

uses while delineating the history of the picaresque, especially commendable is his stress on the sociological aspect of the genre's development. Also the technique in which the book is composed deserves praise. It falls naturally into two parts. The first is the critical text itself, highly readable even for a nonprofessional. The second, which supplements and enriches the first, is made up of a substantial section of notes plus an index of authors, works and subjects. The notes contain a critical bibliography as well as a host of polemics, arguments, and minor information which has rightly been removed from the text to the reference part. The book is beautifully illustrated and equipped with maps. All these devices will contribute significantly to the reader's engagement with Bjornson's valuable study.

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Eugeniusz Czaplejewicz,
WSTĘP DO POETYKI PRAGMATYCZNEJ (INTRODUCTION TO PRAGMATIC POETICS). Wydawnictwa Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego, Warszawa 1977, 197 pp.

That is how the author defines the purpose of pragmatic poetics: its aim is "to build such a theory of a literary work of art, which would take into account and expose its active participation in social life and social practice, as well as its relations with real people who use it" (p 114). Numerous definitions of pragmatic poetics scattered in the text imply one general assumption: literature should be examined in terms of influence, relations should be found between literature and non-literary activities, between "word and action." A postulate of examining literary devices according to their role and usefulness in communication and their function in a process of formation of meanings sounds innovative and refreshing, particularly as compared to contemporary theory of literature,

dominated by structuralism and trends related to it. The impression of novelty results from the fact that synthetic discussion of the theory of literature from the pragmatic point of view is a very recent phenomenon and has not yet achieved a full rank of opposition in relation to aestheticizing theories.

Pragmatic poetics has rich tradition: two chapters of the dissertation, namely "Plato's pragmatic theory of word" and "Two trends in poetics: Platonic and Aristotelian" supply the reader with necessary evidence and provide the basis for the discussion of the influence of literature as well as its dialogue-like and ideological character. The author begins from pointing out the contradictions, structural trends found themselves entangled in. The poetics of syntactic structuralism, for instance, made a sign in art its autonomous world needing no justification from the outside, the fact led to a break with non-literary reality to which the sign referred and to the loss of its semantic aspect. That such an attitude leads to intellectual acrobatics and breaks a relation of a literary work of art with life, was already stated by Mukařovsky, although he was not able to find a proper way-out from the deadlock, what is more, he was not able to avoid one essential danger, i.e. that of bringing poetics too close to linguistics. According to the author the above contradictions resulted from the fact that structural poetics brought Aristotle's suggestions into extreme. Accepting his treatment of literature structural poetics treated it as a set of devices used to cause certain effects and announced disinterestedness of aesthetic experience. Aristotelian trend in poetics, comprising various forms of classical poetics and its many modern currents, has ruled for centuries creating rich tradition, but for all its merits has built a concept of literature that must evoke many reservations. The author rejects such phenomena as: autonomy and aestheticism of poetry, freeing literature from practical aims, placing it "beyond good and evil," reluctance of poetics to evaluate abstract

understanding of a literary work, of art, separating it from its historical context, looking for the aim of poetry in manipulating influence (the division into active encoder and passive decoder), treating a work of art as a set of formal devices taking no account of ideology. Is such an attitude a continuation of Aristotle's intentions? It is difficult to say. "There is little doubt, however, that his formulations, especially if we place them beside Plato's writings, give way to such interpretations although they do it carefully and with moderation – the features lacked by his continuators" (p. 112).

The author contrasts the above critical outline of Aristotelian trend in poetics with a specific praise of pragmatic poetics, the beginnings of which can be found in Plato's writings. The foundation stone of pragmatic poetics lies in three main thoughts contained in the works of the author of the *Republic*: i. literature as influence, ii. literature as a dialogue, iii. literature as ideology. We can trace them in mediaeval "poetics," romantic theories, Tolstoy's understanding of literature – all true to Platonic intentions – in Poland they can be observed in the creativity of C. K. Norwid, S. Brzozowski, K. Irzykowski. The works of S. Skwareczyńska and M. Bachtin show that Platonic trend found its place in contemporary poetics understood as a scientific branch. The author's comments about Platonic poetics are extremely interesting: although not yet examined well enough and deprived of a status of an "official" theory it is presented by the author as a source of revival and turn in literary research. The author is interested in Plato's theory for the light it sheds on pragmatic poetics. He maintains that a notion of literature we can find in Plato's dialogues differs strongly both in range and content from what we are accustomed to by later tradition. Plato understands literature pragmatically, as an art of influencing by means of words. The influence may vary in different literary forms: it is different in spectacular or persuasive rhetoric, different in discussion or poetry. Because in such a broad understanding of literature a word is its

means of communication, in a word lies an essence of literary influence. A word has a concrete mission to fulfil in relation to the decoder, it has to teach, persuade and change him. The function is performed through an attack on various human dispositional centres: intellect, emotions, biological instincts.

