

tologicznych. Autor proponuje tutaj przeprowadzenie rozległej ankiety tematologicznej (*enquête thématologique*) w przekroju przestrzennym i czasowym. Odpowiadałoby to jego zdaniem samej naturze tematu pozwalając uchwycić jego bogactwo i złożoność, określić jego modyfikację i polisemiczność. Ankieta nie może być zbiorem monografii: ponieważ ma odpowiedzieć na pytanie o przyczyny modyfikacji znaczeń tematu, powinno się ją rozciągać na jak najszersze tło historii idei i historii literatury. R. Trousson wyznaje, że nie da się wykluczyć ze studium tematu niewdzięcznej pracy encyklopedysty polegającej na chronologicznej klasyfikacji tematu, ustaleniu tytułów, nazwisk, dat, itd. Zaznacza jednak, że praca taka jest jedynie środkiem do osiągnięcia właściwego celu tematologii.

W *Thèmes et mythes* zarysowuje się projekt tematologii usytuowanej na skrzyżowaniu różnych dyscyplin, zachowującej co prawda tradycyjne nastawienie historyczne, ale nie wykluczającej rozważań nad konstrukcją formalną i wartością estetyczną dzieła literackiego. Unikając w ten sposób zamknięcia wyłącznie w szeregu literatury lub historii idei, zmierzałaby ona do syntetycznego oglądu ewolucji formalnej i znaczeniowej tematu. Szkicowy charakter wykładu R. Trousson sprawia, że nie zawsze wiadomo na jakiej zasadzie ma się w praktyce dooknywać włączenie innych dyscyplin do studium tematu. Wydaje się, że efekt proponowanego typu pracy nad tematem opierałby się w dużej mierze na operatywności intelektualnej i szerokich kompetencjach historycznych i literackich badacza; i to nie tylko w momencie przygotowywania materiału — R. Trousson sugeruje tutaj zgodnie z duchem komparatyzmu pracę zespołową, ale także w jego teoretycznym opracowaniu. R. Trousson oświadcza jawnie, że chodziło mu jedynie o przedstawienie kilku metodologicznych dyrektyw. Tym samym podważa podstawowe założenie swojej mowy obrończej: dyrektywy owe nie

likwidują bowiem słabości tematologii wynikającej z braku spójnej metody. Zgodzić się jednak wypada z twierdzeniem autora, że empiryczny fakt żywotności określonych tematów w kulturze europejskiej uzasadnia potrzebę tego typu refleksji badawczej

Mieczysław Chomicz, Wrocław

Alina Siomkajło, EWOLUCJA EPIGRAMATU (DO POCZĄTKÓW ROMANTYZMU) (EVOLUTIONS OF EPIGRAM TILL THE BEGINNING OF ROMANTICISM IN POLAND). Ossolineum, Wrocław 1983, pp. 186.

The fact that generic notions constitute one of the categorial namings of literary phenomena (liable to historical transformations) establishes a durable interdependence between the generic studies (as a theoretical branch allowing for some a priori assumptions) and the historical research (based, first of all, on an artistic item). This interdependence seems to be reciprocal: genetic research must be accompanied by historical awareness and the literary studies carried from the historical angle must involve generic cognizance.

The first type of research leads to a reflection upon the structure of the genre, determining its historical durability and delimiting it from among other literary phenomena whereas the other approach tends to reconstruct historical process in relation to the flexibility of the genetic notions.

Alina Siomkajło's work — in which priority is given to the second methodological standpoint — attests the above-made distinction. The choice of the author's standpoint results probably from the very "nature" of the genre which is the area of her research since — as it is stated by Jan Trzynadłowski — "small verbal forms may be considered being elusive; they are definable structurally and indefinable functionally; in order to develop their basic structures (emph. mine — M. T.) they need their proper textual, referential or situational

determinants."<sup>1</sup> The necessity to take account of these extratextual (contextual) or even extralinguistic (consituational) factors conditioning the evolution of epigram has brought the author to the following definition of her methodological standpoint: "The potentials of the diachronically — oriented generic method going beyond systematization within its own area and tending instead to explain genre evolution in some wider literary, cultural, historical, philosophical or social context (depending on their respective roles in reshaping the genre models) — have proved to be the most expedient key to explaining the phenomena typical of the spontaneously dynamic nature of epigram." (p. 18). As a result of that the author does not endeavor to establish a single "archetypal" model of epigram but seeks to show its historical flexibility and variety. Starting with Greek and Roman epigrammatic forms she seems at the same time to follow a methodological device formulated by S. Skwarczyńska: "[...] the model with which to compare samples of a given generic structure is the original sample."<sup>2</sup>

