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**GENRE INTERCHANGE AND INTERACTION:
AN ESSAY IN RECONNAISSANCE**

This paper could well begin with an anecdote about a PhD celebrating with a party the award of his degree, for which he had worked on John Galsworthy's novels. When asked by a guest what he thought about Galsworthy's plays, he answered: "My thesis is on his novels". And he said no more.

Fortunately, the tendency to a narrow specialization in literary interests and studies is presently being counterbalanced by the growth of comparative and intertextual studies. They offer a new chance for the integration of knowledge, welcome from the perspective of the integration of European countries and the global civilization of the 21st and 22nd centuries.

Another reason for a more catholic treatment of the body of literature is the fact that many eminent writers practised all literary genres. It would be nonsense to study Scott or Hardy as mere poets or novelists, even though their dramas are forgotten.

The following paper is an essay in reconnaissance of some areas of English literature where new insights might be gained from observing interchange and interaction among various literary genres.

One of the most fruitful formative periods shaping the English novel and creating new literary genres was the second half of the 18th and the first half of the 19th century.

In their tendency to emancipate fiction from the normative Classicist poetics the novelists turned to forms of written expression found in real life: letters, essays, and biography.

Pseudo-autobiography had been successfully launched on the reading public by J. Swift and D. Defoe even before Fielding began to struggle to express – using the terms of Classicist poetics – his conception of a novel. "A comic epic poem in prose" – he wrote about his first novel, referring the new prose fiction to the poetic genres known in that period. How perfectly aware he was of, and sensitive to, all varieties of literary genres,

one can realize by reading the essays with which he introduced each Book of *Joseph Andrews* and *Tom Jones*. Most of them are literary criticism and, published together, might make an interesting booklet on literary theory and practice.

Furthermore, writing *Joseph Andrews*, he knew that it imitated biography, as he states in the essay preceding Book I. Formally, his novels were modelled on two kinds of essays: one which expresses a personal opinion, and another which describes a life.

His novels were, in a way, hybrids for the literary essays appeared separately from biography. The essayistic parts, however, constituted a comment on the literary shape of the biography. Thus Fielding created the first autothematic novel, in which the author consciously exposed himself as the novel's maker and discussed its making.

This idea and practice of metafiction is to be seen later in *Vanity Fair* in which the story is presented within the brackets of a puppet performance and in which the author discusses various possible ways of telling his tale: "We might have treated this subject in the genteel or in the romantic, or in the facetious manner. Suppose we had laid the scene in Grosvenor Square, with the same adventures – would not some people have listened? Suppose we had shown..." (*Vanity Fair*, chap. VI).

Thackeray carries on suggesting all the possible exciting courses of narrative and then ends: "But my readers must hope for no such romance, only a homely story, and must be content with a chapter about Vauxhall, which is so short that it scarce deserves to be called a chapter at all" (*Vanity Fair*, chap. VI).

Similarly, the narrator in *Lovel the Widower* from beginning assures the reader that he will not be a hero, but only a chorus in a tragedy and his presence as a reporter is felt throughout the book.

The mixing of essay and biography (or a part of biography) as a form reappears in the 19th century in Carlyle's *Sartor Resartus* [1833], in Samuel Butler's *Erewhon* [1872], which had first appeared as a series of essays, and in *Marius the Epicurean* [1885] which Walter Pater designed as a series of essays descriptive of various centres of antique civilization.

In most cases, however, the biography was separated in the novel from the essay and became predominant, as is evident from titles like *Roderick Random*, *Waverley*, *Oliver Twist*, *David Copperfield*, *Henry Esmond*, *Jane Eyre*, *Mary Barton*, *Adam Bede*, *Tess of the d'Urbervilles*...

The early novelists, like Fielding and Sterne, also modelled their fictional contact with the reader on the familiar situation of gentlemen's after-dinner chat, in the course of which anecdotes or uncanny stories were told. At the lower social level the inn was a place where people might listen to the "tales of my landlord", as Walter Scott called one cycle of

his novels. The same informal social contact was established when a sailor was spinning his yarn about his adventures.

