

Literatura polska obu Ameryk Studia i szkice—Seria pierwsza

Edited by Beata Nowacka and Bożena

Szałasta-Rogowska. Katowice-Toronto: Silesia University Press (www.wydawnictwo.us.edu.pl) and the Polish Publication Fund in Canada (www.polskifunduszwydawniczy.ca), 2014. 651 pages. Index, bibliography. ISBN 978-83-226-2264-3. Hardcover. In Polish.

The book is divided into six parts, each comprising several articles. The first part, “Go West,” opens with an essay on Jacek Jezierski, who translated and published in 1789 William Robertson’s *The History of America*. The essay offers historical background and biographical information on Jezierski and the Scottish historian Robertson. This essay originally appeared as an introduction to Jezierski’s translation *Historyja odkrycia Ameryki przez Kolumba, wynalezienia i podbicia Meksyku przez Cortésa, pobicia Peru przez Pizarra* (The History of Discovery of America by Columbus, Discovery and Conquest of Mexico by Cortés, Conquest of Peru by Pizarro). Beata Nowacka’s essay on Melchior Wańkowicz’s travels in America in the footsteps of Sienkiewicz summarizes a record of a failed search for inspiration. Anna Jamrożek-Sowa presents Eva Hoffman’s memoir *Lost in Translation* describing the plight of a Polish adolescent living between two cultures. Jerzy Kossek follows the development of a second-generation poet and fiction writer Stuart Dybek. Andrzej Busza offers a Saidean look at the group of Polish writers in London in the 1950s and ‘60s known as Kontynenty. The final essay examines the Solidarity emigration of the 1980s and their disappointment with America and the West.

The second part, “Poetycka Kanada,” (Poetic Canada) comprises articles on Polish poets, newspaper columnists, translators, and playwrights living and writing about Canada. Jan Wolski presents theatrical activities of the Polish émigré community in Toronto and discusses Waław Iwaniuk’s unpublished play “Dom” (Home). Two essays are dedicated to poet Florian Śmieja: one explores Śmieja’s

alienation and desire to grow spiritual roots in the new country, while the other discusses Śmieja’s book of conversations with other émigré poets, writers, editors, and literature historians.

Marian Kisiel analyzes similarities between Bogdan Czaykowski’s views on the teleology of fate and Emil Cioran’s idea of existence as plagiarism. Agata Paliwoda examines the ways in which melancholy is expressed in the poetry of Danuta Irena Bieńkowska and points to tension between melancholy and hope. Two essays deal with Grażyna Zambrzycka’s poetry: Alicja Jakubowska Ożóg examines the motif of journey in Zambrzycka’s verse, whereas Bożena Szałasta-Rogowska writes about the volume *Bóg miodu: Notatnik jukatański* (The God of Honey: A Yucatán Notebook). Violetta Wejs-Milewska writes on Marek Kusiba, poet, journalist, and columnist of New York’s *Przegląd Polski*. The final essay deals with Roman Sabo’s, Stanisław Barańczak’s, and Magdalena Heydel’s translations of Seamus Heaney.

On to the third part. First, poet Józef Wittlin’s war experiences are examined, then Barbara Czarnecka looks at the essay on America by Jan Lechoń, Polish poet, literary and theater critic who like Wittlin died in New York, then Anna Kasperek examines the poetry of Kazimierz Wierzyński. Beata Mytych-Forajter turns to the letters of Jarosław Iwaszkiewicz sent from Argentina and Chile. The final essay deals with Antoni Słonimski’s account of his visit to America.

The next part, “Liryczne Stany?” (The Lyric USA?) comprises five essays. The first deals with Julia Hartwig’s *Dziennik amerykański* (American Journal) and her *Wiersze amerykańskie* (American Poems), the second with Tymoteusz Karpowicz’s texts, the third by Katarzyna Mulet examines the poetry of Stanisław Barańczak as it reflects the experience of American immigration and trauma of alienation. Then Mariusz Jochemczyk examines Jacek Podsiadło’s work. Jochemczyk probes the links between Podsiadło and American literary tradition. Finally, Beata Hebzda-Sołogub studies the poetry of Adam Lizakowski, a representative

of the Solidarity wave of immigrants, and his portrayals of the United States.

