater,

the more frequently it occurs in the writing of a given person (Koziczak 1997, 31; Goc 2020, 128). Manuscripts of writers are a special case of graphological analyses. Graphological analysis techniques make it possible to resolve the sequence of different types of writing (Goc and Konarowska 2014, 77). This type of research is used in forensic science. However, it can be helpful during philological research, especially when working on the creative process of writers. In addition, the findings of which writing variant should be considered last can directly impact the scholarly editions of writers' works being prepared.

Within each stratum, habits and mannerisms develop, and these are the objects of study. The result of such an analysis is a compilation of the most distinctive writing parameters. These are synthetic, graphokinetic, topographical and structural. In the graphocomparative method, this is the basis for determining congruence and differences in the material studied. This, in turn, leads to identification conclusions. This assessment is based on the construction of the individual graphic pattern of the respective scribe.

The scribal analysis I am referring to is based on the underlying assumptions of the currently popular graphical-comparative method. Expert scribes often use this method, as it combines many previous ways of analysing writing, leading to the most accurate and comprehensive analysis of the formal features of writing. This method was developed in the 1920s. It is not possible to unequivocally identify its author. This is why it is assumed that it was created by combining the research of, among others, A. Winberger and E. Locard. In Poland, the method was developed by Z. Czeczot, P. Horoszowski, and W. Wójcik.

In forensic science, this method was based on analysing documentary material (a sample of writing) to ultimately determine the author. The main formal features of writing were already analysed in older research methods. The graphic-comparative method brings in an analysis of the textual-linguistic and technical layers. At the same time, it does not always subject all layers of the text to examination – often, such an analysis is unjustified or impossible. With this method, it is possible to establish sets of handwriting characteristics typical of the person whose manuscript is being analysed. In the publication *The Forensic Scientist*, which refers to the various methods of investigation, we can read that it is the ensemble of features, not individual ones, which are essential in research identification. This is important insofar as not every manuscript contains features included in all four layers to be analysed (Goc 2008, 378). The graphic-comparative method is based on assuming that writing reflects the psycho-physical inclinations of the author of the text under study. Therefore, during the identification process, all sets of writing features are considered, which allows for the evaluation and comparison of the records under study, taking into account the purpose and sequence of their creation.

CLASSIFICATIONS OF HANDWRITING FEATURES

In the description of Mickiewicz's handwriting, I have used the most recent classification of handwriting features, developed in 1984-1989 within the framework of the Autumn School of Empirical Handwriting Research at the Prof Jan Sehn Institute of Forensic Expertise in Kraków. Handwriting examiners use the above catalogues to increase the precision and clarity of opinions. It is the basic measurement method of handwriting research, a scale on which characteristic groups of handwriting features of a particular person or their imitator can be described accurately. An attempt to complete the "Catalogue of Graphic Handwriting Features" was made by A. Koziczak in her publication entitled "Measurement Methods in Handwriting Research". The author gave only an outline of some of the changes concerning the catalogue. It shows how many doubts scribes encounter when studying particular groups of handwriting features in detail. This is a signal for further research in this direction. Having analysed Mickiewicz's handwriting according to the accepted principles, it can be concluded that the following features characterise it:

- 1.1 Type of handwriting plain.
- 1.2 Degree of naturalness natural.
- 1.3 Stages of development of writing mature.
- 1.4 Class of writing refined.
- 1.5 The overall image of the writing angular.
- 1.6 Degree of neatness careless.
- 1.7 Readability illegible.
- 1.8 Additions: strikethroughs, insertions, underlining.
- 1.9 Manner of execution in a hand accustomed to writing.

In his manuscripts, Mickiewicz used simple handwriting. This derives from the basic elementary pattern and is the most common. The notation is free and natural, created with complete motor skills, with a hand accustomed to writing, and contains individual features that have become fixed during the long process of forming graphic habits. The characters are constructed with relative stability and pre-existing characteristics that are of high identification value, indicating the use of mature writing. The graphic line is very fluid, symptomatic solutions in the construction of the characters can be easily specified, and the shading of the writing is subtle. This indicates the highest class of handwriting, which can unquestionably be described as cultivated. The author of the manuscripts abandoned arches and ovals in favour of angular writing, which is characterised by the dominance of angular forms.