In Poland parallel situations resulted in the creation of a literary genre reflecting in a familiar atmosphere the gentry's manners, called *gawęda* [ga'vezda] – a tale or a chat. *Pamiętki Soplicy* [1839] by H. Rzewuski, *Pamiętniki kweśtarza* [1852] by Ignacy Chodźko, *Pamiętniki J. P. Benedykta Winnickiego* [1854] by Wincenty Pol and *Urodzony Jan Dęboróg* [1855] by Władysław Syrokomla are some examples of the genre.

This kind of originally oral story-telling, informal and unplanned and therefore digressive, might have been broken by questions or comments which demanded the story-teller's response.

This is reflected in *Tristram Shandy* in which L. Sterne says:

Writing, when properly managed (as you may be sure I think mine is) is but a different name for conversation. As no one who knows what he is about in good company, would venture to talk all; – so no author, who understands just boundaries of decorum and good-breeding, would presume to think all: The truest respect which you can pay to the reader's understanding is to halve the matter amicably, and leave him something to imagine, in his turn, as well as yourself. (Book II, Chap. XI)

Residual elements of this dual discourse are evident in *Tristram Shandy* in addressing the reader as Sir or in the exchange at the end of Book I, chapter IV:

– But pray, Sir, what was your father doing all December, January and February? – Why, Madam, – he was all that time afflicted with a Sciatica.

Sterne consciously enlarged the digressive material in his narrative to abnormal proportions. "Digressions, incontestably, are the sunshine"; – he wrote – "take them out of this book, for instance, – you might as well take the book along with them..." (Book I, chap. XXII)

The main course of events i.e. the birth, growth and education of Tristram Shandy almost disappears under a spate of his observations, reflections, memories, anecdotes and quotations. The main character is presented from inside registering the stream of his own consciousness. Later Dorothy Richardson, Virginia Woolf and Joyce returned in their own ways to this technique.

Yet Sterne, like Virginia Woolf in *Mrs Dalloway*, was careful to strike a balance between the external and the inner events. He wrote: "I have constructed the main work and the adventitious parts of it with such intersections, and have so complicated and involved the digressive and progressive movements, one wheel within another, that the whole machine, in general, has been kept a-going; – and, what's more, it shall be kept a-going these forty years..." (Book I, chap. XXII)

Sterne's informal talk, his digressions, his playful tone were adopted by Byron in *Don Juan*. For an important interchange and interaction was

taking place not only between essay and biography on the one hand and the novel on the other hand, but also between poetic narrative and prose fiction.

The Byronic hero was inspired not only by Byron's personal problems, but also by Mrs Radcliffe's gothic novels. And the gothic novel, Fielding and Sterne and, perhaps, *Robinson Crusoe*, are present in his *Don Juan* which is a novel in verse, anticipating in many ways the 19th century novel.

This does not mean that Byron was not inspired by some poetic models. Ariosto is usually mentioned and it was John Hookham Frere [1769–1846], an Eton and Cambridge man, British envoy to Lisbon and Madrid, who showed how to handle *ottava rima* with great skill in an English mock-romantic Arthurian poem.

The poem's long and funny title: *Prospectus and Specimen of an intended National Work by William and Robert Whistlecraft of Stowmarket in Suffolk, Harness and Collar Makers. Intended to comprise the most Interesting Particulars relating to King Arthur and His Round Table* [1817–18] is usually abbreviated to *Whistlecraft*. The four *cantos* of the poem at once inspired Byron's *Beppo*, *A Venetian Story* [1818] and later *Don Juan*.

Writing *Don Juan*, Byron, like Fielding, broke off with the Classicist epic tradition. He says:

Most epic poems plunge 'in medias res'

 That is the usual method, but not mine –
 My way is to begin with the beginning;
 Canto I, VI–VII

The poem begins, instead of with an invocation to the Muse, with:

I want a hero: an uncommon want
 When every year and month sends forth a new one.
 Canto I, I

The Muse is nonchalantly addressed later:

Hail, Muse! et caetera.
 Canto III, I

As a plot Byron's "epic satire" (Canto XIV, XCIX) follows the model of "life and adventures". Its tone resembles Fielding's lenient irony and sober realism. It begins like a scandalous French romance, it becomes a story of adventures on sea and land in Turkey and Russia. In its English parts it resembles Bulwer's and Disraeli's silver-fork novel, anticipating it, and in its final scenes it returns to mock-gothic.

