

Marek Stanisław – ON THE SCIENTIFIC GIFT
FOR PROFESSOR STEFAN SAWICKI,
WITH GENERAL REMARKS
ON MODERN NORWID STUDIES

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In honour of Professor Stefan Sawicki's 85th birthday, a group of his colleagues, students, friends and coworkers prepared an extensive collection titled *Strona Norwida. Studia i szkice ofiarowane Profesorowi Stefanowi Sawickiemu* [*Norwid's Side. Studies and Sketches Dedicated to Professor Stefan Sawicki*]. This beautifully published volume, conceived as a jubilee gift, "Norwid keepsake" and collection of academic essays, is not only a gift worthy of the Professor, but also paints a colourful portrait of contemporary Norwid Studies.

The reviewer of this work has been assigned a challenging but rewarding role. Its difficulty stems from the fact that the assessment of jubilee gifts is always a somewhat ambiguous, even inappropriate exercise. However, due to the scientific nature of this book gift, and above all thanks to the excellent group of its authors, the substantive level of the works published therein and the diligence of its publication, it is also a gratifying task – all the more so because it provides yet another opportunity to acknowledge Professor Sawicki's contribution in shaping today's Polish philology and Norwid research.

Strona Norwida contains 28 articles and research papers, arranged in alphabetical order by their authors' surnames. Collections rarely use such a compositional approach, which is why it is worth pointing out its advantages and disadvantages. I would consider opacity to be the main disadvantage of the adopted system: the lack of internal thematic divisions results in an arbitrary arrangement of the individual articles, which can be somewhat confusing and hinders the efficient reading of the work as a whole. At the same time, this arrangement actually seems to have significant advantages: it democratically equates the contributions of all the authors, does not give preference to any one text, and highlights the special nature of the publication. Moreover, it illustrates the richness and diversity of contemporary Norwidological thought, and gives the reader complete freedom of

choice regarding the manner in which it is read. The research papers and articles collected in the book are generally the works of experienced scholars, so each text presents an original and clearly distinctive proposal for understanding Norwid's work. Thus, taking into consideration all of these arguments, it is safe to say that the account of compositional gains and losses is ultimately positive.

In my review, I will devote a few words to each article, but will take the liberty of deviating from the editorial order. I will group the texts published in the book according to their common themes, similar trains of thought, and related research approaches; in a word – I will try to arrange them in such a way that the whole can be read as a sketch of the panorama of modern Norwidology. I am aware that it is difficult to paint a reliable picture of an entire discipline on the basis of a single book, but in the case of specific books – and *Strona Norwida* is undoubtedly one of them – it can at least partially be done. It is possible my attempt will not reveal all the dimensions of today's research on the work of the author of *Quidam* because it is, after all, a very large and ever-expanding domain. However, if the book under review is treated according to the *pars pro toto* rule, then it may well be an opportunity to make a few remarks on the subject.

SYNTHESES

The contemporary impression of Cyprian Norwid's work has its lasting foundations in the research devoted to the specificity of his writing and fundamental features of his artistic sensitivity. Terms like "pisarz wieku kupieckiego i przemysłowego" ["writer of the commercial and industrial era"], "poeta sumienia" ["poet of conscience"], "poeta dialogu" ["poet of dialogue"], "poeta-filozof" ["poet-philosopher"], "poeta-sztukmistrz" ["poet-magician"], phrases like "Norwida walka z formą" ["Norwid's struggle with form"], "Norwidowskie obrazy całości" ["Norwid's images of the whole"] or "chrześcijański wymiar twórczości Norwida" ["the Christian dimension of Norwid's work"] are in wide circulation today, although they paint only a partial picture of the writer's rich and multidimensional work. In the reviewed book we will find several new formulas that will enhance this image. They are developed in the articles by Elżbieta Feliksiak, Elżbieta Dąbrowicz, Józef F. Fert, Edward Kasperski, Wiesław Rzońca, and Włodzimierz Toruń. The details are as follows.

In her essay *Czy Norwid był poetą pustyni?* [*Was Norwid a Poet of the Desert?*] Elżbieta Feliksiak explored the presence of desert imagery in Norwid's work and what it means for his output as a whole. Tracing the evolution and semantics of these motifs, she focused primarily on works from the 1840s and 1850s, pointing out that they created their own sort of blackout poetry. They were mainly associated with "z tym, co «rozsypane», «spaczone» i «zatrute»" ["that which is «scattered»,

«corrupted» and «contaminated»] (p. 111) and “negatywność aksjologiczna i egzystencjalna” [“axiological and existential negativity”] (p. 118). According to the author, Norwid considered the desert to be “wcieleniem rzeczywistości na niby” [“a make-believe embodiment of reality”], “formą świata cieni, jałowego świata pozorów” [“a form of the shadow world, a barren world of illusions”] (p. 118). The author’s affirmative answer to the question posed in the title, supported by careful argumentation and excellent interpretations of selected works, is entirely convincing, all the more so because in addition to desert images (of which there are actually not that many in Norwid’s writing), she also includes related motifs (sand, dust, grit, emptiness, silence etc.). Of course, this does not mean that all the facets of the issue were illuminated or that all the aspects of the problem were exhausted. Nevertheless, Elżbieta Feliksiak’s essay can be considered the outline of a future book on the “desert-like” features of Norwid’s imagination. Unfortunately, somebody else will have to follow up on this thematic thread...

