

Czechs try to resolve Lisbon impasse

An article by Jan Cieński in Prague and Tony Barber in Brussels which was written in the FinancialTimes.com dated October 12 states... The difficulties over approving the Lisbon treaty became even more entrenched on Monday when the Czech government said it would convey President Vaclav Klaus's last-minute demand to amend the pact to the rest of the European Union.

Speaking after a meeting of his cabinet, Jan Fischer, the Czech caretaker prime minister, rejected any step that would require re-ratification of the treaty, which has already been approved by the Czech Republic's parliament.

However, in an apparent bid to finesse the standoff between Mr. Klaus and the rest of the EU, Mr Fischer said the government was willing "to discuss a possible solution to this situation with its European partners" during an EU summit at the end of the month.

In return, Mr. Klaus has to offer a guarantee that he will sign Lisbon once the Czech constitutional court rules on a recent challenge to the treaty. There was no response from Mr. Klaus's office as to whether those were acceptable conditions.

Klaus throws up further Lisbon hurdle - Oct-09

The EU had hoped Mr. Klaus would have relaxed his opposition to Lisbon before the summit, but this now looks increasingly remote.

The Czech president, long known for his Eurosceptic views, is the last obstacle to the entry into force of the Lisbon treaty, a charter of institutional reforms that has been eight years in the making.

Although the Czech parliament ratified the treaty in May, Mr. Klaus first refused to sign until after the second Irish referendum on the pact. Then he said his hands were tied until the resolution of a court challenge to the treaty - expected within a month.

Finally, last week Mr. Klaus threw up an unexpected roadblock by saying the Czech Republic needed an opt-out from the treaty's charter of fundamental rights.

He raised the fear - dismissed by the government and most experts - that the pact could open the way for land claims by the descendants of ethnic Germans expelled after the second world war.

EU policymakers can barely disguise their impatience and irritation at Mr. Klaus's last-minute obstacles. Under the brightest of outlooks, they now do not expect the treaty to take effect until the early months of 2010.

All governments and parliaments in the 27-nation EU have approved the treaty, which establishes a full-time president, gives the European parliament a voice in almost all EU legislation and reduces the number of policy areas where decisions require unanimity among governments.

Mr. Klaus's demand for a legally binding exemption from the charter has sent legal experts scurrying to determine under what conditions, if any, such an exemption might be granted.

If it threatened to require re-ratification of the entire treaty, all EU governments would instantly reject Mr. Klaus's demand.

His request that the Czech exemption should carry the same legal force as exemptions won by Poland and the UK in 2007, when the treaty's text was still being negotiated, risks falling into that category. □

My Father, Bronisław Głowacki (1900-1942)

By: *Irena Głowacka-Lawyer*

Poland was a great power from the 14th to the 17th century. In three partitions (1772, 1773 and 1795) it was apportioned among Prussia, Russia and Austria. Overrun by the Austria-German armies in the WWI, Poland declared independence in 1918. During WW I my father as a 16th year old boy was forced to join the Russian army. He returned home with a stomach illness which later became a cancer.

In 1939 Poland was invaded by Germans. The lack of food and shortage of medicine and doctors, were the main causes of death for thousands of Polish people. I remember when my 42 -year old Father was laying for three weeks in bed unconscious, too strong to die; too weak to live. His 69-year old Mother, my famous grandmother Alexandra from a family of nobility, a politician and devout Catholic, was at his bedside for many long hours.

My Mother, Stanisława 29, my brother Zenon, 8 and me, 10 were crying. My brother and I did not know what was happening. The most tragic time was when the body of my father was placed in the sitting room and two candles were lit all day long. Family friends, my Father's comrades from the underground Polish army and relatives were coming during the day to pay their respects and pray for my father. In the evening after dark, the Gestapo would kill anyone found on the streets. After dark, we could hear the Gestapo troops marching behind our home every 30 min. This marching continued every night, as long as the Germans occupied Poland, for six long years.

The day before my Father's funeral, my Mother lit more candles and forgot to put them out before dusk. Our home was invaded by the Gestapo troops. Their shouting, noise and shooting filled our house. Mother was arrested! We did not know whether she would be killed or if we would be lucky and they would release her. We were afraid for we did not know what to do if we had no mother. The next day the Gestapo released Mother. The following morning my Uncle Stefan a priest from the nearby church came. Together with a few friends and relatives, and in a very quite ceremony at the cemetery in front of the family tomb we said goodbye to my dear 42 year-old Father. □

Modjeska... Woman Triumphant

By: *Jadwiga Inglis*



Film Premiere in Los Angeles

On the 13 of September 2009 at the Silent Theater in Hollywood on Fairfax Ave., the Helena Modrzejewska Art and Culture Club in Los Angeles presented the premiere of a wonderful full-length documentary film "Modjeska-Woman Triumphant," by film director Barbara Myszynski and her husband / cinematographer Leonard Myszynski.

