

Works of Maria Bartusówna. The sketch of monograph.

Forgotten almost completely nowadays, Lviv poet Maria Bartusówna (1854 – 1885) has been still waiting for exposure. This writer's great works of postivism are definitely worth the common interest like her private life, full of unusual events, marked with unrequited love which made the author of famous „Wanda” unhappy forever.

This work's main aim is to come closer with the forgotten works of Maria Bartus, who claim to become the poem of „non – poetic times” entitled only to Adam Asnyk until now

The first chapter of my consideration is mainly devoted to Maria Bartusówna's life situation, who was very early orphaned by her father. Maria had to get the job because of her mather's helplessness and the financial difficulties. Finally, she decided to became a teacher (first, she completed the course of manager of „Froebel's kindergarten” and then she became the folk schools' teacher). Most of the time she spent with her relatives in Kołomyja. There, in her uncle - Marcel's Sławinski house, she met Mieczysław Wąsowicz, who was the only love of her life but unfortunately – unfullfilled and unhappy. Under the influence of him, she began to distribute her youthful poems to different newspapers and started to colaborate with them. They were: the Cracovian „Dziennik Mód”, the Warsaw „Ognisko Domowe” and „Tydzień” from Lviv. Also in Lviv in 1876 Władysław Belza edited the volume of her liryics and because of this, she became the recognisable person and gained popularity. Encouraged with the literary success through Antoni Edward Odyniec, she tried to debut on the Warsaw theatre stage but the famous actor of that time Jan Walery Królikowski, finally dispelled her dreams about being an actress. To earn for a living she worked as a teacher. Another jobs did not meet her expectations and her health condition was getting worse so her life was not easy at all. What is more, she still has had financial problems – despite the countess's of Dubiecko, Aleksandra Konarska constant support. It all caused sudden deterioration her frame of mind and even the death at the age of 31. Then a heated discussion about the value of her poems started. Among the most known names of that times taking place at the disscussion we can innumerate Maria Konopnicka, who defended fiercely her younger friend against enemy critics. Another famous names were also Romuald Starkel, Juliusz Wiktor Gromulicki, Piotr Chmielowski, Wiktor Czajewski, Aleksander Świętochowski, and even Józef Ignacy Kraszewski, who initiated the collection of money for poet's treatment in the latest period of her life. Kraszewski, who was the author of the great amount of historical novels, appreciated

mostly Bartusówna's unusual patriotism. He was also pleased by the drama „Wanda” (unfortunately, four acts of this drama disappeared and nowadays we can dispose only the last, fifth act of this tragedy).

During her short life Maria Bartusówna marked her love for the homeland and the respect for those who devoted everything for it, even their own lives. In her works, the poet tried to teach the history and develop the memory about national heroes, she also tried to bring hope for regaining freedom. Her poems were written in a simple language in order to be understood for ordinary people because they were addressed mainly for them. „Czarodziejska fujarka”, „Duch ruin”, „W jubileuszową rocznicę powstania Styczniowego”, „Trzy obrazy Sybiru”, „Ostatni z Herbutów” - all these works are warnings (before the inappropriate procedures which causes destruction for the nation) and tribute (for those who could preserve to the end despite many suffering and gave hope for the victory over the enemy).

Maria Bartusówna's patriotic works' aim was to keep the nation's spirit up mainly by praising its heroes but also loving the native land and the beauty of its countryside. All this was associated with supernatural sphere of poet's spirit life, who was known for her great religiosity and faith. Bartusówna often „prays” by her poems. Many of them were titled „prayers”. The writer is aware of the beauty of God and when she admires the beauty of the world especially in May, she turns her eyes to heaven by using the poem „Zdrowaś Maryja” and its lyrical verses. Also „Modlitwa majowa” is the tribute given to the Blessed Virgine by her.

In the writer's works there is a specific type of religiosity: her own, separate and considered. In the foreground of her works we can notice the supernatural content. God – inseparable companion of life – is the only one and people can trust him completely. The writer also is loyal to him, which can be considered as strange especially during her life. The age of positivism was not generally focused on religious themes.

A wide range of Bartusówna's poems are devoted to the beauty of native nature, which is often combined with her own life. According to her the people' life is inseparably connected with the nature and we can compare the variability of seasons to subsequent stages of our life.

As everyone knows, during the age of positivism, the poetry was not very popular. However, - although unfavorable perception of it, we can observe a lot of writers who are interested in this area. Many of them like Maria Bartusówna, are focused on their own experiences in the poetry. She often writes about her unreal dreams, which caused a lot of frustration and unhappiness. Many of her works are constructed as a contrast between her dreams and the real life. The writer's restless spirit

did not allow her to stay longer anywhere so she was analysing her life all the time and she was not satisfied with the achieved goals. Even if she managed to achieve something, it would be different than she thought. Bartusówna's life did not fulfill her dreams at all and she was very embittered for that reason. The fact that she was an orphan affected all her life and her father's premature death marked all her works. She was alienated from her peers, she loved spending time in her grandfather's (Jan Julian Szczepański) library, where she was reading romantic literature and identifying with its program assumptions. For that reason, in Bartusówna's poems we can often observe romantic individuality, historicism, messianism and even mysticism. The wide range of themes and contents of her lyrical poems can surprise and it makes her the person of great erudition (due to the fact that she did not attend school) and the wealth of spiritual life. The lack of happiness in her personal life was the main reason that Bartusówna's only goal was work. She was even ready to sacrifice everything for her beloved homeland. Due to the fact of bad health condition, she was trying to arouse the patriotic consciousness of the nation by writing. Her work „Wanda” mentioned before and spotted by J. I. Kraszewski deserves special attention here. This drama presents her brilliant talent, which was not known before. The great value of this drama is caused by successful attempt of updating presented issues (the adventures of Wanda „who did not want to marry German” was the background of the oppressed Polish nation).

To sum up, poet's work inclines to the statement that Bartusówna is appointed to great actions like Romantics. This view was very important to her, but it also was the range of all her miseries and it did not allow her to experience the happiness, which was the main topic of her works. She stayed lonely and unhappy to the end of her life but the great spirituality of her soul remains her still alive in all her literary and dramatic achievements despite the passage of time although she still is an undiscovered poet.

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