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"Literatura staropolska w kontekście europejskim. Związki i analogie",
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fonction sociale, pour lui imposer uniquement les traits que l'auteur a choisi de représenter. Ajoutons enfin que le pamphlet de la Renaissance, dans ses versions les plus féroces, dépassait les limites de l'ironie et du persiflage parce que l'auteur ne respectait rien de ce qui, de près ou de loin, touchait la victime: il lui était même permis de se moquer des infirmités et autres disgrâces physiques. Ce n'est pas pour rien que le terme de pamphlet a été associé, en Pologne, au concept de calomnie.

Nous avons rappelé les problèmes de la communication auteur — lecteur — personnage dans notre conclusion; cela nous a semblé juste non seulement parce qu'ils ont guidé toute notre analyse, mais également parce qu'on peut considérer, dans un certain sens, qu'ils forment un prisme au travers duquel la situation du pamphlet dans la vie culturelle de son époque devient visible. C'est d'ailleurs essentiellement à ce problème que nous avons pensé en traitant de la polysémie dans la caricature littéraire, de ses possibilités et de la nécessité pour elle de faire appel à des signifiants diversifiés qui ont leur point de référence dans la tradition littéraire, les moeurs, les arts plastiques et surtout la culture ludique de l'époque considérée dans ses manifestations les plus variées.

Le pamphlet nominal, variante extrême du portrait caricatural, en représente non seulement la tendance la plus dynamique, mais se révèle être une création «ouverte», capable de briser la rigueur des conventions littéraires et l'adapter des formes diverses de communication, devenant ainsi, plus qu'une description ou qu'une constatation, une oeuvre en action qui attaque et qui provoque.

Rés. par l'auteur

Trad. par *Catherine Maire*

Literatura staropolska w kontekście europejskim. Związki i analogie (Polish Medieval, Renaissance and Baroque Literature in the European Context. Relations and Analogies), ed. by T. Michałowska and J. Ślaski, Ossolineum, Wrocław 1977.

Not so long ago we often heard it said that comparative studies were in a state of crisis. This judgement was, however, rather hasty. Comparative studies are still useful in analyzing literary

phenomena and with some epochs and periods they even are of primary importance. The large volume *Literatura staropolska w kontekście europejskim*, containing the papers delivered at the conference held in Warsaw in October 1975, may serve as a proof and is undoubtedly an important event in the studies of Polish literature of the Middle Ages, the Renaissance and the Baroque. The choice of contents is made in such a way as to give the reader a picture, as full and comprehensive as possible, of the relations between Polish literature and the literary output and culture of other European countries. Most papers included in the volume aim, to a smaller or larger degree, at a synthesis; apart from new remarks and postulates they often meticulously collect statements and short comments scattered in many books and articles. Of course, as the authors of the successive papers point out, the issues presented do not fully exhaust the problem and in certain branches they are only the first attempts at penetrating it. Nevertheless, the book helps the reader, in some general outline, to place Polish literature of the Middle Ages, the Renaissance and the Baroque in the whole European context of cultural phenomena of the times, and hence is of great value for scholars concerned with Polish literature of these periods.

The publication has also another quality of no less importance: both the individual papers and the whole volume may be considered as an important comment in the discussion on the range, methods and aims of comparative studies. It is surely not accidental that the book opens with Zdzisław Libera's paper, "Problemy współczesnej komparatystyki" ("The Problems of Modern Comparative Studies"). He states at the very beginning that comparative studies are by no means in a state of crisis but are actually flourishing, as both the perfecting of theoretical fundamentals and widening of the range of studies show. For example, such Marxist philologists as Zhyrmunsky or Durisin suggest concentrating not only on direct and typically literary interdependencies but also analyzing the external phenomena of a historical and social nature which affect them. Libera presents and discusses a number of trends in modern comparative studies, such as the propositions of the so-called thematological school (Trusson, Frye), with their frequent references to studies of myths and to the depth psychology. He draws our attention

to the interest in the theory of translation (Etiemble, Guyard) and to the phenomena of certain parallelisms in poetics and metrics. Besides, the author of the paper touches upon the problem of the limits of comparative studies, pointing out the tendencies of narrowing or widening them. Libera closes his survey of the contemporary problems of comparative studies with the conclusion that one of the important features of this field of literary scholarship is its very multiformity, its studying the literary work in many aspects and various relations.

