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"Florenckie poematy Słowackiego", Jarosław Maciejewski, Wrocław 1974 : [recenzja]

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Tekst jest udostępniony do wykorzystania w ramach dozwolonego użytku.

révolution romantique en évoquant une oeuvre qui l'a provoquée, comme, par exemple, les *Brigands* de Schiller, ou une violente confrontation d'idées littéraires, comme celle, par exemple, qui a suivi, à la Comédie Française, la célèbre première d'*Hernani* de Victor Hugo. La Pologne est le seul pays où la révolution romantique a été une révolution armée. A la première d'*Hernani*, les jeunes poètes, peintres et journalistes sont venus habillés de façon fantaisiste et armés de bâtons, afin de rouer de coups un public qui sifflait l'oeuvre de leur maître adoré. En Pologne, les jeunes poètes, peintres et journalistes sont venus, eux, à leur première, armés de fusils et poignards, et leur but était de tuer le grand duc russe, frère du tsar.

Cette métaphore historiosophique exprime une profonde vérité: la puissance créatrice du romantisme polonais transcenda la littérature et embrassa l'histoire. Les conspirations et insurrections nationales étaient, dans une très grande mesure, inspirées par l'idéologie romantique de leur organisateurs. Les oeuvres de Mickiewicz et de Słowacki fournissaient des scénarios aux conspirations, manifestations patriotiques et insurrections nationales. La culture polonaise – nous l'appelons moderne pour marquer la distance qui la sépare de l'autre, l'ancienne formation culturelle, fort originale par ailleurs – est donc avant tout une culture où sans cesse se formaient et se développaient des correspondances, spontanées aussi bien que dirigées, entre la littérature et l'histoire. La littérature en Pologne a dû engager une lutte contre l'histoire. Et elle l'a gagnée.

Rés. par les auteurs

Jarosław Maciejewski, **Florenckie poematy Słowackiego**. *Poema Piasta Dantyszka herbu Leliwa o piekle – Ojciec zadżumionych – W Szwajcarii – Waclaw (Słowacki's Florentine Poems. The Inferno of Piast Dantyszek of the House of Leliwa – The Father of the Plague-Sufferers – In Switzerland – Waclaw)*. Ossolineum, Wrocław 1974, pp. 216.

This book presents the process of evolution and collation into a complete cycle of the volume of *Trzy poemata (Three Poems)* and is made up of six sections. The first – *Słowacki in Florence* –

—introduces the reader in the complex puzzle of the works' chronology; to dilemmas in Słowacki's political and poetical biography; and to the problems in the psychology of creation embodied by a Polish Romantic who was a poet, an exile, and a recluse.

The journey to Switzerland of 1832 meant for Słowacki—Maciejewski explains—a flight from Paris. The poet undertook it under the weight of hostile opinion that had greeted his first youthful appearances (his dramas, lyrics and poetic tales) in Polish emigré circles. The political events in Poland itself in 1830 and 1831 did not favour the publication in Warsaw of Słowacki's first fruits. However, his works made their debut in print in Paris at the least appropriate of times: after the failure of the November uprising. 1832 saw his first two volumes off the press: poetry that was lyrico-dramatic, historical and exotic, and thus of no interest to Romanticism after the uprising. Led by Mickiewicz, the "large emigration" condemns Słowacki's creations. The metaphor of "a fine Church without a God", reproaching the poet with a lack of ideas, will serve for many years as a derogatory label to be applied to an equal extent to his subsequent works. The poems *Lambro* and *Godzina myśli (A Meditative Hour)*, as well as the drama *Kordian* were greeted with stony silence.

The reflective Swiss period of the poet's life directs his undertakings towards, on the one hand, the presentation of love as a lyrical dream and, on the other, towards current historical realities. In documenting the fortunes of a single Romantic and his works Maciejewski simultaneously presents in relief

the tragic situation of the generation of which Słowacki was a contemporary, faced with the necessity of choice between social attitudes in society that, more often than not, were contradictory (p. 9).

In 1836 the poet forsakes Switzerland for a long voyage. He takes the following path: Roma, Naples, Greece, Egypt, Palestine, Syria. This voyage differs from the Enlightenment's excursions in search of material for learned reportage as well as from the didactico-emotional sentimental journey. It is a lyrically Romantic "aimless drifting," if one can so characterize the quest for the stuff of poetic creation. In 1838 Słowacki returns to Europe and, from 1838—39 onwards, settles down in Florence.

The idiosyncratic Romantic exile that took the course of a voyage

to the East; the intellectual maturity—already nourished perhaps by the works of Mickiewicz and Krasiński—arising out of the Polish national disaster—and the poet's Florentine experiences: all come to inspire his future creation. The period 1838–41 coincides with the peak of its vitality: seven books appear, including nine poetical compositions on a larger scale, one dedicatory verse, four verses in periodicals in Poland itself, a polemical article in the emigré press, a rich correspondence, and an attempt to describe his Eastern voyage.

