

Coins

– Konrad Korzeniowski
Joseph Conrad –



face value	10 zł
metal	Ag 925/1000
finish	proof
diameter	32.00 mm
weight	14.14 g
mintage	59,000 pieces

Obverse: On the right-hand side, at the bottom an image of the Eagle established as the State Emblem of the Republic of Poland. On the left-hand side at the top, an image of Joseph Conrad, on the right-hand side, an inscription, KONRAD/KORZENIOWSKI/1857-1924, an oblique facsimile of his signature below. On the right-hand side, an inscription, 10/ZŁ, the notation of the year of issue, 2007, below. On the left-hand side, in the rim, a semicircular inscription, RZECZPOSPOLITA POLSKA. The Mint's mark under the Eagle's left leg, $\frac{m}{w}$.

Reverse: A stylized image of the barque named the *Otago* and a stylized image of clouds above. Below, a hologram shows the reflection of the barque in water and changes colours depending on the angle of vision.

Coin designer: **Robert Kotowicz**



face value	2 zł
metal	CuAl5Zn5Sn1 alloy
finish	standard
diameter	27.00 mm
weight	8.15 g
mintage	990,000 pieces

Obverse: An image of the Eagle established as the State Emblem of the Republic of Poland. At the sides of the Eagle, the notation of the year of issue, 20-07. Below the Eagle an inscription, ZŁ 2 ZŁ, an inscription in the rim, RZECZPOSPOLITA POLSKA, preceded and followed by six pearls. The Mint's mark under the Eagle's left leg, $\frac{m}{w}$.

Reverse: On the left-hand side an image of Joseph Conrad, an oblique facsimile of his signature below. An inscription, 1857-1924, below. On the right-hand side a stylized image of the barque named the *Otago*. At the bottom a stylized image of an open book. In the rim at the top and on the right-hand side a semicircular inscription, KONRAD KORZENIOWSKI.

On the edge: The inscription, NBP, repeated eight times, every second one inverted 180 degrees, separated by stars.

Obverse designer: **Ewa Tyc-Karpińska**

Reverse designer: **Robert Kotowicz**

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Information on the sale of coin at the website:
www.nbp.pl

Coins struck by the State Mint in Warsaw.

Printed by NBP Printing Office



On 20 December 2007, the National Bank of Poland is putting into circulation coins depicting Konrad Korzeniowski - Joseph Conrad, of the following face values:

- 200 zł – struck in proof finish, in gold,
- 10 zł – struck in proof finish, in silver,
- 2 zł – struck in standard finish, in Nordic Gold alloy.

From Konrad Korzeniowski to Joseph Conrad

„Joseph Conrad” is a world-known pen name. Nevertheless, most people do not know that the novelist who used that literary pseudonym was Polish, certainly the most famous person born in the region which is now a part of Ukraine and his real name was Konrad Korzeniowski. His life was so adventurous and uncommon that it could provide enough material to make several biographies, and not one; and it all began already with the moment he was born. Whereas no official birth certificate was issued to certify the private baptism administered to the two-day old baby boy on 5 December 1857 in Berdichiv (now Ukraine), the documented ceremony was held five years later in absentia of Conrad who was at that time in Warsaw and was about to follow his parents into exile to Russia.

Although he wrote all his books in English, he had a Polish background. His father, Apollo Nałęcz (who included the name of his coat of armour in his name), a poet and translator, ardently supported the independence movement and organized the clandestine committee that went on in 1863 to direct the Polish uprising against the Russian rule as the National Government (Poland was under partitions at that time). Stefan Bobrowski, his maternal uncle, was the War Commander in Warsaw during the uprising in 1863. Having regained freedom - and having lost his parents little Conrad obtained his education in Cracow and Lviv. Under seventeen he was when he went abroad for good.

It was in France that he began his career of a seaman; he could speak French fluently already as a child. Four years later, he took up studying English and commenced his service in the British merchant navy. In 1886, at the age of 29, he received the master mariner's certificate and became a British subject. Three years later, he started writing his first novel, *Szaleństwo Almayera*, [Almayer's Folly] published in 1895. In 1890, the task was interrupted by his voyage to Belgian Congo. He took the command of a river steambot; what he saw during a several-month period spent in the Belgian colony made him aware of the policies employed by the white colonizers vis-à-vis the natives. Whereas the shock and disappointment seriously undermined his health, the experience he gained provided material for his most famous work, „Jądro ciemności” [Heart of Darkness] (1899).

In 1894, he resigned from his position of the navy officer and two years later he married, Jessie George, an Englishwoman, by whom he had two sons, Borys (b. 1898) and John (b. 1906). Though already his first stories earned positive reviews, popular success eluded him for more than a decade. He was an ambitious, innovative author, daringly addressing topics that were new at that time for the English literature. He drew from the three cultures: Polish, French and British.