There is a strong realistic tendency in *Don Juan* springing naturally from Byron's practical attitude to life. He says:

This narrative is not meant for narration,
 But a mere airy and fantastic basis
 To build up common things with common places.
 Canto XIV, VII

And elsewhere:

[...] My Muse by no means deals in fiction:
 She gathers a repertory of facts,
 Of course with some reserve and slight restriction,
 But mostly sings of human things and acts –
 And that's one cause she meets with contradiction;
 For too much truth, at first sight, ne'er attracts;
 And were her object only what's call'd glory,
 With more ease too she'd tell a different story.
 Canto XIV, XIII

And then:

This strange, but true; for truth is always strange;
 Stranger than fiction: if it could be told,
 How much would novels gain by the exchange;
 Canto XIV, CI

The novels are always in the author's mind. He alludes to *Joseph Andrews* and *Tom Jones* (Canto XIII) and admires Scott

[...] who can paint your Christian knight or Saracen,
 Serf, lord, man, with such skill as none would share it if
 There had not been one Shakespeare and Voltaire,
 Of one or both of whom he seems the heir.
 Canto XV, LIX

Byron uses the novelistic trick of suspense:

Whether Don Juan and chaste Adeline
 Grew friends in this or any other sense
 Will be discuss'd hereafter ...
 At present I am glad of a pretence
 To have them hovering, as the effect is fine
 And keeps the atrocious reader in suspense;
 The surest way for ladies and for books
 To bait...

Canto XIV, XCVII

There is plenty of descriptive, circumstantial realism in the poem, beginning with the episode of the little Juan throwing a pail of housemaid's water downstairs, over the poet (Canto I, XXIV).

The detailed description of Norman Abbey – outside and inside – (Canto XIII, LV–LXXIV); of Juan's Gothic chamber and the view from its window (Canto XVI, XV–XVI); the presentation of aristocratic London

might be carried over to any realistic nineteenth century novel of manners. Only with Byron they are more modern in tone, because of his detached flippancy and irony. This is how he describes the reaction of Juan's family at the news of his being a rich and successful man:

He wrote to Spain; – and all his near relations,
Perceiving he was in a handsome way
Of getting on himself, and finding stations
For cousins also, answer'd the same day.
Several prepared themselves for emigrations;
And eating ices were o'erheard to say
That with the addition of a slight pelisse
Madrid's and Moscow's climes were of a piece.

Canto X, XXX

The drawing of the characters of Lady Adeline and of Juan (Canto XV, XII–XVII) is also a good example of the subtle psychological insight and of novelistic presentation.

As for the narrative situation, Byron follows the examples of Fielding, Sterne, and others. It is he, lord Byron, who tells the story, deviates from it, and repeatedly addresses the reader:

Our hero (and, I trust, kind reader! yours –
Canto IX, XXIII

But, reader, thou has patient been of late
While I ...

Canto XIII, LXXIV

You know, or don't know that great Bacon...
Canto XIV, VIII

In spite of his realism and of the fact that Byron made himself one of the characters in Canto I, besides being the narrator, he quickly forgot about it and assumed, like his successors – Thackeray and Trollope – the position of an omniscient, omnipresent, and sometimes omnipotent narrator, who is both the creator of his literary characters and can also direct their destinies.

So he wrote:

What Juan saw and underwent shall be
My topic, with of course the due restriction
which is required by proper courtesy;
And recollect the work is only fiction,
And that I sing of neither mine nor me...

Canto XI, LXXXVIII

Whether they rode, or walk'd, or studied Spanish
.....
Whether their talk was of the kind call'd 'small',

Or serious, are topics I must banish
To the next Canto; where perhaps I shall
Say something to the purpose...

Canto XIV, XCVIII

And I shall take a much more serious air
Than I have yet done, in this epic satire.

Canto XIV, XCIX

Thus, like Fielding and Sterne, Byron makes his narrative autothematic or metafictional to some degree. And he does something that brought tears to Henry James' eyes and what the Master called "a betrayal of a sacred office" and "a terrible crime" in the creation of fiction – "he concedes to the reader that he and this trusting friend are only 'making believe'. He admits that the events he narrates have not really happened, and that he can give his narrative any turn the reader may like best." (I am quoting *The Art of Fiction in Selected Literary Criticism*. Henry James, ed. by M. Shapira, Mc Graw-Hill, New York 1965, p. 51).