Theoretical postulates appear also in many papers discussing the connections between Polish medieval, Renaissance and Baroque literature and literatures of other European countries. The suggestion most often repeated is that comparative studies should not be confined to typically literary phenomena but ought to connect and study them with the cultural, political and commercial relations taken as a whole. In many cases these external circumstances determined the nature of the connections among the literatures of different nations. Sometimes they worked as a catalyst of personal contacts, these in turn being conducive to affiliation and convergence. In other cases they hindered those phenomena. Especially instructive here is the example of two Polish neighbours: Hungary and Scandinavia. Jan Ślaski in his paper "Literatura staropolska a literatura starowęgierska" ("Old Polish and Hungarian Literature") shows how extremely strong and important the connections here were, though the fact is not always fully realized. A number of external factors, such as the common Turkish threat, marriages between ruling dynasties, connections among religious sects, etc., contributed to these literary connections and influenced many occasional works, w. g. *turcyki*¹ or epithalamia. Personal contacts were also important: Polish councilors stayed at the court of Hungarian kings of the Jagellon dynasty, Hungarians came to Poland, e.g. to acquire an education, and these sojourns were sometimes of great literary consequence, to mention only Czahrowski's poetry and Fabricius' discourse. An interesting example of homology was the common interest in Erasmus and in neo-stoicism, whereas the work of Ballassi, influenced by Polish

¹ *Turcyki*—the name given to the Latin treatises by S. Orzechowski, in which he called Christians to new crusades against the Turks.

poetry (he spent some time in Poland) as well as the influence of Janus on Kochanowski may serve as examples of affiliation, and common themes or the similar development of certain genres (e. g. postils)—as those of convergence. A considerable role, that of intermediary, of the so-called “third link,” was played also by the Italian humanists often travelling between Poland and Hungary. Jan Ślaski draws our attention also to the significance of common “negative” features, e. g. the weak development of petrarchism in both renaissance Poland and Hungary.

That literary relationships took a completely different form with Polish neighbours from the other side of the Baltic has been shown in Edmund Kotarski's paper “Literatura polska a literatura skandynawskie do początku XVIII wieku” (“Polish and Scandinavian Literature till the Beginning of the 18th Century”). They were mainly limited to scholarly polemics, e. g. between Maciej of Miechów and Jan Magnus, or occasional works connected with the Swedish wars or with the Vasa dynasty. According to the author the search for parallelisms concerning themes or genres, and for homology (similar use made of the biblical, classical and Italian sources) seems to be more fruitful. It was undoubtedly a number of political and religious factors, numerous armed conflicts, creating animosity and even hostility between the nations, which helped to form such mutual relations. What in the case of Hungary only strengthened literary relationships, here clearly acted as a deterrent.

Another interesting phenomenon to which attention is paid in many papers is the fact of a specific “specialization” that could be observed in the relations between Polish literature of the time and the cultures of certain European countries. Andrzej Borowski noted this in his “Polska a Niderlandy. Związki i analogie kulturalne i literackie w dobie humanizmu, renesansu oraz baroku” (“Poland and the Netherlands. Cultural and Literary Relations and Analogies in the Age of Humanism, Renaissance and the Baroque”). According to Borowski, the Netherlandian culture, similarly to the Italian culture, functioning in the stereotype of “Italianism” current in the Polish society of the time, was also perceived in a specific way, with special predilection for religious and philosophical doctrines. The best examples of this are the contacts of the Polish Brethren

with Dutch centres, the reception of Lipsius in Poland, translations of series of emblems. On the other hand, the Netherlanders were primarily interested in Polish religious toleration in the 16th century and many religious sects from that country came to live in Poland. These relationships are proved by the correspondence between dissenters (Grotius and Arciszewski) or such works as Zbigniew Morsztyn's poem *Grocyjus in silvis o żonie swej* (*Grocyjus in silvis on his wife*). Among other direct connections one may also mention the adaptation of *Crocus* by Rej or Barleus' introduction to the works of Szymonowic published in Leyden. Nevertheless scholarly influences undoubtedly dominated. Andrzej Borowski distinguishes even "the erasmian period" and "the lipsian period" in the history of mutual relationships. Those cultural relations, came into being, as it were, on the basis of rather lively commercial relationships. Besides, there were Dantyszek's (Dantiscus') sojourn in the Netherlands and the journeys of Poles to the universities of that country.