The next three chapters represent the mainstay of the book's analysis. The researcher devotes them to Słowacki's Florentine work, and they bear the same titles as the poems: *Poema [...] o piekle*, *Ojciec zadżumionych*, and *W Szwajcarii*. The latter two works had earlier lain in rough versions in the poet's travelling-bag before gaining their final form during his stay in Paris. They were printed between 1838 and 1839 by a Polish publisher in Paris.

Despite the varied themes and stances represented by the three poems, Maciejewski demonstrates their coherence with respect to: the contrasts between the narrators fashioned in the course of the poems, the comparisons between their apparently similar private misfortunes, and the problems of the author's attitude to the problems raised and the positions of the heroes.

The poet's stay of a year and a half in Dante's native town left a lasting mark on the Florentine poems. "In the mind of Słowacki Dante is transformed into the figure of a master, teacher and guide to the Polish pilgrim" (p. 20). Classical motifs are superimposed upon oriental ones as well as upon others drawn from Polish folklore.

Poema Piasta Dantyszka transplanted the Dantean problematic to the situation of contemporary Poland, deducing a historico-philosophical significance from the tragic fall of aristocratic Poland. A precise analysis of the episodes of a work with a tight internal structure permits Maciejewski to state that there existed an earlier plan for the poem, somewhat different from the version known to us. Słowacki initially failed to work out this plan in full. In the interim he wrote two poems—*Ojciec zadżumionych* and *W Szwajcarii*—and only subsequently revealed to the *Poema Dantyszka* in order to add two final scenes calculated to round off a cycle composed of three poems.

The chapter on *The Cyclical Nature of the "Three Poems"* draws a partial balance of these considerations. Maciejewski shows how it came about that *Poema Piasta* ultimately did not pass into the cycle. Słowacki was forced by the poem's toughness as an anti-Czarist manifesto to withdraw it from overt publication. It was feared that Czar Nicholas might persecute the poet's mother (who remained in Poland) on the poem's account. *Waclaw* took the place of the *Poema Dantyszka*. This broke the unity of the cycle and deprived Słowacki of "a clear trump in the rivalry for a favoured place in emigré opinion, so responsive to the problems of the nation" (p. 145).

Waclaw, which alludes to Byron's poetic tales (eg. *Giaur*), opens a new phase to Słowacki's work, as Maciejewski demonstrates in the final chapter of his book.

In *Waclaw* the poet, for the first time, posed the question of the meaning for Polish history of its great morally negative figures; for the first time he synthesized this history by means of the bewitching detail of his landscapes and though customs and Ukrainian myths (p. 147).

Słowacki's Florentine poems protest against the circumstantially established view that the poetry lacks ideas. In *Waclaw* there appears the typical Romantic hero, at odds with his surroundings and himself; many means help to embody the depicted world, and no single one is exclusively relied on. This poem further differs from the remaining works of the cycle in the motivation of the despair of its hero, a national traitor whose prototype (in *Poema Dantyszka* as well as in *Waclaw*) was the figure of Szczęsny Potocki.

Poema Piasta Dantyszka appeared separately and anonymously in 1839. *Waclaw* was accorded a place among the three poems as a substitute link. Thus the conclusion, with its editorial recommendations, reads as follows:

Słowacki's four Florentine poems ought to be printed in a different order and interacting structure than those which literary history has proposed hitherto (p. 210).

As a result of the philological precision with which the monographs unfold, they tend to resist description, despite the fact that the purposeful construction of Maciejewski's exposition is exemplary. One can closely follow the methods of a modern historian of literary facts as they are deployed in the demonstration of the arti-

stic unity—and the rifts in sequential ordering—of the four poems. The tracing of the linear course taken by the problematic of the four poems, together with the quotations of acknowledged judgments made by previous historians of the poet, serves to resolve problems of a philological nature. The weight of demonstration has been apportioned between the main disquisition and the footnotes. The commentary's references considerably enrich our factography concerning Słowacki. They introduce numerous corrections into the researches of E. Sawrymowicz, S. Makowski and even supplement the statements made by J. Kleiner in his *Kalendarz życia i twórczości Juliusza Słowackiego (A Chronicle of the Life and Work of Juliusz Słowacki)*.

Sum. by Alina Siomkajło
Transl. by Paul Coates

Alina Witkowska, **Mickiewicz. Słowo i czyn (Mickiewicz. Word and Deed)**, Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe, Warszawa 1975, pp. 366.

This is in many ways an unusual book. First of all, in this age of specialized studies and even more specialized scholarly languages it is becoming increasingly unusual for someone to attempt to write about an author's entire literary production. Witkowska has not only done this but also added the philosophical writings and life of an author about whom volumes of specialized studies have already been written. What makes her study more unusual is that it does not follow the traditional pattern associated with "life and works" studies. These studies were often criticized because they sometimes became parodies of both the author and his works as pop psychology deprived both his actions and his writings of their original motivation. In addition, literary scholars complained that the author's works usually were little more than an appendix to his biography.

Witkowska has taken another approach in writing this book. First of all, she has moved all of the traditional "scholarly apparatus" to the footnotes in order to preserve the fluidity and continuity