Józef F. Fert presented a similar “szkic do portretu wielkiego poety” [“sketch for the portrait of the great poet”] (p. 137) in his valuable essay *Norwidowskie oblicze cierpienia* [*The Face of Suffering in Norwid’s Work*]. At first glance, the author’s thesis appears to be fully justified – suffering has long been (since Miriam’s time, at least) considered the central motif of Norwid’s biography and work. Fert therefore went down the same path as several generations of other researchers, pointing out the existential experience of the poet himself (the orphanhood and homelessness of the writer’s childhood, later disappointments in love, his émigré fate, the rejection of his work by the public), and the tragic events of the Polish collective in the 19th century (the nightmare of partition and drama of emigration), which cast a shadow over his individual fate. However, biographical considerations and historical reflections are just the starting point of an otherwise comprehensive discussion aiming to formulate a few reflections on the role of suffering in Norwid’s art. Thus, Fert interpreted Norwid’s artistic work to be a way of giving the phenomenon of suffering an existential meaning, of elevating it to the rank of a central human experience and universal artistic symbol – and this is evidenced by numerous works around this theme (including the poems *Dumanie* [*Pondering*], *Fatum* [*Fate*], *W Weronie* [*In Verona*], *Na zgon śp. Józefa Z....* [*On the Death of Józef Z....*], *Fortepian Szopena* [*Chopin’s Grand Piano*], *Trzy strofki* [*Three Stanzas*] and many epistolary confessions). The examples referenced here seem perfectly convincing, although one could easily find many more examples to support Fert’s thesis. This topic definitely deserves its own book.

Elżbieta Dąbrowicz presented a captivating interpretation of Norwid’s work as a way of affirming the world in her essay *Pomarańcze w pismach Norwida* [*Oranges in Norwid’s Writings*]. The author’s contemplation was inspired by the

motif of the orange in the poem *Do Bronisława Z.* [*To Bronisław Z.*]. Through Elżbieta Dąbrowicz's characterization, this seemingly insignificant, even marginal motif, used by the poet a mere few times (e.g. in the works *Ostatni despotyzm* [*The Last Despotism*] and *Czarne kwiaty* [*Black Flowers*]), became palpable proof that an atmosphere of cheerfulness, acquiescence to the surrounding world and enchantment with it were present in Norwid's work. The theme addressed by the author resonates all the more loudly, because the study of Norwid – also in the eyes of many other contemporary researchers, as well as readers – is usually accented by the poet's bitter reflections on the world, its human and civic oppositions, foreboding tone, and the pain of misunderstanding. All of this is justified, but is it entirely right? Elżbieta Dąbrowicz's beautiful essay – full of subtle insights and sophisticated interpretations – not only seems to undermine this categorical diagnosis, but above all encourages a different perspective on the work of the author of *Quidam*.

Włodzimierz Toruń's study "*Bić się umieją, a nie umieją walczyć*" *Norwid o zmaganiach Polaków*. [*"They know how to Fight, but know nothing about Battle"* *Norwid's Thoughts on the Struggles of Poles*] is a valuable discussion of Norwid's thoughts on the methods of effectively fighting for Polish independence. The author of this article described his intentions very modestly, as a mere reference to "kilku myśli co nie nowe" ["a few thoughts that are not new"], but his reconstruction is impressively transparent and competent. Toruń touched upon virtually all the most important dimensions of Norwid's thoughts on the independence of Poland: he pointed out the writer's critical judgments about the intellectual immaturity of Poles and the untimeliness of the uprisings they attempted, the lack of proper consideration and disregard for international diplomatic efforts, the half-heartedness of their goals and unwillingness to cooperate in solidarity, their underestimation of the social, economic and ethical dimensions of their struggle. Toruń set his disquisition against the backdrop of selected political concepts from the Romantic era, illuminated it with the abundant literature on the subject, and enhanced the whole with impeccably-chosen quotes. The author's reconstruction provides very interesting material related not only to Norwid's views, but also to the 19th-century history of Poland and the present state of its society.

Edward Kasperski, in turn, placed Norwid's work in the context of Romantic discussions on literature as a source of knowledge in his extensive essay *Wobec prawdy. Poezja a filozofia* [*Facing the Truth. Poetry v. Philosophy*]. The scholar's starting point is very persuasive – it boils down to the thesis that the relation of literature to the truth is not an ahistorical category, detached from its historical context, but depends on the "stosunek do dyskursów niejako «zawodowo»

zajmujących się ustalaniem (wytwarzaniem) prawdy: do religii, filozofii, nauki” [“attitude towards discourses that somewhat “professionally” deal with the establishment (manufacturing) of the truth: towards religion, philosophy, science”] (p. 185) prevailing at a given time. Therefore, the “truth” is each time associated with various, historically conditioned, forms of knowledge: scientific or practical knowledge, knowledge based on religious beliefs or also knowledge rooted in subjective internal experiences. Later on in the study, Kasperski argues that in the Romantic era, beliefs about the truthfulness of literature were mainly based on the covenant of poetry and philosophy. As proof, the scholar calls upon the ideas of German Romantics, who advocated overcoming the reductionist language of modern science and amalgamating all areas of human knowledge – this was to be achieved by integrating the aforementioned fields. Kasperski outlined Norwid’s approximate position in this context – his criticism of scattered and one-sided knowledge, as well as proposals of creating a new, uniform vision of reality. Norwid’s concepts certainly require more detailed analyses (which this study, already extensive, could not accommodate), but the general outline of his views was illuminated clearly, objectively and with unquestionable expertise.

