

anxiety about the Poles ultimately taking over has remained.

Kopp shows that during the Great War German hopes about annexing large territories in the East (from which Poles and Jews were to be expelled) were still very much in evidence. When the war ended and Germany lost rather than gained territory, the colonial discourse shifted to the colonial successes of the past and to plans to regain what was lost. In the interwar period geographical maps used in schools presented, through various visual tricks, lost territory as German. From such data one can conclude that Hitler was not an aberration in German history, and that the losses incurred after the First World War evoked a savage will (masquerading in the conscious mind as a desire to bring civilization to the untutored) to crush those to whom the eastern territories had been lost. "The *Kulturboden* ideology permeated German representations of the East" (160).

The book concludes with some remarks about contemporary times. The author shows that the diffusionist theory has deep roots in Germany and that it has influenced, among others, Erika Steinbach's political program. The narrative about the alleged German ability to create livable and civilized space for the eastern "barbarians" is by no means dead. "The diffusionist models continue to underlie a subset of representations of German-Eastern European relations" (209).

Alas, as mentioned earlier, the author's familiarity with the history of Poland leaves much to be desired. She does not know that it was not Napoleon that created the Congress Kingdom, it was created by the Congress of Vienna after Napoleon's defeat. Napoleon created the Warsaw Principality (Księstwo Warszawskie) that functioned for a few years as a rump Polish state. The May 3 Constitution was voted in in 1791, not in 1794 (15). The 1846 rising was a peasant rebellion against the landowners instigated by Vienna and meant to weaken Polish presence in the Austrian empire, rather than a rising for freedom; to place it alongside the 1830 and 1863 risings is equivalent to mixing apples and oranges (38). The unfootnoted information that 10 percent of the population in Bismarck's Prussia was Polish seems a bit low (64).

While reading this book that positions the German imagination at the center of civilized Europe, I thought of James Boswell's 1764 poem that presents Germans as Europe's periphery, not unlike the way Germans presented Poles a few generations later:

*Here am I, sitting in a German inn,  
Where I may penance do for many a sin,  
For I am pester'd with a thousand flies,  
Who flap and buzz about my nose and eyes.*

*A lumpish landlord has the easy chair;  
Hardly he speaks, but wildly does he stare.  
In haste to get away, I did not dine,  
And now I've had cold beef and cursed wine.  
And in five minutes, or a little more,  
I shall be stretch'd on musty straw to snore.*

Kopp's book is characterized by an admirable objectivity. In spite of some repetitiveness, it serves as a model of fair scholarship. The book should be translated into German and Polish; it certainly deserves more attention from academic scholars than it has hitherto received. I wish this book would be required reading in German and Polish schools.

The author's final conclusion is that "the mental map of German diffusion" is slowly being replaced by the notion of a "shared European identity" (210). I wish this were true. If this ever comes to pass, Germans will have to come to terms with the fact that their notion of European identity may not be the same as that of their eastern neighbors. In particular, as this book amply demonstrates, Europe's Graeco-Christian identity seems to have been replaced in Germany by a purely secular identity long before the twentieth-century wars. By comparison, Polish identity still has Graeco-Christian roots. However, this is a topic for another book. Δ

## Narrating Migration

*Druga pleć na wygnaniu: Doświadczenie migracyjne w opowieści powojennych pisarek polskich* (The Second Sex in Exile: Migration Experiences in Narratives of Postwar Polish Female Writers), by Bożena Karwowska. Kraków: TAIWPN Universitas, 2013. 268 pages. Index, footnotes. ISBN 97883-242-2289-

6 (paperback); ISBN 97883-242-1908-7 (e-book). In Polish.

## Ewa Wampuszyc

**B**ożena Karwowska's newest book analyzes migration narratives of three generations of Polish female writers: postwar, post-Solidarity, and post-1989. In a study that takes us from Poland to diasporic destinations like Argentina, Britain, Canada, France, Germany, and the United States, Karwowska sheds light on the ways in which Polish female émigré writers express the experience of migration in its various manifestations (exile, emigration, immigration, and resettlement). Through close readings of selected writings by such authors as Manuela Gretkowska, Brygida Helbig-Mischewski, Eva Hoffman, Danuta Mostwin, Janina Surynowa-Wyczółkowska, and others, Karwowska demonstrates how female authors narrate the challenges of leaving home in exchange for a new place, society, and culture. Significantly for migration and women's studies, Karwowska shows how—unlike literature written by men, where the position of “exile” determines identity (as in the works of Czesław Miłosz or Witold Gombrowicz)—literature written by women posits a more fluid identity that directly confronts new values and social constructs presented by the point of arrival. Karwowska saliently demonstrates the tendency for female émigré authors to express identity as multilayered, more akin with postcolonial literatures. Furthermore, she successfully outlines a discursive affinity between the writings of the female émigré authors mentioned above, and literature about the Polish borderlands and/or periphery by contemporary Polish female authors, such as Joanna Bator, Inga Iwasiów, and Olga Tokarczuk. In this way, Karwowska suggests that women writers-in-exile historically tended toward adopting narrative strategies and discourses that have more in common with borderland literature than with the literature of their male counterparts.