Henry James' condemnation is, let me say, only as valid as the condemnation of the Elizabethan drama from the standpoint of the theory of "three unities". And it falls down if we apply to it the criticism of the Classicist poetics which Dr Samuel Johnson presented in his *Preface to Shakespeare* in defence of the Stratford dramatist.

Dr Johnson has written that "he that can take the stage at one time for the palace of Ptolemies, may take it in half an hour for the promontory of Actium. Delusion if delusion be admitted, has no certain limitation". But, he added, "the truth is that the spectators are always in their senses and know, from the first act to the last, that the stage is only a stage, and that the players are only players". Their "lines relate to some action and an action must be in some place; ..." the different actions that complete a story may be in places very remote from each other; and where is the absurdity...?"

Applying this argument to Henry James's idea of the novel as a self-contained, autonomous world from which the creator is absent, we may answer that the readers are always in their senses and know from the first to the last that novel is a novel. And if they recognize in it the Art of Fiction, they ascribe it to its author. The author-reader presence cannot be forgotten. Fiction is "make believe". The Jamesian ideal may be accepted only as a historical convention.

However, let me return to Byron. As the author of *Don Juan* he not only followed some novelistic traditions, but he also anticipated the later society novels and was, in my opinion, the pioneer of light, conversational, racy narrative of which even the majority of Victorian novelists were incapable.

Their emancipation from the 18th century Johnsonian formal prose was slow. Byron consciously made a break with the tradition and chose a different discourse which he describes, saying:

[...] speculating as I cast my eye
On what may suit or may not suit my story,
And never straining hard to versify,
I rattle on exactly as I'd talk
With anybody in a ride or walk.

Canto XV, XIX

My suggestion that Byron's novel-poem has exercised an influence on the shaping of the 19th century novel may become more acceptable when we look at certain general, massive changes in the development of English literature in the Romantic and the Victorian periods¹.

In the Romantic period poetry was dominant. In the Victorian period – the novel. The transition meant a change from fantasy to realism. And this change may be observed in the individual development of great Romantics.

Years ago I made a study of the parallel development of Sir Walter Scott and Adam Mickiewicz as writers striving for similar reasons towards a more comprehensive and detailed realism². Both the great Romantics started with writing ballads, then they felt they needed a larger vehicle of the romantic poetic tale and then they wrote novels: Scott his *Waverley* and Mickiewicz his *Pan Tadeusz* which is a novel in verse. Byron's path ending in *Don Juan*, was similar.

This tendency towards the detailed, the concrete and the individual was in keeping with the Romantic attitude to life as contrasted with the Classicist attitude. It may be observed in the creation of the original Romantic genre of the poetic tale – a vehicle larger than the ballad and permitting the poet to present a more detailed and more picturesque story.

S. T. Coleridge could not find enough room for his tale in a ballad, so he put together seven ballads and made a long and wonderfully vivid romantic tale about *The Ancient Mariner*. His *Christabel* (written in 1797, published in 1816) suggested a new kind of freer rhythm to Walter Scott and he produced *The Lay of the Last Minstrel*. Byron and Keats followed.

¹ A fine study of Byron's conversational style with many good examples may be found in *Lord Byron* by J. D. Jump, *The Pelican Guide to English Literature* 5. *From Blake to Byron*, London 1957, p. 240–251.

² Cf. *Walter Scott in Poland. Part I and Part II*, *Studies in Scottish Literature* 1972, vol. II, No 2, p. 87–95 and vol. III, No 2, p. 71–95.

The invention of the poetic tale, the visual imagination and their interest in nature allowed the poets to make their descriptions true to life.

Scott in *Lady of the Lake* [1810] described so exactly the route of James Fitz-James taken across the mountains to Loch Katrine that in Sir Walter's lifetime tourist-guides led visitors along it.

The poetic travelogue forced on the Wordsworth in *Descriptive Sketches* and on Byron in *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage* a task of realistic description.