Wiesław Rzońca’s study *Z zagadnień Norwidowskiej semantyki poetyckiej* [*On Norwid’s Poetic Semantics*] also contains methodological themes. The subject of the author’s critical considerations has become one of the most evident paradoxes of contemporary Norwidology, namely the characteristic incoherence between the conviction that his works are polysemantic and the tradition of examining Norwid’s output mainly in the context of Romantic literature. The first issue focuses on modern poetics and its semantic ambiguity, while the second places Norwid’s work in the realm of the first half of the 19th century, often subservient to a specific ideological message. The core of the dilemma described by Rzońca is thus, firstly, the historico-literary categorization of Norwid’s achievements (Romanticism or Modernism), secondly, the tradition he actually belongs to (19th or 20th century), thirdly, his specific artistic image: that of a (post)Romantic ideologue or a modern artist of the word, and fourthly and finally – the way of interpreting his work: subordinated to the custom of “deciphering” ready meanings or sensitive to the poetics of ambiguity. Rzońca’s arguments, clearly emphasizing the modernist nature of Norwid’s work and its inclination towards the 20th century, also addresses the chronology of this work (“Kto jednak, nie licząc badaczy romantyzmu Norwida, oczekuje, że napisany w 1881 r. wiersz będzie romantyczny?!” [“After all, who besides researchers of Norwid’s Romanticism, expects that a poem written in 1881 could be Romantic?”] – is the rhetorical question the author asks when discussing the ballad *Rozebrana* [*Disrobed*]), as well as its opposition to Romantic tendencies and polysemantic poetics. The context of Rzońca’s elucidations is Stefan

Sawicki's popular essay *Z zagadnień semantyki poetyckiej Norwida* [*On Norwid's Poetic Semantics*], which in his study received not only a thorough commentary, but also a beautiful apologia.

LANGUAGE STUDIES

Studies on the language of the author of *Quidam* are a significant achievement of contemporary Norwid research. It does seem that in the case of an artistically sophisticated writer so sensitive to all stylistic nuances, this kind of research constitutes a necessary foundation for thoroughly understanding his work. It is hardly surprising that not many Polish writers attract the same degree of linguists' attention as Norwid does. The subjects of linguistic studies are mainly the semantic and lexical aspects of Norwid's language. The research papers by Jadwiga Puzynina, Teresa Skubalanka, Anna Kozłowska and Tomasz Korpysz included in *Strona Norwida* perfectly illustrate this research trend, at the same time continuing the best philological research traditions.

Teresa Skubalanka presented a model example of a stylistic analysis of Norwid's works in her article *Glosy stylistyczne do kilku wierszy Cypriana Norwida* [*Stylistic Notes on Several of Norwid's Poems*]. The author used the poems *W albumie* [*In an Album*], "Ty mnie do pieśni pokornej nie wołaj..." ["Do not call me to a Humble Folk Song"], *Po balu* [*After the Ball*], *Zagadka* [*Riddle*] and *Spowiedź* [*Confession*] to compose detailed "philological notes" that clarify the meanings of the texts she chose. Skubalanka's analyses include the etymology, word formation mechanisms and the semantics of those words, expressions, metaphors and symbols, and also the characterization of the syntax, style and composition of the quoted poems, and finally – the intertextual references they contain. In each case, the author's conclusions aim for clear interpretive suggestions, which partially confirm, and partly broaden and refine the interpretations presently in effect. Skubalanka's article can be considered a benchmark of philological scrupulousness and meticulousness. It should therefore be emphasized that similar analyses should be the starting point of every interpretation of Norwid's expression.

Jadwiga Puzynina's essay *O "walce" w pismach Norwida* ["*The Struggle*" in *Norwid's Writings*] is similar in nature. In it she conducts a thorough linguistic analysis of one of the most crucial semantic concepts in Norwid's (literary and journalistic) expression. The author expertly assessed the frequency of the use of the lexeme *walka* [*struggle*] in Norwid's writings, and then made a careful, synchronous typology of those uses (dividing them into objective, metalinguistic

and “opinions evaluating this concept,” and also into metaphorical and metonymic uses). Puzyńska has clearly highlighted the semantic components of this word (heroism, effort, commitment to peace), as well as the fundamental semantic differences that apply to: *walka* [struggle], *bitwa* [fight/combat] and *wojna* [war] in Norwid’s language. An important theme in the essay is the reference of the semantic analysis of the word *walka* to two types of values: autotelic (having unambiguous semantic markings) and instrumental (with variable, axiologically ambivalent accents). It is worth repeating that similar analyses are of fundamental importance for the interpretation of Norwid’s legacy.

Anna Kozłowska’s article “*Przedwieczny (którego zowią B o g i e m)*” *O jednym Norwidowskim imieniu Boga* [“*The Pre-eternal one (Whom they call God)*” *On one of Norwid’s Names for God*] is an equally valuable work. The first indisputable value of this text is the compilation of the wealth of names Norwid uses for God: *Jedyny* [the One and Only], *Istotny* [The Essential], *Wszehobecny* [The Omnipresent], *Wszędy-obecny* [The All-Present], *Niewidzialny* [The Invisible], *Nieskończony* [The Infinite], *Wszchemocny* [The All-Powerful], *Miłosierny* [The Merciful], *Sprawiedliwy* [The Righteous], *Ukrzyżowany* [The Crucified], *Wcielony* [The Incarnate], *Utajony* [The Latent] (which have been supplemented with the contexts of their original formulations). The variety of terms used by the poet is the best proof of the rank the writer attributed to theological thought. In comparison with the rest of this catalogue – and this is the second strong point of the essay – Kozłowska analyzed the frequency of occurrence and semantics of the name *Przedwieczny* [The Pre-eternal], emphasizing its most important semantic elements: constant presence in time, transcendence, man’s inability to name or know him. The author successfully linked the semantic analysis of this concept to the contexts in which it appears (she distinguished, among others, historiosophic themes, reflections on the presence of God in history and human freedom). Thanks to the clear identification of the scope of the uses of the term *Przedwieczny* [The Pre-eternal], Kozłowska’s article is a valuable contribution to the characterization of Norwid’s concept of God, and moreover provides interesting material for the reconstruction of this writer’s anthropological and historiosophical concepts.