The quality of the writing is also worth noting – Mickiewicz wrote with care, adding numerous additions to the autographs, such as corrections, strikethroughs, underlining and insertions. The writing in the analysed manuscripts differs in the

degree of care taken. "Dziady. Part II" – with additions – is filled more illegible handwriting in some places, and in others, it is impossible to recognise individual words. In contrast, the text of the work "Romantyczność" is executed much more carefully, although, in many parts, the writing is still not easy to read, which is why it is classified as partially legible. In addition, while "The Maiden of Orleans" searches in vain for decorative text separations, the second manuscript has numerous ornaments, such as initials or a decorative variant of the letter 'd'. The topographical features are imposed by the physical characteristics of the ground on which the writing samples were made. The arrangement of lines and characters concerning each other is parallel. However, the lack of linearity makes it difficult to determine whether Mickiewicz's handwriting was descending due to his trait or whether this was due to a lineless ground. Noteworthy is the difference in the size of the midline band (only 0.2 mm), which has implications for the subsequent results of the scribal study – inter-line and inter-word spacing.

The inter-line spacing in both autographs is variable. The character notation in the blurb is slightly smaller and narrower (by the size of the ground), the height of the interlinear zone being 1.8 mm for this sample. The standard interline spacing is equal to three midline bands (here 5.4 mm) – the spacing used is 7.35 mm, indicating enlarged interline spacing. Similarly, in the blank, the midline zone is 2 mm high, the standard spacing is 6 mm, and the average for this sample is 4.67 mm – reduced spacing.

In contrast, the length between words averages 3.7 mm for "The Phantom" and 3.78 mm for "Romantyczność". The model spacing is obtained by determining a range of 1.5 to 2 midline band sizes. The slight disparity in the height of the midline band makes the model result in 2.7 mm - 3.7 mm and 3 mm - 4 mm, respectively. Thus, the word spacing in "Dziady. Part II" is (slightly) enlarged, while in "Romantyczność", it is proportional. The character spacing in both samples is enlarged by almost double, and the table below illustrates the model spacing, the distance used and the final measurement result.

Paragraph distinctions are another topographical feature that characterises Mickiewicz's writing, as not all are equally marked. The frequency of paragraphs is very high (every 3.68 and 6.04 paragraph lines, respectively, for both manuscripts). It was not uncommon for Mickiewicz to use an overhang of the first line by 6.9 mm in the dirty typescript and 7.4 mm in the blank typescript instead of paragraph indentation. He also marked the new paragraph with an enlarged initial letter. Mickiewicz did not divide the words; he used the omission of the non-fitting passage by one line. He placed the headings in the middle of the page, along with an offset to the top margin. In the samples, the properties of signatures, addresses, dates and numbers could not be measured, as they do not appear in the text.

Differences are also found within punctuation marks, which co-organise the content. These belong to the identification analysis because of the individual way in which they are drawn and located. In the blurb, the author did not pay much attention to their position concerning neighbouring characters. The horizontal spacing is increased, and the horizontal layout is usually lowered. However, in measuring the properties of this topographical feature, I encountered all possible positions of punctuation marks in both layouts; the published result is nevertheless the most common. The manuscript of "Romantyczność" is much more carefully executed in this respect than "The Phantom" or "Universal Jambs". The punctuation marks are distant (suggesting a handwriting feature specific to this performer), and in the vertical layout, they are crossed out according to the pattern.

We can divide the motor features into three elements: tempo, impulse, and emphasis. In all samples, the results are almost the same. The speed at which the author wrote is determined:

- (a) absolutely (score averages),
- (b) within the writing sample (constant),
- (c) relative to the individual norm (natural).

The shading has a descending direction; it is variable and non-rhythmic, and the intensification site increases on the left side of the mark. Unfortunately, due to the nature of the test material – a photocopy of the samples – I cannot determine the strength of the pressure. The type of pulse is identified by the frequency with which the writing tool is pulled away from the substrate. We can distinguish between pulses:

- (a) grammatical a sign built up from several grammars, i.e., several separate parts into which the graphic sign can be divided. According to a drawing primer, we distinguish between one-gramme letters (e.g., e, s), two-gramme letters (e.g., a, u) and three-gramme letters (e.g., m),
 - (b) lettered a character built of a single continuous line,
 - (c) syllabic at least two characters built of one continuous line,
- (d) word a whole word built from one continuous line (not found in Mickiewicz),
- (e) polysyllabic a combination of at least two together (not found in the materials studied).

