

miss us and was the road hard?" A few more rays of sun are badly needed for a proper closure. Surely the author's childhood and the parents' parenting produced many bright moments. While looking for these moments, the reader realizes that they cannot appear because the book is devised to be a great outcry of pain, a piercing "why," an attempt to reach the deaf world that has reduced the Second World War to what it was not. The hero of this book is the Polish peasant who suffered beyond measure and whose suffering has not been acknowledged by the world.

The author's parents certainly brush shoulders with the heroic; the same cannot be said about the author. What struck me very unpleasantly was a remark in one of his prose texts that for him the Polish language had all kinds of unpleasant connotations. This remark is then repeated *in extenso* by the nonentity who wrote the preface to Guzłowski's book and who apparently wished to confirm it. Guzłowski seems to classically represent the Stockholm syndrome, the "blame the victim" syndrome in which unpleasant associations stick to the victim rather than to the torturer. It was Germans and not Poles who created hell on earth for Guzłowski's parents, yet he symbolically blames the language of the victims. Through his verse his parents admit that their childhood in Poland was serene, even though they were peasants with scarce means; it was the German invasion on 1 September 1939 that created hell, hunger, pain, humiliation. But Guzłowski symbolically rejects these facts. Snapshots of his parents show an elderly couple satisfied with life, yet Guzłowski conveys none of this satisfaction in his poems. Guzłowski's poems are poignant and the story he tells is extremely powerful, the best presentation of the German occupation of Poland I have ever read. It is marred by the author's inability to come to terms with the country and culture that made his parents and so many others into individuals who did not hurt others and who faced the world with a clear conscience.

At the risk of weakening my argument with a "should be," I have to assert that without Guzłowski's book anyone's knowledge of the Second World War remains incomplete.

However, I remain in disagreement with the author.

Rising Hope

Warsaw Rising Trilogy, vol. 1

By Marie Sontag. Book design by Lawrence Knorr. Cover by Daniel Sontag. Edited by Amanda Shrawder. Mechanicsburg, PA: Sunbury Press (www.sunburypress.com), 2015. 220 pages. Maps, bibliography. ISBN 978-1-62006-556-3. Paper.

Harry Louis Roddy

Rising Hope is a thrilling young adult novel that tells the story of the Polish Scouts' involvement in the Warsaw Rising against the Nazi occupation of Poland in 1944. Although the action of the novel revolves around a fictional set of characters, Sontag weaves historical figures into her narrative. This allows her to be as historically accurate as possible while telling a fast-paced and thrilling story.

The narrative centers around the fictional Dąbrowski family: Tadzio Dąbrowski, his older sister Magdalena, and younger brother Henio. The story begins in September 1939 with the Nazi invasion of Poland. Professor Handelsman, a historical figure but one who is given the fictional role of scoutmaster over all the Scouts in Warsaw, issues a challenge to his young charges: to give their all to the defense of Poland in the resistance against Nazi occupation. Although all the other Scouts eagerly sign on, Tadzio begs off since his father recently left on a mission. Thirteen-year-old Tadzio uses the need to take care of his family as an excuse not to join the effort. A sensitive, intellectual, and artistic youth, Tadzio does not feel that he is cut out for combat and risk. However, upon searching his feelings, he realizes he will not be able to live with his own cowardice, and soon joins in the effort.

Sontag uses this central figure of Tadzio to tell the story of the extraordinary bravery of the Scouts as they work to sabotage the Nazi aggressors, finally taking the fight directly to their enemies. Sontag populates her book with a cast of engaging characters who fight alongside

historical Scout leaders, such as Andrzej Romocki ("Anoda") and Tadeusz Zawadzki ("Zośka"). As the novel develops, the reader is able to watch Tadzio grow into a brave and competent young man who becomes an integral figure in the Scout resistance.

This is an important novel that tells a somewhat neglected story with aplomb. Although it is written in a literary style that will appeal most to young adults, its story will be engaging to readers of all ages interested in this particular historical period and in a balanced narrative on this subject. Sontag tells the story with great sympathy for the Polish people as well as a high degree of sensitivity for her subject matter. I recommend *Rising Hope* to all readers who enjoy a tale of stirring heroism in the face of overwhelming odds, where the lines between good and evil are clearly demarcated.

Orphan Girl

A Transaction, or an Account of the Entire Life of an Orphan Girl by Way of Plaintful Threnodies in the Year 1685. The Aesop Episode

By Anna Stanisławska. Verse translation, introduction, and commentary by Barry Keane. Toronto, Ontario, & Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, Tempe, Arizona: Iter Academic Press, 2016. 291 pages. ISBN 978-0-86698-5475. Paper.

Piotr Wilczek

Anna Stanisławska's work was unavailable to readers and historians of literature for a long time. Fragments of *Orphan Girl* were published in 1893, but a full scholarly edition of this late seventeenth-century narrative only appeared in 1935. In spite of this edition's existence, this exceptional example of women's writing was not mentioned in textbooks of Polish or world literature until recently. The only book on the author and her work appeared in 2004, authored by Professor Dariusz Rott of the University of Silesia. However, Rott's book is intended for the general reader, whereas the present edition contains a comprehensive and

scholarly analysis of Stanisławska's poetic narrative in the context of early modern literature in Poland and abroad.

There is no other work of early modern Polish literature (medieval, Renaissance, or baroque, until the beginning of the eighteenth century) that can compare with Stanisławska's rhymed account of her life. What is more, no woman in Polish literature published such a sincere and artistically valuable confession until the early twentieth century. From this perspective, *Orphan Girl* is a unique work. A poet in his own right, Keane has an exceptional talent to render the beauty of old poetry into English, and his translations are excellent poems in the target language. The same can be said about Stanisławska's book. The translation reads smoothly as a poem in English, and at the same time is faithful to the original text. It is quite simply a gem. Rarely has poetry in translation been given such lively treatment:

He fancies himself as a nurse

With an apothecary of cures.

But he then shouts out my bedroom

Window: "How great is our alarm

At the state of our listless patient!"

He ambles over to the bed

And screams right into my ear:

"It's high time you perked up, my dear!" (stanza 143)

Stanisławska was not an exceptional poet; I would say that in his translation Barry Keane is a better poet than she. His efforts to "emulate the metrical and rhyming scheme of the poem and also to accentuate its rhetorical and performative potential" result in a very successful work. Last but not least, Polish historical and literary background is important to an understanding of *Orphan Girl*, and Barry Keane has framed the translation with an introduction and commentary that throw fascinating light on the times in which Stanisławska lived. From several perspectives this is a landmark work.