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The issue of the Other in two tetralogies – the Hutsul one of Stanisław Vincenz and the Galician one of Julian Strykowski

SUMMARY

The aim of the thesis is to present the issue of the Other in two tetralogies: the Hutsul one of Stanisław Vincenz (*Na wysokiej połoninie*) and the Galician one of Julian Strykowski (*Głosy w ciemności, Austeria, Sen Azrila, Echo*). My observation is that after circa a quarter-of-a-century growing significance of local environments and, consequently, fascination of the Eastern Borderlands and „local homelands”, the vision of „little homelands” has been becoming behind the times for a dozen of years now. As a result, writing activity of Vincenz and Strykowski has remained beyond the main trend of literary studies. I find it unfair, therefore the purpose of this thesis is also the attempt to find a possibility of the authors' literary output (in this case limited to *Na wysokiej połoninie* and the Galician tetralogy) returning to both researchers and readers' consciousness. I think the return is possible if we acknowledge the issue of the Otherness to be essential – if we move away from looking for the common and start emphasizing differences. Then, as Przemysław Czapliński claims, a chance for respecting the Otherness will appear, with no attempt to alter it.

The first chapter of the thesis is of a methodological character. In the first place, determination of the Other's identity requires defining the Eastern Borderlands as a space changing in time, unchangeably preserving the most important elements of chivalric ethos, though. Therefore, it is necessary to characterize the Eastern Borderlands as an axiological space as well. The right values of the so-called „localness” will be shown here, the values of positive character associated with mutual understanding. This part of the thesis also contains understanding of the concept of „Galicianism”, essential to explain the relationship between Eastern Borderland writing of Stanisław Vincenz and Galician character of Julian Strykowski's novels. The matter of walking away from methodological meanings of Eastern-Borderlandness in order to recognize the concept of a border as more valuable is brought up in this chapter as well. Such a view is consistent with a current state of studies.

Chapter II shows how particular Borderland or Galician communities can function in a relationship with the Otherness, taking into account the identity of each of the communities. For this purpose I use studies conducted mainly by Bernhard Waldenfels and Marian Golka, which help to create a catalogue of relations: from the Otherness as homeliness or, at least, favourably seen difference to strangeness that in its extreme cases causes so-called „radical strangeness” or even hostility. Moreover, the Otherness is seen also in reference to suprapersonal relations: with nature and geographically understood space, hence the description of a shtetl – a typical Jewish town. In this chapter studies on stereotypes are also used, which consequently leads to the analysis being made in chapter III of the issue of colonial tendencies present in both tetralogies. I seek elements of colonialism in analysed texts mainly in characterisation of Polish institutions of Borderland social life such as manors, temples, inns and in relations prevailing in business activity especially the trading one.

The last chapter of the dissertation entitled *Post-reading of Stanisław Vincenz's and Julian Strykowski's tetralogy – universalistic potential of texts* includes consideration on the possibility of updating the texts and extending their scope beyond the currently most popular point of view pertaining to the atmosphere of functioning of non-Polish ethnic groups and exoticisation of their customs. For this, I use Elżbieta Sarnowska-Temeriusz's thematological findings and studies on postmemory. However, what interests me most is the issue of the possibility of incorporating today's reception of tetralogy in the principles of postcolonial studies. In this respect, I consider a dialogue to be of special significance, especially as Emmanuel Lévinas sees it, in so-called Another One who sees a chance to build up his self-esteem and, as a consequence, to accept the worth of coexistence with the Other.

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