

TRADITIONAL STORY CHARACTER

– MIKOŁAJ DOŚWIADCZYŃSKI

(NICHOLAS WISDOM, NICHOLAS EXPERIENCE

OR NICHOLAS EXPERIENSKY)

The Poland's DVALD project's traditional story character is Nicholas Experiensky, the main character of the *Mikołaja Doświadczyńskiego przypadki* (*The Adventures of Nicholas Experiensky*) novel, written by Ignacy Krasicki and released in 1776. The work is considered to be the first Polish novel.



Ignacy Krasicki (1735 - 1801)

THE FORM

The novel is written as a memoirs report of the main character which was designed to give authenticity to the work. For further giving the

authenticity, there are also other genre forms like a letter, speech, inventory of objects on the ship etc.

The novel consists of three parts, each of them constitutes a separate novel type:

Book I describes childhood and education of Nicholas Experiensky. It is in the form of a philosophical tale and satirical-manner novel with elements of robinsonade.

Book II tells about the main character's reeducation on the Nipu island and is written in the form of utopia.

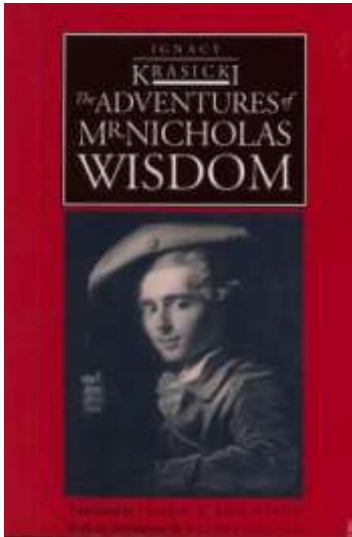
Book III contrasts newly acquired Experiensky's knowledge with the realities of civilization. It is written in a form of a philosophical tale, a novel of manners and an adventure novel.



THE PLOT

Book I. The title character is brought up in a traditional Polish noble family. His home education is mainly based on stories concerning witchcraft and ghosts. Next, he lands in a public school, which does not provide high level of education. After the death of his father, a sixteen-year-old Nicholas returns home where he is educated by a French tutor, Mr Damon, who is an uneducated troublemaker passing himself off as a marquis. He teaches Nicholas mainly French as well as encourages him to read baroque romances. It makes Nicholas to fall in love with his mother's foster child, Julianna, having the same name as the main character of one of the romances Nicholas has read. As Nicholas's mother finds out about this love, she sends Julianna to the nunnery. Nicholas leaves with his teacher to Warsaw so as to complete his education. There, he only takes up drunken revels and gambling. His mother has to pay back his debts. After she dies, Nicholas dreams about going abroad. In order to do it, he pledges his three villages and jewels. He goes to Paris, where his riotous life

drives him into debts. Escaping from his debtors, Nicholas heads to Amsterdam and next he plans to leave to Batavia. His ship crashes, though, and he lands on the island having a strange name – Nipu.



Book II. On the Nipu island, Nicholas knows the society of the Nipuan. Cared by the local wise man Xaoo, he familiarizes with Nipu's system and customs which leads to complete reeducation of the character and change of his views.

Book III. Missing his father country, Experiensky decides to return to civilization. He takes a Spanish ship on which he is imprisoned and finally sold as a slave to the mine of silver in Bolivia by the captain. There Nicholas meets an Indian who says that the Nipuan, who escaped from colonisation, are his ancestors. He also

meets Gwilhelm, a protestant, who helps him return to Europe. The captain of the ship carrying Nicholas to Europe is margrave de Vennes, with whom Experiensky talks a lot about the possibility of applying Nipuan philosophy within the European civilization. He lands in Cadiz, where he tries to behave himself according to Nipuan philosophy. He is captured for this and closed in a lunatic asylum by the Inquisition. He is helped by de Viennes and after that Nicholas decides to come back to Poland. There, he begins virtuous life of an enlightened nobleman who is good for his lieges. He tries to deal with politics, too. Yet he reveals that the Parliament is so corrupted that it is impossible to change it. After all these years and adventures, Nicholas meets Julianna who eventually becomes his wife...

THE MAIN CHARACTER

Nicholas Wisdom (Experiensky) is the main character of the novel, experiencing adventures in all sorts of places - from Warsaw via Paris until the utopian island Nipu. Nicholas has noble roots, but is not too rich. Death of his father accepts with some relief, in any event, without sorrow, trying to recover time „taken” by the school discipline. The departure of the mother is to him



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Comenius

more experience, but over the passes at the end of the agenda. Nicholas is a dynamic and energetic hero, yet a completely new in contemporary Polish literature. We know him as a naive youngster, who after his first rebels against the school, then uses the life in the company of a new teacher. He changes only on the island Nipu, which is for him a kind of school of life, and also the place where he verifies his knowledge. He begins to understand the way of thinking of people from Nipu and admires it. When returning to his homeland, he is a completely different man - and he knows what to expect from life and what to want. Because after such a difficult journey the capital city is not a place for him, he is housing in the countryside and there, along with his wife, he finds happiness.

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