Tomasz Korpysz’s article *Cyprian Norwid o definicjach i definiowaniu* [Cyprian Norwid on Definitions and Defining] is another example of the important conclusions drawn from the semantic analyses of Norwid’s linguistic practice. The author begins with the apt remark that each “tekst artystyczny niemal zawsze jest nie tylko odbiciem oryginalnej autorskiej wizji świata, lecz także przykładem niestandardowego, specyficznego użycia języka” [“artistic text is almost always not just a reflection of the author’s original vision of the world, but also an example of non-standard, unique use of language”] (p. 209). In this sense, successful

reading depends on the reader's ability to recognize the specificity of a given literary expression. In the case of Norwid's work, this is a particularly important task, because – as Korpysz rightly pointed out – the author of *Quidam* belongs to those “charakteryzujących się wyjątkowo kreatywnym stosunkiem do materii językowej” [“who have an exceptionally creative attitude towards linguistic matters”] (p. 209). The linguistic devices of particular importance include the practice of defining, commonly used by Norwid, especially in important moments of his expression (Korpysz found around 300 various definitional phrases in the writer's works). Interestingly, from the semantic point of view, Norwid's method relies not so much on creating definitions, as it does on “redefiniowaniu słów dobrze znanych i wskazywaniu na ich nieoczywiste [...] aspekty semantyczne” [“redefining well-known words and indicating their non-obvious [...] semantic aspects”] (p. 211). In his valuable article Korpysz pointed out and described with note-worthy precision the various ways Norwid used exactly this kind of defining for concepts and phenomena (redefinitions, definitions through negation etc.), he also pointed out the poet's tendency to theorize on the definition-forming practice itself, and supported his arguments with well-chosen examples.

INTERPRETATIONS

Modern Norwidology has been creating very favourable conditions for the development of the art of interpretation for several decades now. This is hardly a coincidence, given that the Polish writer's works – refined, ambiguous, transcending their time – seem to be the perfect testing grounds for various hermeneutic practices and strategies. The book under review fully confirms that this is the case: it contains many excellent studies whose subject is the interpretation of the poet's selected works. Grażyna Halkiewicz-Sojak, Bernadetta Kuczera-Chachulska, Dorota Plucińska, Piotr Chlebowski, Reverend Antoni Dunajski, Rolf Fieguth, Mieczysław Ingot, Michał Kuziak, Zdzisław Łapiński, Dariusz Pniewski and Krzysztof Trybuś all presented their suggestions on reading Norwid's works.

Grażyna Halkiewicz-Sojak's study “*Rozebrana,*” czyli *Norwidowska ballada o nadziei* [“*Disrobed,*” or, *a Norvidian Ballad about Hope*] is a great example of the art of interpretation. The author suggested the reading of this work as one of “z ważniejszych dopełnień Norwidowskiej refleksji o nadziei” [“the most important supplements to Norwid's thoughts on hope”] (p. 158), and at the same time “pęty i balladowej klamry polskiego romantyzmu” [“the key point and ballad-framework of Polish Romanticism”] (p. 165). This is not the first interpretation of the poem, but its great advantage is the emphasis on new themes, while taking

into account the previous studies of Norwid's masterpiece. The author used the existing findings – related to the allegorical structure of the presented world, the tripartite composition of the piece, the intertextual dialogue with Słowacki's poetry – to focus on the symbolic shaping of the native landscape into the dominion of Diana-Polonia, a space awaiting transformation. The author's most original observations concern the compositional and meaning-creating role of the opposition between that which is invisible (even if obvious), and that which is visible (but less important). According to Grażyna Halkiewicz-Sojak the opposition has a double meaning: it emphasizes not only the incomplete existence of Poland in its political sense, but is also a kind of admonition and call to ably look with the mind's eye, an encouragement to see the true (though hidden) essence of the world. Norwid's poem, in which one can discern "chrześcijańskiej ufności w sens i sprawiedliwość dziejów" ["a Christian trust in the sense and justice of history"] (p. 162), can be seen not only as an allegory of Poland, but also as a parable of "prawdy o polskim byciu w świecie i... nadziei na dostrzeżenie tego, co ważne" ["the truth about Polish being in the world and... the hope of noticing what is important"] (p. 165). In this sense *Rozebrana* can be seen as a complement to Mickiewicz's ballad-manifesto *Romantyczność* [*Romanticism*]. I would also emphasize that the skillful introduction of the diachronic perspective (still a rare perspective in today's Norwidology) is a significant value of the discussed study. The author places her arguments in the context of Norwid's reflections on hope – a concept already discernible in the poet's early works, and then consistently revisited in later texts. In Grażyna Halkiewicz-Sojak's opinion Norwid is a "constellation poet," or an artist who "już na początku formułuje istotne pytania i do odpowiedzi na nie wielokrotnie powraca, dopełniając je coraz dojrzalszą refleksją" ["formulates important questions from the very beginning and returns to their answers repeatedly, supplementing them with increasingly mature reflections"] (p. 158). A very keen observation!