One may observe how, writing *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage* Byron developed an eye for details and gained ability to evoke places from memory. The Greek monastery on a rock in Canto II, XLVIII–XLIX, is much more vivid than the hills of Cintra in Canto I, XIX–XXII and the description of an unusual sunset and moonrise occurring at the same time in Canto IV, XXVII–XXVIII is as unforgettable as the waterfall on the Velino in Canto IV, LXIX–LXX–LXXI. In *Don Juan* the technique, acquired by an effort to depict things seen, has been applied to the presentation of things imagined, as happens in the novel.

Let us turn now to Coleridge's description of the night in *Christabel* as an example of delicate painting technique:

The night is chilly, but not dark.
The thin gray cloud is spread on high.
It covers but not hides the sky.
The moon is behind, and at the full;
And yet she looks small and dull.

11. 15–19

The same subtle and minute observation is to be seen in characterization:

There she sees a damsel bright,
Drest in a silken robe of white,
That shadowy in the moonlight shone;
The neck that made that white robe wan,
Her stately neck, and arms were bare;
Her blue-veined feet unsandall'd were
And wildly glittered here and there
The gems entangled in her hair.

11. 58–65

Writers, educated on the Romantics, learned this technique of detailed and impressive description and carried it on from the poetic tale to their novels. Coleridge has taught them how, instead of somewhat antiquarian-inventory method of Scott, the interiors might be presented by mere hints at some details:

...when the lady passed, there came
A tongue of light, a fit of flame;
And Christabel saw the lady's eye,

And nothing else saw she thereby,
Save the boss of the shield of Sir Leoline tall,
Which hung in a murky old niche in the wall.

11. 156-163

Such effects were later practiced by Sheridan Le Fanu.

Keats does this also by concentrating on details which suggest the whole interior:

A casement high and triple-arched there was
All garlanded with carven imageries;
Of fruits and flowers, and bunches of knot-grass
And diamonded with panes of quaint device...

Eve of St. Agnes, 24

His description is painter-like, including the effects of light, colour and fabric and highly exact:

Then by the bed-side, where the faded moon
Made a dim, silver twilight, soft he set
A table, and, half anguish'd, threw thereon
A cloth of woven crimson, gold, and jet. -

And still she slept an azure-lidded sleep
In blanched linen, smooth and lavender'd,
While he from forth the closet brought a heap
Of candied apple, quince, and plum, and gourd;
With jellies soother than the creamy curd,
And lucent syrups, tinct with cinammon.

Eve of St. Agnes, 29-30

In the Middle Ages the early romance evolved from *chanson de geste* by imitating the chronicle, as we can observe in Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia Regum Britanniae*. It also assumed either metrical or prose form. It seems that the interchange and interaction between both forms of narrative fiction was repeated in the 19th century.

In my paper "*Aurora Leigh*", *A Victorian Christian Feminist Novel*³ I turned the readers' attention to the fact that some 19th century European writers wavered between the choice of verse or prose for their novels. The result was that *Don Juan* [1819-1824] was followed by another flippant novel of the times - Pushkin's *Eugene Onegin* [1834], that *Waverley* has its counterpart and parallel in Adam Mickiewicz's *Pan Tadeusz* [1834], that one might discuss Wordsworth's *The Prelude* [1850] as an autobiographical novel in verse whose far-reaching descent might be discerned in some books by Virginia Woolf, and that in Elizabeth Barrett Browning's *Aurora Leigh*

³ W. Ostrowski, "*Aurora Leigh*". *A Victorian Christian Feminist Novel*, [in:] *Studies in Literature and Language*. In Honour of Adela Styczyńska, Łódź 1994, p. 117-125.

[1857] we have a social-problem novel which fails in the use of verse rather than in its novelistic shape and message.

Literary scholars may not be used to the idea of examining the interchange and interaction between different literary genres which are usually studied separately. So let me point to the mutual influences of forms and techniques between the drama and the novel.

Do not let us forget that both Mrs Radcliffe's and Walter Scott's romances frequently bore quotations from Shakespeare or other playwrights as epigraphs placed over chapters. This shows that while the authors were writing novels, some plays were at the back of their minds.

Wordsworth, Coleridge, Scott, Byron, Shelley, and Keats tried their hand at writing drama. This was in keeping with the Romantic quest for dramatic psychology.