The film is about conquest; "attaining the unattainable;" about the life of an artist missionary; the American journey of the nineteenth century iconic Polish actress Helena Modjeska as she builds her own persona one step at a time to later become an icon on the American stage. It's about her earliest impressions, influences, conflicts, and desires as she leaves her war-torn Poland to become the voice of Poland and the voice of women - the dignified, the fallen, and the conflicted. It is a journey about faith and compassion. Modjeska was a muse for world-class artists, inspiring composer Ignacy Paderewski, American author Willa Cather and poet Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, Shakespearean actors Edwin Booth and Maurice Barrymore as well as Nobel Prize winner Henryk Sienkiewicz. Adored and admired for her beauty and nobility, she never forgot her true nature and the influence of Mother Nature on her art. It is a film about California, utopian living, and artistic freedom. Symbolically, the "Forest of Arden" in Orange County became her beloved sanctuary. Based on Modjeska's letters, memoirs, biographies, and interviews with scholars and descendants, the stylized documentary tells the story of one woman's commitment to her self, to her Shakespeare, to her family, to her "countries" Poland and USA, and to humanity through her art.

Beautiful music for "Modjeska - Woman Triumphant" was written by young composer Mikolaj Stroinski, enhancing the story and bringing inside-out the romantic soul of Helena Modjeska.

Film director and cinematographer Barbara and Leonard Myszynski graduated from the National Film Academy in Łódź, Poland. They live and work in California.

After the showing, Barbara explained to the audience some of the details about making the film and what Modjeska meant to her personally. Barbara said, "The making of our stylized documentary was truly a six-year labor of love for its Polish-American filmmakers, culminating on the 100th anniversary of Modjeska's death in 2009! Our story incorporates silent film footage, over 15 hours of interviews with Modjeska scholars (both Polish and American), historians, theatre directors, and descendants, including over 300 archival photographs as well as symbolic recreations. Due to the fact that no actual footage of Modjeska was ever discovered and we were dealing with the 1800's, we decided to stylize the film with symbolic impressions of Modjeska through objects of diffusion, such as glass, veils, and elements in nature rather than attempt to replicate performances that no

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Modjeska on screen

A review by: *Marek Żebrowski*



**Helena Modjeska (Modrzejewska)
As Ophelia in Shakespeare's Hamlet**

The fascinating life of Helena Modrzejewska (1840-1909), a brilliant Polish actress known to American audiences as Helena Modjeska, is a subject of a recent documentary, Modjeska—Woman Triumphant, made by director and writer Basia Myszynski with her husband, Leonard, who served as cinematographer for the project. Following a generally chronological route in setting up the narrative, the film recreates the persona of this celebrated actress through reenactments (using voices and images of three different actresses), as well as historical photographs, playbills, and other carefully gathered memorabilia. In addition, some of Modjeska's descendants are interviewed, giving the film a lively touch and, admittedly, a remote connection to the personality of their illustrious ancestor. The other pillar of this documentary is provided by interviews with various theatre critics, university professors, and historians who offer additional insights on the main subject.

Modjeska came from a family of musicians, painters and actors in Kraków, and her passion for theatre manifested itself quite early. On the verge of adulthood she married an older gentleman who was also her first manager; with him she toured the provinces, appearing in theatres of regional cities in Galicia, then an Austrian-administered part of Poland. Ambitious and emotive as an actress, Modjeska set her sights on demanding repertoire that included many traditional Polish plays, a good dose of contemporary repertoire and Shakespeare, her personal favorite. By the late 1860s she divorced her first husband (with whom she had a surviving son) and married Count Bożenta Chlapowski. She also began to appear in Warsaw theatres to great public acclaim. After several years in Warsaw, in 1876 Modjeska decided to emigrate to America and set up an artistic colony in California. Taking her family and several friends (including the novelist Henryk Sienkiewicz), she arrived in a promised land of Orange County after a long and arduous journey. The town of Anaheim was at that time nothing but a small outpost amidst barren and desolate scrubland, sparsely populated by some refugees from Germany. Attempts at farming by this group of European intellectuals came to naught and Modjeska had to return to her profession in order to make a living. Courageously she set out for San Francisco where, after a few false starts with foreigners who offered to teach her proper English, she became fluent enough to audition for a play. Her debut in San Francisco in 1877 in the main role of Adrienne Lecouvreur was sensationally successful and she went on to New York, which immediately became her second conquest. Afterwards, Modjeska travelled between America and Europe, touring extensively and appearing

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