Bernadetta Kuczera-Chachulska's study *Jeszcze o "ostatnich wierszach" Norwida* [*More about Norwid's "Last Poems"*] is also of an interpretational nature. Her starting point is the interesting observation that "garść liryków, napisanych przez poetę pod koniec życia w najszerszym norwidologicznym obiegu, funkcjonuje jakby poza czasem powstania, poza chronologicznym myśleniem o ich autorze" [the handful of Norwid's poems in the widest circulation, the ones he wrote towards the end of his life, exists as if outside the time they were created, beyond the chronological way of thinking about their author"] (p. 237-238). Building on this idea, Kuczera-Chachulska treated Norwid's life in the 1870s and 1880s as a distinctive "liryczny «finale», klamrę artystyczną i myślową" ["lyrical «finale», an artistic and reflective binding"] (p. 238) of his work. The unquestionable value

of this essay is the convincing, in-depth and original interpretation of three lyrical masterpieces from this period: the poems *Słowianin. Do Teofila Lenartowicza* [*The Slav. To Teofil Lenartowicz*], *Do Bronisława Z.* [*To Bronisław Z.*] and *Lapidaria* – an interpretation emphasizing the reconciliatory dimension of these lyrical expressions, their deeply existential, lyrical “I”-centric, subjective character (this is quite novel, especially when viewed in the context of the interpretation tradition thus far), and also the singularity of their artistry, which lies in equating (the hitherto dichotomized) “dotykalne realia życia i wyabstrahowanego systemu przekonań i wartości” [“tangible realities of life and abstract system of beliefs and values”] (p. 243). It can be presumed, that in the author’s view, the artistic rules she pointed out relate not only to the three example poems, but characterize Norwid’s late works in general. In this sense, the article by Bernadetta Kuczera-Chachulska can be read as an instructive summary of the entire late-life period of Norwid’s work. This text is also an excellent testament to the author’s interpretive craft: evident are her keen poetic ear, attention to detail and semantic subtleties, concern for the aesthetic quality of the analyzed works, great knowledge of the traditions of interpreting Polish Romantic poetry, and consideration of the philosophical contexts.

Zdzisław Łapiński’s study *O “Czulości” (kilka przypisów do Gomulickiego* [*On “Tenderness” (a few notes on Gomulicki)*] is also distinguished by surprising freshness – surprising mainly because Norwid’s poetic masterpiece has already been the subject of many convincing interpretations and erudite commentaries – one could therefore think that its semantic potential has long been exhausted. But what a mistaken assumption that would be! Łapiński modestly defines his commentary as an attempt to affix “a few footnotes” to the poem, but really, it allows us to look at Norwid’s text from a new perspective. The author suggests a “traditionalistic” reading: he does not shock us with contrived new concepts, instigate showy polemics or astound us with novelties. He simply offers a careful reading, trying to ascertain the historical meanings of the title word and the literal meanings of the expressions used in the poem. To this end, he uses 19th-century dictionaries, as well as contemporary ones. His reconstruction shows that in *Czulość* Norwid presented a variety of emotional states in abridged, symbolic forms (violent and gentle feelings, consistently with the 19th-century understanding of the words), but he attributed neither positive, nor negative values to them, moreover, he did not place them in opposition to one another. According to Łapiński, the unusual quizzicality of this poem is to be found not so much in the question of which type of emotions Norwid favoured (this has been the subject of fierce debate among many interpreters), but rather in the semantic openness of this poem to interpretation, in the peculiar suspension of its meanings in a state of

undecidedness. The effect is such, that in *Czulość* there are various equally valid interpretative possibilities, including those that “nie do pogodzenia z naszymi” [are incompatible with ours] (p. 292). A beautiful conclusion!

Krzysztof Trybuś presented an intriguing interpretation of the poem *W albumie* [In an Album] in his study *Rozważania wokół wiersza “W albumie” Cypriana Norwida* [Concerning Cyprian Norwid’s Poem “In an Album”]. The Poznań-based researcher treated this rarely interpreted work as a poem about memory and the ways in which it functions, and about Norwid’s views on Mediterranean culture and on poetry. According to Trybuś, Norwid’s lyrical expression creates a map of the world of sorts, it demarcates its centre and peripheries as well as defines the properties of these spaces, thus becoming an act of delineating the symbolic genealogy of Norwid’s soul. The poetics of the album entry (or poetic postcard) used in the work also determined the specific way in which Norwid created poetic reality – it is based on placing the exiled present times opposite the homeland landscapes extracted from memory and imagination. Trybuś recognized this way of thinking about the creative power of memory, in turn, as a characteristic feature of Polish literature from the last two centuries. *Rozważania wokół wiersza “W albumie” Cypriana Norwida* is an excellent combination of subtle and nuanced text interpretation and persuasive historical and literary conclusions.

Dorota Plucińska presented a structuralistic analysis of the prose miniature [*Pamiętnik podróżny*] [Travel Journal] in the article *Biografia jako tworzywo literackie: [“Pamiętnik podróżny”] Cypriana Norwida* [Biography as Literary Material: Cyprian Norwid’s [“Travel Journal”]]. The very choice of this subject deserves recognition – because [*Pamiętnik podróżny*] is one of the very few of Norwid’s texts that have not received the interpretational interest they deserve.¹ Meanwhile, it is clear from Plucińska’s analysis that it should be treated more favourably: both because of its literary genre form (using conventions typical of 19th-century travel writing), and because of the sophisticated, ironic narrative, as well as the art of caricature (visible especially in the character sketches) and the original message, which fits perfectly within the set of Norwid’s considerations on Poles’ collective mentality. Plucińska not only competently analyzed this miniature, but also contributed many valuable remarks about Norwid’s technique as a prose writer; he drew inspiration from his own experiences, playing a peculiar “grę z biografią (własną i cudzą)” [“game with biography (his own and other)”]

¹ Only J.W. Gomulicki provided this text with a brief editorial comment in *Pisma wszystkie*. Cf. C. NORWID, *Pisma wszystkie*, compiled, edited, introduced and critically annotated by J.W. Gomulicki, vol. VII: *Proza. Część druga*, Warsaw 1973, p. 553-554.