Impulse differs in the two manuscripts, with Mickiewicz using the grammar-letter-syllabic notation in the blurb and letter-syllabic notation in the blank. It indicates a greater writing fluency in the "Romantyczność" manuscript than in the others.

The field of writing belongs to the group of measurable traits and is divided into text, line, word and sign fields. The measurement results of the two samples differ due to the difference in substrate formats (which affected the size of the writing and line spacing). The size of the writing, i.e., the height of the midline zone, is also

worth noting. We can divide the ranges as follows: fine writing up to 1.6 mm, small writing from 1.6 mm to 2.6 mm, medium writing from 2.6 mm to 4.0 mm, large writing from 4.0 mm to 6.0 mm, and very large writing over 6 mm. The result of both materials on the nominal scale is identical – it is small writing. On the quotient scale, blotting scored 2 mm, and blanking scored 2 mm in band height. The width of the characters is proportional. The slope is right-handed and consistent in the manuscripts. The proportions of the height of the superlinear and sublinear elements to the height of the midlinear characters vary. In Material One, the size of the superlinear and sublinear zones is medium (ranging from 1.6 mm to 2 mm), while in Material Two, these values are magnified (from 2.6 mm to 3 mm) and even exaggerated (above 3 mm). This is a result of the difference in the care and ornamentation of the two samples; as I mentioned earlier, the blank is written with greater attention to the aesthetic level of the text. The slant of the writing in both samples is right-skewed, the degree of slant varying from 66° to 72°.

The final phase of the scribal analyses is related to the structural features of Mickiewicz's handwriting. The predominant feature is the contact binding of letters, which is characterised by the absence of a line connecting adjacent characters. In the section on bindings, I have given other connections that occur in the text but do not appear in a frequency equal to the final result. The constructed characters are drawn with an identical succession of consecutive graphic parts (grammars). The number of varieties for each character predominantly varies. I believe this results from the deliberate elimination of careless graphical forms in the blank.

CONCLUSION

It is my deep conviction that the methods used by scribal scholars are gaining ground. This is important insofar as it can bring new possibilities in studying the textual layer of manuscripts. Incorporating the basic "Catalogue of Graphic Handwriting Features" into the standard textological procedure will provide a more accurate and comprehensive description of the work under analysis. Focusing on the relationship between handwriting recognition and author identification will result in determining accurate and objective handwriting characteristics. This is because it is impossible to carry out a proper verification without being able to read the underlying information — which is the sets of graphic features of writing. A scribal study makes it possible to determine graphical-editorial consistency. In addition, scribal methods can standardise the comparison of the writings of the same performer. Methods of handwriting analysis are imperative when critiquing a text, criticising sources or attempting to reconstruct records. The main aim of a handwriting examination is to establish, or perhaps better

to confirm, the executor of a text. During the research, it is not uncommon to identify additional information about the author: their age (and, at the same time, the approximate date of composition of the manuscript in question), their state of health and general psychophysical disposition (which affects fundamental changes in the linguistic layer of the work), possible imitations that may serve to mask the performer of the text.

The development of contemporary scribal analysis is, so to speak, at a standstill due to the relative decrease in the number of experts to the number of examinations carried out, which increases the time that is devoted to the examination of a particular manuscript. Contributing to this is the lack of centres that train experts in this field; such training is often the result of expert candidates studying under their master's supervision and requires many years of practice. Before beginning the arduous preparation process, the student should already have a degree and innate analytical skills that will help in recognising and remembering spatial relationships or reproducing writing movements. The researcher's advantage may be the ease of constructing expert conclusions – descriptions of visually observed relationships. Ultimately, it is the clarity of the verbal explanation that the entire examination is based on. The graphological examination of Adam Mickiewicz's manuscripts adds to the excitement of exploring his literary legacy, offering insights into the personality and emotions of this iconic figure of Polish literature. Delving into the manuscripts can help reveal the evolution of ideas and themes taken up and abandoned by Adam Mickiewicz. This is why I think it is worthwhile taking advantage of the opportunities offered to researchers by handwriting analysis.

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WHAT HIDES BETWEEN THE LETTERS? AN ANALYSIS OF ADAM MICKIEWICZ'S WRITING

Summary

The article presents some issues related to the study of Adam Mickiewicz's manuscripts using graphological scribal tools. The main subject of analysis was made the archives, which are stored in the Library of the John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin. What is important, they are an integral part of the legendary Philomath Archive, which has been dispersed over the years. The conducted analyses, which are only a contribution, but may indicate future directions of researchers' interests, allow us to get an idea of the basic features of Mickiewicz's handwriting. In addition, the analyses undertaken have made it possible to isolate and describe the characteristic features of the poet's manuscripts.

