

Ryszard Nycz

"Powieść młodopolska. Studium z poetyki historycznej", Michał Głowiński, Wrocław 1969 : [recenzja]

Literary Studies in Poland 7, 125-128

1981

Artykuł został zdigitalizowany i opracowany do udostępnienia w internecie przez Muzeum Historii Polski w ramach prac podejmowanych na rzecz zapewnienia otwartego, powszechnego i trwałego dostępu do polskiego dorobku naukowego i kulturalnego. Artykuł jest umieszczony w kolekcji cyfrowej bazhum.muzhp.pl, gromadzącej zawartość polskich czasopism humanistycznych i społecznych.

Tekst jest udostępniony do wykorzystania w ramach dozwolonego użytku.

d'aboutissement de l'époque, les limites de la pensée sur la poésie. Le nombre peu important ne réduit pas les valeurs évolutives qu'ils véhiculent, transmises aux générations suivantes de poètes.

Symbolizm i symbolika... est non seulement une introduction dans les problèmes fondamentaux de l'imagination et de la conscience poétiques de la Jeune Pologne, montrés en relation avec l'universum de la pensée humaniste de l'époque. En relevant la portée des expérimentations poétiques de la Jeune Pologne et de la nouvelle vision du monde corrélée à ces expériences, l'ouvrage découvre les racines des tendances qui seront déterminantes dans l'évolution de la poésie polonaise du XX^e siècle.

Rés. par *Marian Stala*
Trad. par *Lucjan Grobelak*

Michał Głowiński, **Powieść młodopolska. Studium z poetyki historycznej (The Novel of Young Poland: A Study in Historical Poetics)**, Ossolineum, Wrocław 1969. Series: Z Dziejów Form Artystycznych w Literaturze Polskiej (History of Artistic Forms in Polish Literature), Vol. XIII.

Głowiński's study is the first comprehensive monograph on the novel in the Young Poland period, based on a vast material (about 200 works) and supported by theoretical and methodological reflection. Although the author concerns himself mainly with problems of narration and its role as a basic structural factor of the novel, he also discusses other essential elements, such as the plot structure, construction of characters, space-time relations, the function of descriptions, and roles and competence of the narrator and the reader on various levels of organization of the novel.

In Chapter I, "Gatunek literacki i problemy poetyki historycznej" (A Literary Genre and Problems of Historical Poetics), Głowiński considers both the theoretical and historical significance of genological categories and characterizes the concept of genre viewed in historical and systematic, as well as in diachronic and synchronic, aspects and in terms of structuralization and destructuralization. A literary genre is defined here as "an intersubjective set of precepts,

rules and habits which regulate in a given epoch the given type of discourse, determining its tacit (or conscious and formulated) recognition and acceptance as distinct" (p. 23). A literary trend (movement), here considered as the *conjoncture* (in G. Gurvitch's sense) that affects the genological system and variously transforms it, is treated separately in the next chapter, this time as a category of historical poetics. Viewed in this perspective, within the evolution of literature, a literary trend (movement) is, according to the author, a certain set of possibilities, conditioned by factors of various kinds which contribute—directly or indirectly—to the development of literature; the set being not invariant but changing depending on the situation.

These possibilities involve both the way of writing literature and the ways it is perceived, yet these two ranges never overlap entirely, since the set of possibilities of which writers can avail themselves in their creative work constitutes a proposition for the reader and does not have to be immediately accepted by him. [...] A literary trend (movement), conceived in this way, indicates then the range of conventions—as well as the ways in which they are to be formed—and the choice of literary forms (p. 48).

Having presented the basic theoretical categories, Głowiński introduces his main subject in Chapter III, in which he discusses the situation of the novel in the Young Poland period. The new literary model is characterized as a synthesis of naturalist and modernist tendencies, with the basic frame of reference being still the model of classically realistic novel, undergoing at the time various transformations owing to the new *conjoncture*.