(p. 315), sensitive to the story-like value of the anecdote, enhancing the narration with an axiological dimension.

Adela Kuik-Kalinowska's essay "*Poetessa dicit.*" *Zofia-artystka i Zofia-kobieta w "Quidamie"* ["*Poetessa dicit.*" *Zofia-the-artist and Zofia-the-woman in "Quidam"*] seems to touch upon issues that are quite well known. There is no question that the portraits of Norwid's literary heroines have repeatedly attracted readers' and researchers' attention, and that Norwid's concept of a "complete woman" has been the subject of many competent interpretations. Kuik-Kalinowska's study creatively fits into this long and rich interpretational tradition, and concerns one of Norwid's most important female protagonists, Zofia from the poem *Quidam*. An unquestionable value of this essay is the verification of the thesis (quite influential in early Norwidology, especially), that Norwid's literary depictions of women were subordinated to preconceived symbolic meanings and are quite removed from true life: "nie tyle mają być, ile znaczyć" ["they are not so much meant to be, as to mean something"] (p. 254). The author's conclusions – although not expressed directly – appear to confirm the fact that "w postaci Zofii artystyczne założenie poety znalazło swój wyraz" ["the poet's artistic premise found its expression in Zofia's character"] (p. 267). In her discussion on the subject, Kuik-Kalinowska focused mainly on the detailed description of Zofia (especially as a poet and woman of the salon), while in her reading, she considered the symbolic and aesthetic dimensions of Norwid's literary creation.

Piotr Chlebowski's essay *Śmierć na Placu Przedajnym. Uwag kilka o pieśni XXIV poematu "Quidam"* [*Death On Market Square. Several Remarks on the Song XXIV from "Quidam"*] is characterized by different values. In analyzing the setting of just this one song, the author demonstrated the – not at all obvious – confluence of *Quidam*'s artistic form with the poetics of 19th-century realistic novels, and even with contemporary film technique. According to Chlebowski, "nie ma tu szczegółu, zdarzenia i gestu, oderwanego od realnej rzeczywistości, od konkretnego czasu i przestrzeni" ["there is no detail here, event or gesture, detached from actual reality, from a specific time and place"] (p. 55); however, "sceny są tu poddane owemu niezwykłemu kadrowaniu," które cechuje się intensywną "przemiennością «klatek-obrazów»" ["the scenes are subject to that unusual image cropping, whose main characteristic is an intense alternation of «picture-frames»"] (p. 57). The principle of metaphorization and symbolization Norwid uses applies to almost every element of the world he presents; not only the ambiguous term *quidam* or place and time of the accidental death of the poem's protagonist, but also many other motifs: flowers, herbs, moon, bull. All of them have been consistently subordinated to the main idea behind the poem: extracting the historiosophic sense of history as sacred and sacralizing the concept of each

man's purpose, "w sposób, który przekracza horyzont metafizycznej wrażliwości" ["in a way that transcends the horizon of metaphysical sensitivity"] (p. 67) of the individual instances in the poem. Chlebowski's study draws insightful conclusions and provides a detailed analysis of individual motifs; moreover, it consistently strives to define the expression and artistic function of all the fragments of the analyzed text, including those, which at first glance seem meaningless.

Michał Kuziak's interpretive study *Czarne kwiaty, których nie ma. Jak dekonstruuje się tekst Norwida* [*Black Flowers, which do not Exist. How to Deconstruct Norwid's Text*] is noteworthy for two reasons. Firstly, it is a very interesting interpretation that brings out the hitherto poorly understood semantic dimension of this novella. Secondly, it has an intriguing methodological design, which, in essence, is an attempt to enrich Norwidology with deconstructionist inspirations. Kuziak interprets *Czarne kwiaty* [*Black Flowers*] as a work about Norwid's concept of *mimesis*, touching upon the issues of representation, or, to put it more precisely – as Norwid's attempt to answer the age-old question of how to "uobecnić świat w tekście" ["make the world present in a text"] (p. 274). The author's interpretation was based on the thesis of "paradoksalnej idiomatyczności *Czarnych kwiatów*, w sposób szczególnie kwestionujących status instytucji literatury" ["the paradoxical idiomatic nature of *Black Flowers*, questioning the status of the institution of literature in a particular way"] (p. 274). This paradoxality is based – on the one hand – on Norwid's clear intention "pisanie (mówienia) prawdy" ["to write (speak) the truth"] about the world, and on the other – on the declarations present in the novella, which "odrywają" ["break"] from the reality of the narration of *Czarne kwiaty*, expressing what we would call "poetyki negatywnej" ["blackout poetry"] (p. 275-276). Kuziak pointed to the fragments of the text that – in his opinion – undermine Norwid's intentions of making the world present: the ambiguous nature of "podpisów świadków, którzy, pisząc nie umiejąc, znakami krzyża niekształtnie nakreślonego podpisują się"² ["the signatures of witnesses, who, not knowing how to write, sign their names with clumsily-made crosses"], the equally ambivalent meaning of the flower motif used in the novella (which "okazują się czymś, czego nie ma, czymś naznaczonym nieistnieniem, widzianym w szaleństwie" ["turn out to be something that is not there, something marked by non-existence, seen in madness"]) (p. 277), and also the fictional status of one of the literary heroines – the unnamed Irish woman (a character made up in a text posing as a document). According to Kuziak, *Czarne kwiaty* is not only an attempt to address mystery, but also eloquent proof that "literatura w istocie unieobecnia