A similar "specialization" marks the reception of Spanish literature and it is to this problem that Krystyna Niklewiczówna devoted her paper entitled "Piśmiennictwo hiszpańskie w Polsce w okresie staropolskim" ("Spanish Literature in Poland"). Chiefly read in Poland were the mystics: Luis de Granada, St. Teresa, St. John of the Cross, and the scholarly and didactic works of Vives, Quevedo, Alfonso X, while the influence of literature proper was much weaker. Slight traces of it can be found in the works of Sęp Szarzyński, Twardowski, Beniśławski and in the Jesuit drama. These impulses, however, reached Poland with great delay and often incidentally. Niklewiczówna suggests that it was the ideological quality in Spanish literature that counted most for the Polish reader and hence the rather surprising disproportions in the reception and the lack of interest in the most outstanding artistic figures of the Iberian Peninsula.

Another important problem connected with comparative studies is the phenomenon of the so-called "third link"—of the intermediary language and culture. Undoubtedly this was the function performed by Polish literature in relation to certain Slavonic countries. Paulina Lewin points this out while studying the reception of Polish literature in the Ukrainian and Russian culture. In her paper "Li-

teratura staropolska i literatury wschodniosłowiańskie” (“Polish Literature and the East Slavonic Literatures”) she showed how, through Polish literature, a certain influx of European values reached those nations, though the process was long and had many stages. Lewin argues that comparatists should be interested not only in the borrowings themselves but also in the ways they are assimilated and the ways they function in the culture of another nation. These are important phenomena if we want to understand in what way Polish culture spread east. The main centre of this propagation was the Mohylańska Academy in Kiev. The writers connected with it: Symeon Połocki, Łazarz Baranowicz and others, wrote in their native language as well as in Latin and Polish. Both through the Ukraine and directly from Kiev these influences spread further into Russia. Those who greatly contributed to this were Jan Białobocki and Symeon Połocki, whose activity had undoubtedly an influence on the shaping of the Russian Baroque. European values, which Polish culture carried in its intermediary role, began to compete effectively with the traditional model of culture. It was then that the Russian syllabic verse was formed, the court and school theatre appeared and Baroque poetics was adopted. Among the works adapted and translated were the works of Frycz and Strykowski, the *Chronicles* by Bielski, romances and anecdotes. It was also through the Polish *Gofred* that the Tasso model of the historical epos reached those lands.

Literary relationships between Poland and the Chechs were of a completely different character. During the Middle Ages a number of European values penetrated to Poland through its southern neighbours. Józef Magnuszewski deals with this process in his paper “Literatura polska i literatura czeska do połowy XVIII wieku” (“Polish and Czech Literature till the Middle of the 18th Century”), showing how the impulses from the other side of the southern border influenced the shaping of the Polish language and versification, left their traces in chronicles, in translations of the Bible and *Psalter*, in religious songs, etc. During the Renaissance the intermediary role of the Czechs diminishes—the literatures of both countries have become equal partners. In the following century the mutual relationships become more and more loose and cultural

exchange is limited mainly to religious writings and literatura so-wizdrzalska².