Fielding and Charles Reade first wrote plays and then turned to novel-writing. Reade's *Masks and Faces* [1852] was changed by him into the novel *Peg Woffington* [1853]. Sir James Barrie's *Peter Pan*, performed in 1904, was retold as a story of *Peter and Wendy* in 1911, while his novel *The Little Minister* [1890] was dramatized in 1897.

The Platonic philosophical dialogue or Menippean satire seems to have inspired the novels of Thomas Love Peacock of which the first, *Headlong Hall*, was published as early as 1816 and the last, *Gryll Grange*, in 1860. Their pattern is to introduce a group of extraordinary characters and made them talk. The narrative and descriptive text is reduced to a minimum and the dialogue or colloquy, marked with names like the text of a play, constitutes the body of his novel.

Whatever their origin, Peacock's works introduced a novel whose form of expression was predominantly dialogue. Later Ivy Compton-Burnett made it function not so much as a conversation or a discussion, but as a revelation of the inner thoughts of her characters. And Henry Green wrote a series of novels, from *Living* [1929] to *Doting* [1952], in dialogue.

In Peacock we have, it seems, the beginning of the English novel of ideas whose representatives about the end of the 19th and in the first half of the 20th century were Samuel Butler, the author of *Erewhon* [1872] and *Erewhon Revisited* [1901] and Aldous Huxley, especially in *Point Counter Point* [1928]. In their hands the dialogue form has been changed into a series of essays orally delivered by characters; for any lengthy statement in a dialogue, as we can observe in Plato and in Bernard Shaw's plays of ideas (cf. *Man and Superman*), becomes in fact a short essay.

The interchange between the form of drama and of the novel has not functioned in only one way.

Towards the end of the 19th century, when the revival of the theatre began in the British Isles, some eminent playwrights – G. B. Shaw, Sir

James Barrie, Harley Granville-Barker – used novelistic techniques in writing dramatic texts.

Shaw's outspoken plays were barred from the stage by censorship so he published their texts for reading, drawing on his experience as a novelist who had written *The Irrational Knot* [1880, publ. 1905], *Love Among the Artists* [1881, publ. 1900], *Cashel Byron's Profession* [1882, publ. 1886] and *An Unsocial Socialist* [1883, publ. 1887].

To make his plays readable and to spur the reader's imagination, he transformed dry technical stage-directions into fine novelistic descriptions of stage-settings, characters' looks, behaviour and even thoughts. The Prologue to *Caesar and Cleopatra* may serve as an example of Shaw's literary ability to create atmosphere.

The same may be said about Sir James Barrie in *Dear Brutus* [1917] – his own original psychoanalysis expressed in the terms of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* – and in the disturbing *Mary Rose* [1920], a play about the working of time on human relationships. Pages of novelistic introductions precede the dialogue in those plays and make them richer than the stage production can be.

The eminent actor, producer and Shakespearean scholar Harley Granville-Barker followed Shaw and Barrie in this respect. The same may be said about John Galsworthy who, besides being known as the author of *The Forsyte Saga* and *A Modern Comedy*, was a successful writer of numerous plays. One of them, *Justice* [1910], contains a scene without a word (Act III, Scene III), with an action only described in the playwright's words. The scene, they said, impressed Winston Churchill so much that he made a change in prison regulations.

What I have so far presented, shows that literature is an organism; that literary genres do not develop in isolation. They mutually influence and inspire one another. Narrative forms grow almost out of everything, sometimes out of a metaphor, as happened in one of Dickens's stories in which the idea of a Christmas song and the idiom "spirit of Christmas" were transformed into a prose ghost story.

The genre interchange and interaction take place even between genres widely different – in their structure and realization – like theatre play and the novel. Dickens's novelistic technique inspired Griffith the film maker.

We can also see how easily from its inception the novel absorbed various models of expression and presentation either from human practice or from other literary genres. There is some kind of continuity in its growth and certain forgotten techniques are revived as what the French call the *nouveau roman* – demonstrates. Julian Barnes's metafictional novels and David Lodge's *Changing Places*, in which even film-script technique may be found, testify to this.

I have called the investigation presented in this paper an essay in reconnaissance. As every reconnaissance it requires closer investigation checking up of details and a more extensive search. It may require corrections.