Plato includes social concreteness of words and their social sense to the most important features of linguistic utterance, this should be understood that a word must have its decoder through whom it interferes with reality in order to change and shape it. Words may cause good as well as evil, that is why there are no socially neutral words. Words, loaded with social sense, are subjected to evaluation which their ideological character inevitably brings about. Are we allowed, then, to stop at the mere explanation of linguistic mechanisms? "The pressure of social reality is too strong [...] one has to get involved in an attempt of defining social aims a language should serve" (p. 95).

Based on the above assumptions the poetics of Platonic provenance interprets a literary work of art pragmatically, examining in the first place various functions given to the texts by their creators and users. It is hostile to such phenomena as autonomy and aestheticism of literature, does not avoid evaluation and moreover, accepting a multitude of criteria depending on its purpose, examines a literary work of art in a close relationship with social situation. Poetics of Platonic provenance opposes immanentism, placing a literary work of art in history-literary process, doubts in the usefulness of emphasizing differences between literature and science maintaining that human activity and knowledge are close to each other.

The part of the dissertation which presents basic assumptions of pragmatism contains opinions particularly inspiring for the development of pragmatic poetics. It consists of three chapters developing main thoughts of Platonic tradition (literature as influence, dialogue, ideology). Although concerned with general matters the opinions point to a concrete direction of research work.

The most interesting conceptions of literature as influence can be found in the contemporary theory of the theatre, in the writings of Bertold Brecht for whom an artist should aim at evoking an inventive and critical attitude in the decoder, and in the works of S. Skwarczyńska and M. Bachtin who are sorting out literature according to the mechanisms of influence.

The process of influence is closely connected with both ideological and dialogue-like character of literature. From the latter approach the author chooses two questions worth more penetrating analysis: what type of relations join a literary text with other elements in a dialogue process and on what a dialogue within a text depends. The conclusions constitute a basis of reflection on the problem of ideological aspect of literature. Ending his thesis the author explains that accepting an ideological direction in pragmatic poetics does not mean accepting "ideologism" destroying literature for falsely and narrowly understood ideology.

Eugeniusz Czaplewicz's dissertation was not intended to be an exhaustive account and is not a handbook of pragmatic poetics. It is a good "introduction", an outline posing important questions. Well-composed, showing both scholarly inspiration and power of reasoning it justifies the need of pragmatic attitude in literary research.

A shortened version of this dissertation can be found in a book *Problems of Pragmatic Poetics* (ed. by A. Lam, Warsaw 1977, pp. 168), containing papers by E. Kasperski, B. Owczarek, Z. Mitosek, R. Sulima, and Z. Osiński. The papers contain discussions on the subject and tasks of pragmatic poetics and its connections with Marxism. They aim at closer formulation of pragmatic problems and do not avoid to analyze them on concrete facts. The appearance of books signaling a new theoretical school seems an important and interesting fact as it may mean a turn in Polish literary research.

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Transl. by Ewa Stachniak

Michał Masłowski, *DZIEJE BOHATERA. Teatralne wizje Dziadów, Kordiana i Nie-Boskiej komedii do II wojny światowej* (HISTOIRE DU HEROS. Les visions théâtrales de *Dziady*, *Kordian* et *Nie-Boska komedia* jusqu'à la II^{ème} guerre mondiale). Ossolineum, Wrocław 1978, ss. 221, 3 nlb, il. 30.

En 1974, la revue bimensuelle polonaise "Théâtre" publiant un article de Grzegorz Sinko engagea une discussion annoncée dans un avant-propos de la rédaction comme étant relative «au sujet de l'état, des devoirs et de la méthodologie de la science polonaise sur le théâtre»¹. Pour sa part, Sinko explicite formule une conclusion intéressante, à savoir que dans les recherches théâtrologiques il est indispensable de profiter de l'expérience de la sémiologie et de l'anthropologie de la culture. En effet, «la sémiologie et l'anthropologie de la culture constituent aujourd'hui la base indispensable à l'étude de l'oeuvre théâtrale non seulement dans son ensemble et dans différentes parties mais également par rapport à la société de laquelle la dite oeuvre est sortie ou par laquelle cette oeuvre est reguë». Ce postulat (certainement n'est il pas considéré comme la seule possibilité du chercheur) correspond dans un certain sens au livre de Michał Masłowski, présenté dans l'ouvrage précité lequel fut publié au début de l'année 1978.

Dans l'introduction, Masłowski écrit: «le présent ouvrage est un essai [...] d'interprétation idéologique et artistique des trois drames romantiques polonais les plus importants [*Dziady* de A. Mickiewicz, *Kordian* de J. Słowacki et *Nie-Boska komedia* de Z. Krasiński — I. G.]. Ceux-ci sont à la base du grand répertoire du théâtre polonais; par leur complémentarité ils nous permettent, de voir ces oeuvres d'une certaine façon qui repose sur les prémisses théâtrologiques et sur les informations relatives à la pensée mythique de l'homme, permettent

¹ G. Sinko, *Sur le besoin de la théorie*, "Teatr", 1974, nr 20, p. 4-5.