In his preface to *Murzyn z załogi „Narcyza”* (1897), [The Nigger of the „Narcissus”] a well-written novel about a ship crew who was struggling with the Nature, he defined the task of an author as „oddawanie najwyższej sprawiedliwości widzialnemu światu” [rendering the highest kind of justice to the visible universe]. This well-known formula spans the mastery in literature and moral

reflection. The preface sounds even more characteristic of him when he expresses his conviction of „solidarność, która wiąże ze sobą samotność nieprzeliczonych serc ludzkich ... która łączy całą ludzkość – umarłych z żywymi, a żywych z jeszcze nie narodzonymi.” [conviction of solidarity that knits together the loneliness of innumerable hearts ... which binds together all humanity – the dead to the living and the living to the unborn]. The stubborn pursuance of the contact with the reader, with a view to making him a co-author of the work, is a characteristic feature of all Conrad's works. This way, he searched for new narrative forms, which had a vast influence on the 20th century literature.

Lord Jim (1900), a novel of honour lost and tragically regained, *Nostramo* (1904), amazing panorama of a fictional state in Central America, subjugated to the USA economic imperialism, are recognized as his genuine masterpieces at present. The two other political novels: *Tajny agent* (1906), [The Secret Agent] a prophetic book about an international political provocation and a terrorist bomb attack, and *W oczach Zachodu* (1911), [Under Western Eyes] author's artistic response to *Zbrodnia i kara* [Crime and Punishment] by a Russian author Fyodor Dostoevsky, prove the amazing and comprehensive talent of the author, whose sea stories e.g. *Smuga cienia* (1915) [The Shadow-Line] are extensively read.

An eminent British philosopher, lord Bertrand Russell, a friend of Conrad, deemed a short story entitled „Amy Foster” (1901) - a tragic story of a young Polish highlander, cast away from his sunk ship onto the English coast - as a key to the ego of the author himself. This work in the form of novel within a novel, is characteristic of Conrad's writing. He wrote a number of short stories of varying length and on different topics: „Placówka postępu” (1896), [An Outpost of Progress] held in sub-Saharan Africa, „Pojedynek” [The Duel] (1908), excellent (and also amusing) historical novel set in the Napoleonic era. Conrad - fascinated by the times of Napoleon - put two stories in that historical scenery, *Korsarz* (1923) [The Rover] and unfinished *W zawieszaniu* (1925) [Suspense]. In most of his works it was the continental Europe - and not Great Britain - which served as the background in which the story was held – the geographical scope was quite broad spanning the area from St. Petersburg and Ukraine and Italy and Spain. He touched the issue of Poland in his work *Ze wspomnień* [A Personal Record] (1909) and a moving story of the November Uprising organized in 1831 against the Russian occupation of Poland „Książę Roman” (1911); and also in a number of feature articles, e.g. „Nota w sprawie polskiej” [A Note on the Polish Problem] (1918) and „Zbrodnia rozbiorów” [The Crime of Partition] (1919), where he discussed the issue Poland's right for independence.

With the view to winning support for the Polish National Loan floated in the USA by the government of Poland at war with the bolshevik Soviet state at that time, he wrote about „poczucie obowiązku i niezniszczalnej świadomości narodowej, zachowanej ... w bojach z potęgą trzech mocarstw i nieugiętym ponad stuletnim oporze” [the sense of duty and the imperishable feeling of Nationality preserved ... in open struggle against the might of three Powers and in indomitable defiance of crushing oppression for more than a hundred years] he was a man of merit both for the English

and World's Literature, he spared no efforts to serve his motherland. He died on 3 August 1924 and the representative of the Prime Minister of Poland was the only official present at his funeral.

Professor Zdzisław Najder
Doctorus Habilitatus

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



face value	200 zł
metal	900/1000 Au
finish	proof
diameter	27.00 mm
weight	15.50 g
mintage	8,200 pieces

Obverse: On the left-hand side, an image of the Eagle established as the State Emblem of the Republic of Poland. On the right-hand side of the Eagle stylized images of the barque named the *Otago* and of an open book with the pages whose bottom edges are shaped to look like sea waves. At the top, in the rim, a semicircular inscription, RZECZPOSPOLITA POLSKA and the notation of the year of issue, 2007. At the top, on the left-hand side an inscription, 200/ZŁ. The Mint's mark under the Eagle's left leg, $\frac{m}{w}$.

Reverse: An image of Joseph Conrad, on its right-hand side an inscription, 1857-1924. Below an inscription, JOSEPH CONRAD, against the background of the stylized facsimile of his signature. In the rim on the left-hand side a semicircular inscription, KONRAD KORZENIOWSKI.

Coin designer: **Robert Kotowicz**