But I hope that the material which I have shown will stimulate further research on genre interchange and interaction. Indeed, similar investigation has already begun. I can mention at least Angus Easson and his paper "Statesman, Dwarf and Weaver: Wordsworth and Nineteenth-Century Narrative"⁴ in which "the importance of Wordsworth not only in Romantic poetry, but also in nineteenth-century narrative" is discussed⁵. All such contributions are welcome.

Witold Ostrowski

MIEDZYGATUNKOWA WYMIANA I WSPÓLDZIAŁANIE: PRÓBA REKONESANSU

Autor sugeruje, że można by osiągnąć nowy wgląd poznawczy przez badanie wymiany i współdziałania między różnymi gatunkami w obrębie literatury angielskiej.

Autor zwraca uwagę na to, że jednym z najbardziej formatywnych okresów kształtujących powieść angielską i inne nowe gatunki literackie, była druga połowa XVIII w. i pierwsza połowa XIX w.; że w XIX w. nastąpiło przejście od dominacji romantycznej poezji do panowania realistycznej powieści i że towarzyszyła temu indywidualna ewolucja poetów – W. Scotta, A. Mickiewicza, G. Byrona w poszukiwaniu dłuższych form narracyjnych, które pozwoliłyby na bardziej szczegółowe i szerokie realistyczne przedstawienie odtwarzanego świata. Poeci zaczęli od ballady, przechodzili do powieści poetyckiej, a później do powieści prozą, jak *Waverley*, lub wierszem, jak *Pan Tadeusz*, *Don Juan* i *Eugeniusz Oniegin*.

Pisząc o początkach powieści angielskiej autor zwraca uwagę, że czerpała ona z form użytkowych: listów, eseju, biografii i gawędy towarzyskiej.

Esej i biografia występują obok siebie u Fieldinga, tworząc powieść autotematyczną. Późniejsze inne próby scalenia eseju z biografią spotykamy w powieściach *Sartor Resartus* T. Carlyle'a, *Erewhon* S. Butlera i *Marius the Epicurean* W. Patra.

Z towarzyskiej sytuacji gawędy powstał układ autor – czytelnik, pozwalający na apostrofy do czytelnika, dygresje a nawet czynienie z fabuły fikcji – świadomie stosowany przez Laurence'a Sterne'a w *Tristramie Shandy* i kontynuowany u Thackeraya, Trollope'a i innych w okresie wiktoriańskim.

Byron wykorzystał wzory powieści Sterne'a, powieści romansowej, przygodowej i obyczajowej, tworząc *Don Juana*, na co wskazują liczne przykłady. Jednocześnie, używając nowego,

⁴ A. Easson, "Statesman, Dwarf and Weaver: Wordsworth and Nineteenth-Century Narrative", [in:] *The Nineteenth-Century British Novel*, ed. J. Hawthorn, London 1986, Edward Arnold Publishers, p. 17–29.

⁵ Cf. S. Baker, "Shakespearean Authority in the Classic Detective Story", *Shakespeare Quarterly* 1995, vol. XLVI, No 4.

satyrycznego, lekkiego, nonszalanckiego tonu i języka konwersacji przygotował drogę powieściom z życia arystokracji pióra Bulwera i Disraeliego oraz lekki nowoczesny styl powieściowy.

Na konkretność i indywidualność charakterystyki, plenerów i wnętrza powieści angielskiej XIX w. wywarła wpływ technika romantycznej powieści poetyckiej, o czym świadczą przykłady z Coleridge'a, Byrona i Keatsa.

W dalszym ciągu autor przechodzi do wymiany między powieścią a dramatem. T. Love Peacock wprowadził powieść dialogowaną, którą w XX w. uprawiali Ivy Compton Burnett i Henry Green. Natomiast G. B. Shaw, Sir James Barrie, John Galsworthy wprowadzili do sztuk rozbudowane i utrzymane w stylu powieściowym wskazówki sceniczne. Wszyscy ci pisarze byli zarówno dramaturgami, jak i twórcami powieści.

Kończąc esej, autor spodziewa się poprawek, ale także zachęca do dokładniejszych dalszych poszukiwań tego rodzaju, twierdząc, że gatunki nie rozwijają się w izolacji.