In focusing on works by Polish female émigré writers who are rarely found among the greats of literary history, Karwowska's work reinforces the sociological and anthropological value of literary texts that, while not masterpieces in their

own right, can shed light on the intersection between feminist, literary, migration, and topographical studies. She calls attention to the value of these works as meaningful records of migration and women's experiences. In addition, her analysis elucidates an important aspect of Polish history in the twentieth century that is shared by migrants worldwide on the one hand, and on the other marked by the particularities of the Polish experience.

Through her study Karwowska demonstrates that home is an ideal that migrants seek to recreate narratively. To underscore the relationship between (e)(im)migration narratives and space, broadly understood, she organizes her study according to the rooms of a house: “Przedpokój” (Entrance Hall); “Salon”; “Kuchnia” (Kitchen); “Sypialnia” (Bedroom); and “Za oknem” (Beyond the Window). This structure reminds readers that (e)(im)migration is fundamentally about a search for place, an attempt to (re)construct rootedness, a necessity to insert an old self within a new context, and the desire to feel at home wherever that may be. Karwowska argues that the (re)creation of a home in a new historical, geographic, cultural, and linguistic context often becomes the foundation of female migration stories.

Basing her observations on Eva Hoffman's suggestion that migration has become the norm in today's globalized world, “Przedpokój” examines postmigration identity through a productive juxtaposition of writings by Hoffman and Miłosz. Karwowska contextualizes this chapter in Edward Said's *Reflections on Exile* and the work of other postcolonial scholars, who posit identity as a fluid concept that challenges monoethnic and monocultural communities or nations in an unprecedented way.

“Salon” studies female discourses on migration and contrasts the authorial strategies of postwar, post-Solidarity, and post-1989 waves of female Polish émigrés scattered across the globe. One of the most interesting aspects of this section is when Karwowska considers the nineteenth-century Polish legacy of home as a civic space that fosters a communal, national (i.e., Polish) identity, and the ramifications of this model for postwar female émigré writers in the face of intercultural marriages, individualism, and Western feminist values. She

shows a narrative tendency toward representing heroines who are tied to motherhood and the nurturing of patriotic values, which include maintaining the home as a “territory of Polishness” and fostering the Polish language while being unabashedly confronted with assimilation and depolonization.

In the section titled “Kitchen” Karwowska further considers the problems of motherhood and multiculturalism as presented by female émigré writers of the postwar period. She contrasts this analysis with a study of more recent émigré narratives that blur the line between fact and fiction. In particular, she considers women who are both scholars and fiction writers, and who conflate the categories of “heroine,” “author,” and “critic,” thus establishing a continuity and fluidity between reality and text.

In Part IV, “Bedroom,” Karwowska analyzes the representation of traumatic war experiences, particularly rape, in postwar migrant narratives. To this end she introduces into Polish-language literary and cultural criticism the term “*ocaleniec*” as the translation for the English concept “survivor.” While some linguistic purists may view “*ocaleniec*” as an unnecessary neologism, Karwowska convincingly demonstrates the importance of adopting a term which distinguishes between the passivity suggested by such words as “*ocalony*,” “*ocalany*,” or “*ocalały*,” and the more active “*ocaleniec*” who actively moves beyond trauma. By addressing the problem of translating the English concept of “survivor” across linguistic and cultural borders, Karwowska shows how the privileged position of “victim” in Polish culture is linguistically encoded. Such cross-linguistic work is vital to migration studies; in the context of Polish studies it provides a new understanding of the cult of martyrology. This observation is one of the most interesting and important contributions of Karwowska’s volume.

The final part, “Beyond the Window,” examines how the Other is portrayed in the novels analyzed. Karwowska elucidates the complex Polish tendency toward simultaneous and contradictory identification with “the underdog” (i.e., a nonwhite Other), and dominant, European cultural values, as well as

the tendency to harbor a sense of inferiority vis-à-vis the “Western” Other. In this section she also analyzes the importance of place in the process of creating (post)migration identities by examining the portrayal of urban centers in the novels studied. She provocatively concludes her analysis by moving it into the virtual world, considering the way in which ideas of self are or are not deployed successfully in Internet projects designed to help women express their experiences of migration.

Written from the perspective of a female academic who herself emigrated from Poland and completed her higher education in Canada, this is a profoundly personal book. As the author explains, working on the topic of (e)(im)migration led to a deeper understanding of her own experience as an émigré. This personal touch deepens Karwowska’s analysis, understanding, and empathy for the writers whom she studies; it also makes her intellectually sensitive to identifying themes and discourses that other scholars may have ignored. This personal layer, in combination with an academically sharp analysis, results in a study of unusual breadth and interest.

Karwowska’s ability to access English-language secondary and theoretical sources provides a valuable perspective for the Polish-language academic community. She supports her arguments with an interdisciplinary theoretical apparatus, nimbly integrating feminist, urban, cultural, topographic, and postcolonial studies (Homi Bhabha, Julia Kristeva, and Toril Moi, to name a few) with scholarly works specific to Polish studies. This rich theoretical context, in combination with some of the more obscure authors that she analyzes, reinserts into Polish cultural historiography a long-ignored body of materials that Karwowska has proven deserves further study. By offering a transnational perspective on the Polish migration experience, Karwowska’s book constitutes an important, interdisciplinary contribution to a number of fields: Polish literary and cultural studies, anthropology, sociology, migration studies, women’s history, and American ethnic studies. Considering this potential audience, one should hope that Karwowska’s book will be made available in English. Δ