The connections of Polish literature with the literature of other countries were not always so direct. Sometimes the inspirations came to Poland with a few centuries' delay, as it was the case with the so-called French pre-Renaissance of the 12th century, which influenced Polish 15th- and 16th-century literature. Jadwiga Sokołowska in the paper "Literatura staropolska a literatura francuska do połowy XVIII wieku" ("Polish and French Literature till the Middle of the 18th Century") presents also examples of certain typological analogies: e. g. Kochanowski in Polish poetry – Ronsard in French poetry, the bilingualism of both literatures, etc. Some direct connections, however, can be found with English literature, despite the fact that the political and cultural situation was not exactly conducive to them. Witold Ostrowski gave a few examples of such connections in his "Literatura staropolska a literatura angielska" ("Polish and English Literature"). English influences are evidenced e.g. by the translations: *Argenida* by Waclaw Potocki and those of Owen by Kochowski, etc. Writers of Scottish origin living in Poland, such as Loechius and Ines, are also to be remembered in this context. On the other hand Polish literature was reaching England: interest was aroused in Copernicus and Jan Łaski, the poetics of Sarbiewski and *De optimo senatore* by Goślicki were edited, the latter several times.

Tadeusz Ulewicz devoted his paper to cultural and literary connections between Poland and Italy during the Middle Ages and the Renaissance ("Związki kulturalno-literackie Polski z Włochami w wiekach średnich i w renesansie"). The relations between those two countries were extremely animated. Travellers, students and participants of oecumenical councils journeyed *en masse* to Italy.

² *Literatura sowizdrzalska* – the trend of the plebeian literature at the end of the 16th century and in the first half of the 17th century, flourishing mainly in Małopolska (Little Poland) and named so after one of its central heroes, So-wizdrzał (German Till Eulenspiegel). This kind of literature was anonymous, its authors being usually clerks, and was addressed to the folk public; it was typified by satire and grotesque. A considerable role in this trend was played by parodies of the official literature (also religious), e.g. parodies of the psalms. Among genres characteristic of this literature were: comedy (e.g. the ribald comedy), epigram, and prose stories, generally of light character.

The first humanists, such as Zbigniew Oleśnicki, Grzegorz of Sanok explicitly propagated the achievements of Italian culture. In turn, in the times of Sigismund I Italians started to come in large numbers to Poland.

The book includes also the paper "Literatura włoska a literatura polska w XVII wieku" ("Italian Literature and Polish Literature in the 17th Century") by Julian Lewański. He is concerned with the parallelism of changes taking place in the poetry of these two countries, with the coherences between the lyrics of Jan Andrzej Morsztyn and the theatre of the times of Władysław IV Vasa, and finally with a number of interdependencies connected with translations and adaptations.

Among the papers delivered at the conference we find also two papers discussing the relationships with separated regions: Bronisław Nadolski's "Polska a Prusy. Kontakty literackie i kulturowe do połowy XVIII wieku" ("Poland and Prussia. Cultural and Literary Contacts till the Middle of the 18th Century") and Jan Zaremba's "Związki literackie Śląska z Rzeczypospolitą do połowy XVIII wieku" ("Literary Connections between Silesia and Poland till the Middle of the 18th Century"). The former discusses the cultural role of Gdańsk and Królewiec, and especially of the schools there, the latter the influence of Polish models on the literature written in Silesia, of Rej's prose on *Kazania pokutne* (*Penitential Sermons*) by Gdaciuz, of Szymonowic on the poetry of Jerzy Bock, etc.

Worth-mentioning also is the interesting observation made by Marian Szyrocki in his paper "Z dziejów powiązań literackich polsko-niemieckich w okresie od średniowiecza do baroku" ("On the History of Polish-German Literary Relationships from the Middle Ages to the Baroque"). The author points out that the German Reformation had very definite effects on Polish literature, bringing about the coming into being and the subsequent flourishing of new genres, such as the treatise or dialogue, and changed the attitude towards the vernacular, animating the art of translation. All this makes us realize how complicated the mutual influence of distinct literatures and cultures is and how many additional, stimulating factors, often involving literature in the wide historical and political context, contribute to it. The great variety of theoretical

postulates and actual solutions contained in the volume to a great extent is the result of the fact that every researcher has faced completely different problems and difficulties in his own field of research. Therefore the book will not give the reader an unequivocal prescription for the aim, methods and range of modern comparative studies. After all, it is probably impossible. But *Literatura staropolska w kontekście europejskim* has proved that comparative studies are absolutely essential, since only research on a wide scale allows us to understand our own tradition properly.

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Transl. by *Aniela Korzeniowska*