The fifth part is titled “Inne Stany” (A Different United States). The first two essays record the image of America in Polish non-fictional literature and in the Soviet-inspired “social realist” journalism. The remaining articles likewise deal with the image of America in Polish prose and drama. Barbara Fride reads Jan Józef Szczepański’s text, *Koniec westernu* (The End of the Western) through the lens of postcolonial theory. Barbara Gutkowska analyzes Sławomir Mrożek’s journals and explores the role of the United States and Mexico in shaping the writer’s worldview. Barbara Dutka examines Andrzej Kijowski’s text, *Podróż na najdalszy Zachód* (Journey to the Farthest West) and the writer’s opinion of America. Aleksandra Zug offers yet another vision of America as experienced by the protagonist of Feliks Netz’s novel. Ewa Bartos looks at the image of America in Stanisław Dygat’s prose. Iwona Puchalska examines a selection of Lilian Szymour-Tulasiewicz novels focusing on national identity, culture, and tradition. The last essay briefly explores Andrzej Bobkowski’s portrayal of the United States.

Finally, “W rytmie latino” (In Latin Rhythms) offers portrayals of Central and South America. Piotr Millati analyzes Andrzej Bobkowski’s attitudes towards Latinos, Jerzy Paszek looks for links between Argentine literature and Witold Gombrowicz’s novel *Trans-Atlantyk*, and Radosław Sioma analyzes Gombrowicz’s *Pornografia*. Jolanta Pastarska writes about the portrayal of Argentina in three Polish women writers: Janina Surynowa-Wyczółkowska, Józefa Radzymińska, and Zofia Chądzyńska. Piotr Garliński-Kucik looks at the Mexican period in Teodor Parnicki’s life and writing.

The title of *Polish Literature of Both Americas: Vol. 1* encompasses a large geographical area. As the title indicates, the editors intend to continue exploring the topic. It should be pointed out that the thirty-nine essays collected in the book deal mostly with those Polish writers who live in, travel to, and write about the North American continent. Quite a few essays are reprints. The editors do not make a distinction

between works by exiled Polish writers living in the Americas, those who only visit and comment on their American experience, and Polish translators of books written in English about America.

MORE BOOKS

Uncaptive Minds: A Publication of the Institute for Democracy in Eastern Europe. Special issue commemorating 25 years after 1989: Reflections on the Unfinished Revolutions. **Edited by Eric Chenoweth and Irena Lasota.** Cover design by Małgorzata Flis. Washington, DC: IDEE (1718 M Street, No. 147, Washington, DC 20036. 184 pages. ISSN 0897-9669.

This worthy periodical was one of the best, if not the best English-language serial informing the world about the struggle for liberty in Soviet-occupied countries in the 1980s. A quarter century after the Soviet army moved out of Eastern Europe (this took place as late as 1991 in Poland), activists from the area gathered to assess how much had been achieved and what was still missing.

It is not surprising that seminar participants saw the situation in many post-Soviet countries in terms of an “unfinished revolution.” Corruption, Russian pressure, economic ruin, and primitive selfishness have been all too visible everywhere. It is encouraging, however, that so many participants offer superb analyses of their country’s situation. With such elites, one can remain hopeful about the future.

Many speakers use the terminology of independence and liberty rather than democracy and pluralism, testifying to the view that democracy is secondary to liberty, and that without liberty there is no democracy. In practice, this means that national sovereignty has to be achieved before democracy can be built. Speakers such as Vincuk Viačorka and Ales Bialiatski from Belarus, or Tunne Kelam from Estonia emphasize that each country has to work out its own model of democracy. Such has been the case in Western Europe where some countries built their democracy on the