

Poets – Students of Warsaw Underground University and Romanticism

Summary

The book has been divided into three parts for substantive and formal reasons.

The first part, *Poets-Students. Profiles*, provides many non-obvious cases of biographical reflections. Stefan Zabierowski's account of Krzysztof Kamil Baczyński's student life is grounded in numerous documents and reminiscences, whereas Tomasz Wójcik paints the portrait of Miron Białoszewski, a student of underground Faculty of Polish at the time. Andrzej Zieniewicz vividly depicts Zdzisław Leon Stroński, whose *Okno* (Window) - 'home' imaginarium in prose poetry written after his incarceration at Pawiak gaol, overcame romantic anhellism in a novel way. Mateusz Antoniuk following 'cardboard concepts' in the poems of Waław Bojarski and Tadeusz Borowski, shows how war poetry is entangled in the antinomy between real and unreal. Andrzej Stanisław Kowalczyk withdraws from the dominant motif of poets-students, carefully observing Alfred Łaszowski's journey into the depths of the fascist-totalitarian 'heart of darkness'.

The second chapter of the book, *Poets-Students and Romanticism*, examines the nature of literary debt war poets owed to romantic ethos and tradition. Andrzej Fabianowski points at Maria Okońska, suggesting that 'romantic matrices' supported Okońska's 'apostolic deed'. Ewa Hoffmann-Piotrowska indicating numerous references to Zygmunt Krasiński's works in Baczyński's poems, convincingly demonstrates that associating Baczyński's use of romantic tradition solely with Juliusz Słowacki's literary contexts appears rather

simplistic. Both Karol Hryniewicz and Karol Samsel propose a disparate point of view when researching the influence of romantic ideas and beliefs on war poets. Hryniewicz emphasises the creative way in which Baczyński and Gajcy adapted the 18th century aesthetics of sublime and horror. Samsel, who analyses Zofia Szmydtowa's papers from the 60s of the 20th century devoted to Norwid, proposes a hypothesis that the content of her papers might have been given to her students twenty years earlier on underground university courses. The chapter closes with Piotr Mitzner's study on contemporary popularity of Polish occupation songs.

The last chapter *Poets-Students in the Generation Mirror* contains five studies. In the first one, Jan Potkański recapitulating the story of Jerzy Andrzejewski's 'posthumous' tribute to Baczyński, shows – with the use of psychoanalysis – Andrzejewski's novel *Bramy raju* (*The Gates of Paradise*) as traumatic, coded coming to terms with war past. In Hanna Gosk's study Baczyński's 'life after death' theme returns as she compares post-war correspondence between Stefania Baczyńska, poet's mother and Kazimierz Wyka with the novel *Widma* (*Phantoms*) by Łukasz Orbitowski. Jolanta Dudek in her comparative study juxtaposes Baczyński with William Butler Yeats – two visionary poets dreaming of 'extended being'. Agata Araszkiwicz in her article perceives Zuzanna Ginczanka as 'an eternal satellite of Polish canon'. The book closes with the article by Maria Jolanta Pieńkowska devoted to war and occupation exhibitions, held at the Adam Mickiewicz Museum of Literature in Warsaw after 1989.

Translated by Bożena Lesiuk