

manner of upper-class Greeks, proving that they are no longer slaves after being delivered from bondage in Egypt. Also, a ceremonial part of the meal is the *aphikomani*, from Hellenistic Greek *epicomon*, the final course of the banquet.

English colleges created their own, more sedate versions of the symposia. The common room and dining hall arrangements with sherry, port, and other wines, where a variety of opinions are expressed, parallel those of antiquity. Tutorials, though one-on-one, traditionally end with the quaffing of a glass of sherry.

William A. Percy

### SZYMANOWSKI, KAROL (1882–1937)

Polish composer. The son of Polish landed gentry, Szymanowski was born in Tymoszwka, in eastern Poland (now part of the Soviet Union). He began to play the piano and compose at an early age, and while at the Warsaw Conservatory quickly acquired a reputation as a composer of talent, and a follower of modern musical trends.

Szymanowski's wide travels (he visited America in 1921) brought him into contact with many European artistic trends. This is reflected in his evolving and somewhat eclectic style, which moves from a Chopin-Scriabinesque early period, through a more Germanic chromaticism, to an impressionist period. His final compositions reflect Polish folk traditions and are more Bartokian in style.

Evidence of Szymanowski's sexual preference is largely indirect but nonetheless telling. He remained unmarried,

and once jokingly remarked that the only woman in his life was his mother. Correspondence with several close male friends is extant, although not published in its entirety [no similar correspondence with women exists]. Contemporaries of the composer make reference to his fondness for men. B. M. Maciejewski, in *Karol Szymanowski: His Life and Music* (London, 1967), states that it was common knowledge throughout European cultural circles that Szymanowski was homosexual. The Polish biographer Stefania Lobaczewska is more circumspect, stating only that Szymanowski was regarded in his youth as *zepsuty* (decadent, immoral) and that his music is marked by a strong erotic drive.

The most direct evidence is the composer's two-volume novel, *Efebos*, written in 1917. It is described by the composer as an *apologia pro vita sua*. The hero of the novel is a divinely beautiful young man in whom are united physical and divine love. Unfortunately, all but the introduction to the novel was destroyed during the bombing of the Polish National Archives at the beginning of World War II. Contemporary accounts describe it as the composer's theory of Greek love.

Szymanowski's musical output spans the gamut from solo piano works (three sonatas, preludes, studies, mazurkas) to songs for voice, orchestral works, symphonies, concerti, ballets, and opera (*King Roger*, premiered in the United States only in 1988). Szymanowski was director of the Warsaw Conservatory from 1927 to 1931, and was a strong advocate for contemporary music in prewar Poland. At his death, he was widely heralded as Poland's greatest composer since Chopin.

Peter Gach