Keywords: Adam Mickiewicz; manuscripts; graphology; Philomath's Archive

CO KRYJE SIĘ POŚRÓD LITER? ANALIZA TWÓRCZOŚCI ADAMA MICKIEWICZA

Streszczenie

W artykule zostały przedstawione zagadnienia związane z badaniem rękopisów Adama Mickiewicza z wykorzystaniem narzędzi grafologicznych i pismoznawczych. Głównym przedmiotem analiz uczyniono archiwalia, które są przechowywane w Bibliotece Katolickigo Uniwersytetu Lubelskiego Jana Pawła II. Co ważne, stanowią one istotną część legendarnego Archiwum Filomatów, które przez lata uległo rozproszeniu. Przeprowadzone analizy są jedynie przyczynkiem, jednak mogą wskazywać przyszłe kierunki zainteresowań badaczy, pozwalają zorientować się w podstawowych cechach motoryki pisma Mickiewicza. Ponadto podjęte analizy umożliwiły wyodrębnienie i opisanie charakterystycznych cech rekopisów wieszcza.

Słowa kluczowe: Adam Mickiewicz; rękopisy; grafologia; Archiwum Filomatów

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Pict. 1. Manuscript of a work entitled The Phantom

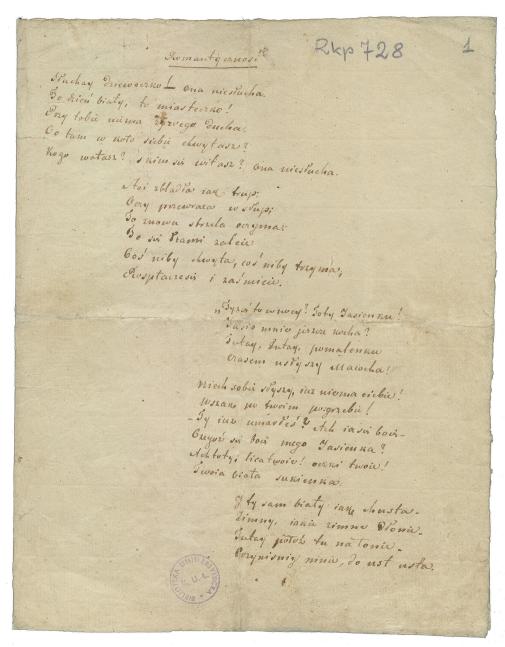
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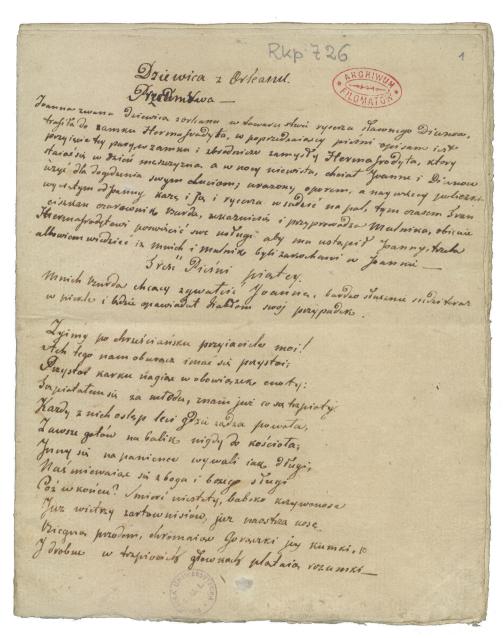
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Tagralam ia wy vno insechem drovo ntomyte u gore skeli pod etag o tak, dalig dalig, nied vis na nowicken sputi. Coscie orand keyo pradata, Ciemmuty i sawierudy, harry placen i mozora, hali ysuli i sectorali Tanv ta garotra graduili: Who a war wichrungen tradaw stanion, which is we wie writer at bramy Pory ryw amy rankinamy. mow ai no men crego brannie.

Pict. 2. Dziady II - Adam Mickiewicz's notes



Pict. 3. Manuscript of a work Romantyczność



Pict. 4. Manuscript of the Virgin of Orleans with the stamp of the Philomath Archives