² C. NORWID. *Czarne kwiaty*, [in:] IDEM, *Pisma wszystkie*, vol. VI: *Proza. Część pierwsza*, Warsaw 1971, p. 186.

to, co obecne” [“literature in fact makes absent that which is present”] (p. 279). The writer undertook the unfeasible, inherently contradictory task of expressing this mystery in such a way “by ją ukazać, a zarazem jej nie naruszyć” [“as to reveal it, without disturbing it”] (p. 281). Kuziak considered this exact dilemma of the *mimesis* strategy to be the semantic core of the text, and at the same time, its most original dimension. I should only add that this intelligent and compelling interpretation had a very strong basis in the text of Norwid’s novella.

The group of interpretive texts – this time, of a comparative nature – includes Reverend Antoni Dunajski’s valuable study “*O miłości ksiąg dwie*” i jedna encyklika [“*Two Books about Love*” and *One Encyclical*]. The author – a renowned expert on the religious dimension of Norwid’s work – presented a theological model of the reading of this rarely studied text. The example with which he compared Norwid’s concept of love was Pope Benedict XVI’s encyclical *Deus caritas est*. From this point of view, the assessment of Norwid’s essay *O miłości ksiąg dwie* [Two Books about Love] was very critical – Dunajski pointed out its incompleteness and underdevelopment, the biographical entanglements of the poet’s arguments, the lack of proper perspective on the issue, and the arbitrariness of the whole concept, which mainly emphasizes the human dimension of love. As a result – he claimed – Norwid’s argument contains several theses that are “nie do końca ze sobą powiązanych, postawionych raczej na zasadzie aksjomatów” [“not entirely related to one another, juxtaposed rather on the basis of their axioms”] (p. 101). Dunajski’s assessment, focused on the theological dimensions of Norwid’s views on love, seems to be well-founded, although it would be interesting to see his arguments in a historical context as well, in particular against the backdrop of 19th-century customs (especially matrimonial). In this way, the reader would gain yet another important and useful context in which to interpret the essay *O miłości ksiąg dwie*.

In his excellent comparative study “*Vade-mecum*” *Cypriana Norwida w kontekście Victora Hugo i Charles’a Baudelaire’a* [Cyprian Norwid’s “*Vade-mecum*” in the context of Victor Hugo and Charles Baudelaire] Rolf Fieguth addressed a subject which has not yet been given its own book. This is the question of Norwid’s “affinities by choice,” or, to put it more precisely – traces of the influence of the French poets named in the title of the essay: Victor Hugo and Charles Baudelaire. The very indication of these associations still seems to be an important novelty for Norwidology, and in this sense it is a value in and of itself (this refers especially to the influence of Victor Hugo’s works on Norwid, whose writing – especially his poetry – remains to this day almost completely unknown in Poland). Fieguth went much further even: assuming that “poezja Hugo, a zwłaszcza metoda i styl kompozycji jego kolejnych książek poetyckich, stanowiła w połowie XIX w.

punkt odniesienia [...] innych inicjatyw poetyckich na europejską skalę” [Hugo’s poetry, and especially the method and style of his successive poetry books, became a point of reference in the mid-19th century [...] for other poetic initiatives on a European scale”] (p. 139); he juxtaposed the artistic and ideological proposals of the author of *The Legend of the Ages* with the compositional solutions used in *Vade-mecum* and *Kwiaty zła* [*Flowers of Evil*]. By doing so he demonstrated that the above-mentioned lyrical cycles by Norwid and Baudelaire are connected by “twórcza opozycja do poezji Hugo” [“a creative opposition to Hugo’s poetry”] (p. 140), apparent in the rich repertoire of similar poetic motifs (wandering, desert, flowers, big city etc.), and above all in the numerous polemic allusions to the poetry of the French Romantic (Fieguth pointed out, among other things, the different, though referring to one another, ways of understanding the purpose of poetry, the attitude of these poets to the literary book market of that time, their journalistic temperament and sense of history, and also the important role of religious themes and reflections on art; the scholar even found presumable caricatures of Victor Hugo in Norwid’s poetry). According to Fieguth, the relationship between Norwid and Hugo is visible in the expression of similar emotional states and similar compositional approaches (mainly in the “Dante-esque” motif of wandering around the world and underworld). The author illustrated his reasoning with wonderful comparative analyses of selected poetic works. He ended with the persuasive conclusion that there may be some doubts as to these affinities if they are considered in isolation; however; viewed in the aggregate, side-by side, they present a compelling case. One can, therefore, be tempted to say that Fieguth’s essay accurately identifies the missing link in the chain of Norwid’s affinities with 19th-century European poetry.