This important role of the old model—that of the realistic novel—in crystallization of the new one is reflected in two key problems with which writers of the epoch concerned themselves: the narrative perspective and rules of composition. In Chapter IV, "Przekształcenia powieści realistycznej. Pozycja narratora" (Transformations of the Realistic Novel: The Narrator's Position), the author analyzes the predominant mode of narration, that which makes use of the interior monologue in its various forms and functions (chiefly as expressive of a character's feelings and as a means of recording his process of perception) and in which—consequently—the narrator's position and language is close to the linguistic perspective of characters. Głowiński characterizes also other forms of quotation used in the novel of the time.

Changes in narration, where the language of the omniscient narrator is no longer predominant, being gradually superseded by the language of characters, correspond to changes in composition; and it is to the latter that Głowiński devotes the next chapter of his book: "Przekształcenia powieści realistycznej. Powieść jako zespół scen" (Transformations of the Realistic Novel: The Novel as a Series of Scenes). He examines here the principles and motivations of the "ill composition" of novels of the period, with their tendency to episodic and fragmentary structure and presentation in scenes. The characteristic revival of the novel in the first person that occurred towards the close of the 19th century and was highly conducive to the transformations of the classic model is discussed in the chapter "Od dokumentu do wyznania. O powieści w pierwszej osobie" (From a Document to a Confession: On the First-Person Novel). General characterization of this type of the novel and of historical and literary situation in which it was revived serves as a background for the analysis of its basic kinds: the diary novel, and the epistolary novel. Formal mimesis, by which the author means "imitation of other, non-fictional forms within a novel" (p. 192), is here the principal category in terms of which Głowiński treats the subject.

In Chapter VII, "Konstrukcje i destrukcje" (Constructions and Destructures), the distinctive features of the novel of Young Poland, hitherto considered in a general and summary way, are analyzed in a more detailed manner, in terms of the fundamental opposition between the destructive tendency to demolish all traditional models of the novel (the case of T. Miciński's novels) and the constructive tendency to transform these models into forms suited to the new literary situation (W. Berent's and K. Irzykowski's novels). To quote Głowiński's conclusions:

These works represent three types of possibilities created by the fiction of the period: the novel as a series of loosely connected episodes of various kinds, as a result of exclusively negative—in a sense—procedures in which the existing models are taken to pieces with no intent to construct a new one; the consistently polyphonic novel, radically rejecting the plot in the form which has hitherto seemed to be a necessary element of the genre; and the novel in which the predominant element is methodological reflection (p. 268).

The chapter closes with a brief description of the *rapsod*, a peculiar literary form, very characteristic of the aesthetics of Young

Poland, which might be considered as a hybrid form resulting from the interrelations between the novel and the prose poem, and combining elements of both.

Finally, with the last chapter: "Powieść młodopolska – miejsce w historii" (The Novel of Young Poland—Its Place in History) the approach changes from the synchronic to the diachronic one: the novel of the period is located in the evolution of literature, in relation to both the 19th-century traditions of the novel and its forms in other national literatures of the time, as well as in relation to the later, 20th-century novel, which in its most valuable achievements owes a great deal to the tradition of Young Poland.

Sum. by *Ryszard Nycz*

Transl. by *Maria-Bożenna Fedewicz*

Janusz Stradecki, **W kręgu Skamandra (The Skamander Group)**, PIW, Warszawa 1977, pp. 384.

Systematic research into literary culture was taken up quite recently in Poland, but its traditions go back to the middle of the 19th century. For a few years now in various university research centres, and especially in the Department of Studies on Literary Culture at the Institute of Literary Studies of the Polish Academy of Sciences, research workers have been collecting documentation and discussing methodology.

This research does not concern isolated literary works but the functioning of literature in social consciousness, and this depends on many factors: on the writer, the role he plays in culture, his various activities (literary groups, authors' unions), on the public institutions which influence the development of literature, and also on the media (publishing houses, the press, literary soirées). Another important factor is the reader who is at the receiving end, his social status and his literary and political background. This reader is a real person, he is part of some culture, which influences the way he interprets the message of any literary work. And so we can say that the object of researches into literary culture is the actual functioning of literature which is dependent on the processes of communication characteristic of a given culture.