The ground on which A. Siomkajło distinguishes two kinds of epigrams, i.e. the lyrical early Greek kind and the satirical Roman one, are not, however, their structural properties, but the "philosophy" they imply: their philosophical and ideological contexts as well as functional determinants. Both typological models recur in the farther parts of her book according to the assumption saying that "The process of expiring and arising of the concepts of the Polish epigram unfolded in constant interaction not only among the native models but also through recurrent references to antiquity." (p. 20). Surveying the principles and the contents of the book one may pose a question why the author has

concluded her investigation at the turn of Enlightenment and Romanticism while the later, or even quite recent, continuations of this genre in Poland (Lec, Sztaudynger) are evident. Such a picture of the generic evolution has been substantiated by the contemporary generic studies which point to Romanticism as the beginning of the so-called genre-cognizance crisis understood as the lack of an explicitly stated, uniform idea of the pattern and quality of particular literary genres: "In Romanticism the notion of the genre lost definitely its delimiting and qualitative status to become a descriptive and systematizing category. Romanticism sanctioned the rise of new literary genres and abandoned the notion of the genre in its hierarchical and qualifying application. Classic hierarchy was abolished; genres were equated and mixed. The category of the genre was replaced by that of the kind: since Romanticism onward the determinants of the genre began to yield place to viewing literary phenomena through the categories of lyricality, dramaticity and epicity."<sup>3</sup>

In the book of A. Siomkajło the evolution of the Polish epigram till the outset of Romanticism has been presented as, first of all, the development of that delimiting and qualitatively-oriented cognizance of the genre supported by a number of old-Polish, Enlightenment and early-Romantic poetic schools and treatises on poetry. These are just the main sources from where the author draws her knowledge of the old-Polish epigrams of gentry tradition as well as their multiple variations, or of the Baroque epigrammatic forms deriving from bourgeois culture, or else of the later (turn-of-the-epoch) continuations. Word invention in naming epigrammatic forms testifies to an immense popularity of this genre in the Polish literary tradition (its most outstanding representatives being M. Rej, J. Kochanowski, M.

<sup>1</sup> J. Trzynadłowski, *Małe formy literackie*, Wrocław 1977.

<sup>2</sup> S. Skwarczyńska, *Niedostrzeżony problem podstawowy genologii*, [w:] *Problemy teorii literatury*, Wrocław 1967.

<sup>3</sup> J. Misiewicz, *Światopogląd i forma. O artystycznych wartościach literackich*, Lublin 1983.



Sep-Szarzyński, W. Kochowski, W. Półtocki, I. Krasicki, A. Naruszewicz, T. K. Wegierski, F. Zabłocki, S. Trembecki, K. Brodziński, A. Fredro, A. Mickiewicz). It also "shows how the Polish ideas of the genre went astray from the cognizance that had been formed through the development of other literatures." (p. 29). What is then the possibility — in the context of this multiform existence of epigram as well as its semantic openness — to draw its evolutionary line in the Polish literature from its origins till the Enlightenment-Romanticism turn? The author has selected a functional approach: as a changing factor she sees the function of the text, or — in J. Lotman's words — "the text's social function; its liability to meet some definite expectations of the community which has produced it."<sup>4</sup>

This multi-way development of the Polish epigram is being traced in the light of its four functions: ludic, esthetic, moralistic and cognitive. And thus the author says that "the Renaissance epigram comes to exist together with its practical use; it is occasional and is marked by a sense of realism and daily life." (p. 154). The development of epigram which in the Baroque period interweaves with artful poetry, undergoes formalization defiant to the realistic epigram". (p. 187). Epigramatic forms in the Enlightenment are, in turn, conditioned by a didactic and moralistic function. They even go as far as to undertake the task of social preaching: the author, most often anonymous, assumes the role of the Nation's spokesman; "the Enlightenment 'riddle' removes the gentry epigram from the terminology and the epigramatic production in Poland. It installs itself in the latter's place. The political function of the 18th century 'riddle' transfers the significance of epigram from private life to parliamentary and public affairs." (p. 69). The Rococo-Enlightenment epigram, as

a product of the aristocratic culture, shows different tendencies marked by obviously entertaining and esthetic functions. The Enlightenment-Romanticism turn, manifest particularly in the literary output of K. Brodziński, evolved "against satirical and slanderous use of epigramatic productions in the name of Greco-Slavonic program of idyllic literature..." (p. 115). Since then onward epigram was becoming more general and universal in thought, and abandoning occasional duties for the cause of preaching "practical philosophy", which was indicated in the titles themselves: "Wisdom of the World", "Sages of the World", "To Time", "To Truth", etc. The priority of the cognitive function, together with a manifest subjectivity showing the signs of Romantic individualism, marks the last variation of the Polish epigram in its evolutionary line. Romanticism, in spite of its utmost tolerance in regard to the generic norms, did not ignore that form of expression (classic as it was): apart from the idyllic epigram involved in the popularity of the journal, there developed — particularly in post-Uprising times — small forms carrying public messages. This testifies to the author's essential remark stating that "the incoherent evolution of Polish epigramatic literature was overshadowed by marcialis trends, i.e. by a satirical epigram with a moral, flavored with "Roman salt". In different epochs and with flexible impact the above trend competed with the epigramatic lyrical miniature." (p. 187).

It seems that the essential merit of A. Siomkajło's work lies in that it does not leave the reader with a sense of fragmentary vision in regard to the totality of literary and cultural reality: its theoretical substance does not exist in a "vacuum". According to the author's initial assumption "evolutionary lines of different traditions of the genre can [...] illustrate transformations of national literatures or even of the whole cultures." (p. 6).

Joanna Tarnogórska, Wrocław

<sup>4</sup> Quot. after: H. Markiewicz, *Literatura w świetle semiotyki (Na marginesie prac J. Lotmana)*, [w:] *Konteksty nauki o literaturze*, Wrocław 1973.