Mieczysław Ingot’s study *Trzy milczenia. “Milczenie” Cypriana Norwida w kontekście “Milczenia” Ignacego Krasickiego oraz “Milczenia” Franciszka Grzymały* [*Three Silences. Cyprian Norwid’s “Silence” in the context of Ignacy Krasicki’s “Silence” and Franciszek Grzymała’s “Silence”*] belongs to the same category of comparative interpretations. It proposes an interesting comparative interpretation of one of Norwid’s most important texts against two other 19th-century poems about silence. Ingot focused primarily on Norwid’s relatively lengthy and multilayered essay (it contains enough material for a small book) and supplemented his study with considerably more laconic comments about Krasicki’s and Grzymała’s texts. He identified the most important – it would seem – problem in Norwid’s essay, namely the way in which he addresses the issue of the truth, which differs from his earlier texts, because it emphasizes the insufficiency of human cognition and the inability to discover it fully. Using this new concept, Ingot interpreted Norwid’s theory of silence and leaving things unsaid as a method of

“dochodzenia do prawdy” [“searching for the truth”] (p. 180). These issues were brought together as a distinct theme through Norwid’s following anthropological metaphor: “jesteśmy w każdym zmyśle i rozmyśle naszym otoczeni kryształem przezroczystym, ale u-obłędniającym poglądy nasze”³ [“our every sense and perception is surrounded by a crystal that is transparent, but distorts what we see”]. The semantic analysis of this metaphor, revealing its anthropological and epistemological connotations, seems to me perhaps the most valuable element of this entire essay. Inglot convincingly illuminated this quote’s meaning with well-chosen examples from the writings of philosophers and Enlightenment and Romantic writers. Despite some compositional imbalance (which I already mentioned and which is easily justified given the issues addressed in the volume), it should be emphasized that the author’s careful argumentation excellently highlights the important differences in the concepts of silence in the presentations of these three Polish writers: Krasicki and Grzymała’s traditional, moralistic understanding, and Norwid’s philosophical one.

Ryszard Zajązkowski’s essay *Cyprian Norwid i Roman Brandstaetter – obszary zbliżenia* [*Cyprian Norwid and Roman Brandstaetter – Common Grounds*] is a valuable scientific comparison. The creative links between the two writers are not of a genetic character (which the author acknowledged at the beginning of his work), but their close ideological and artistic affinities are a strong foundation. Zajązkowski built his thesis around two issues: Norwid and Brandstaetter’s “osadzenie w polskości” [“deep Polish roots”] and “łatwość, z jaką przekraczają granice etniczne i kulturowe” [“the ease with which they transcend ethical and cultural boundaries”] (p. 407) in their works. The author’s examination of the role Italy (and Rome) played in the lives and works of these authors provided powerful evidence to justify this thesis. Zajązkowski compared the routes of their journeys around Italy and traced Norwid and Brandstaetter’s Italian fascinations to show the overwhelming degree to which they influenced “wyobraźnię i światopogląd obu artystów” [“the imaginations and worldviews of both artists”] (p. 408). The similarities include: their creation of symbolic Italian landscapes, replete with cultural motifs that make time stand still “na pograniczu doczesności i wieczności” [“at the border of temporality and eternity”] (p. 410), a particular sensitivity to the sacred dimension of the world, historiosophy and anthropology rooted in Christianity, and finally, multidimensional reflections on art, focused on its ethical dimension and connection to universal (classic) aesthetic values. Without deciding the latter issue (as we know, the assessment of Norwid’s oeuvre has always been a contentious and complicated issue and researchers’ opinions remain divided),

³ IDEM, *Milczenie*, *ibid.*, p. 226-227.

this study can be considered a strong argument for the presence of Norwid's ideas in 20th-century Polish literature, and in some ways also an interesting chapter in the history of modern Classicism in Poland.

The article *Po co Norwidowi fantazja? [Why did Norwid need Fantasy?]* by Dariusz Pniewski took a slightly different comparative route. The author chose to interpret five of Norwid's works that Norwid had categorized as belonging to the "fantasy" genre (these are his early poems: *Marzenie [A Daydream]*, *Wieczór w pustkach [An Evening in Wildreness]*, *Chwila myśli [A Moment of Thought]*, as well as his later ones: *Toast [A Toast]* and *Echa [Echoes]*). Starting with the literary genre findings of Grażyna Halkiewicz-Sojak, who in her essay *Młodzieńcze "fantazje" Cypriana Norwida [Cyprian Norwid's Youthful "Fantasies"]* (2003) identified the main features of these works (i.e. their dramatic structure, folk poetry and fantastic horror conventions, extensive allusiveness and the important role of personified objects), Pniewski based his original concept on the analysis of the world they present in terms of their images. Following this reasoning, he pointed out the previously unnoticed aesthetic affinity between Norwid's "fantasies" and Edward Young's "graveyard aesthetics," the similar "Byronic" creations of the protagonists, who were torn between dreams and reality, and finally the peculiar structure of the presented world, in which personified objects and phenomena played the key role. The allegorical clarity of the above literary conventions, which Pniewski identified and functionalized very well, brought him to the conclusion that Norwid used Aesopian language in his "fantasies," which allowed him "do zaszyfrowania przekazu o wymowie patriotycznej" [to encrypt a patriotic message] (p. 346). It should only be added that Pniewski largely based the meticulous literary analysis on his extensive knowledge of art history. His study is a confirmation of the great ambition of modern Norwidology, which boldly and creatively draws inspiration from various fields in the humanities.

INTERDISCIPLINARY STUDIES,
BIOGRAPHICAL STUDIES, TEXTUAL STUDIES

It is not a coincidence that a significant number of contemporary researchers of Norwid's oeuvre operates freely in the area of interdisciplinary research – especially on the borderline of literary studies and art history and translation studies (and also, which we've already discussed, theology or history). Yet another group of scholars, whose works do not directly concern the interpretations of Norwid's works, remains faithful to the traditional philological disciplines like textual or

literary biographical studies. Together they make a significant contribution to the harmonious development of research on the life and work of the author of *Quidam*. The articles by Edyta Chlebowska, Agata Brajerska-Mazur, Zofia Dambek, Jan Zieliński and Wiktor Mikucki included in the reviewed monograph are meaningful examples of this.

As I have already mentioned, one of the very important achievements of modern Norwidology is the broadening of the sphere of reflection on the work of this artist to include issues relevant to art history. Edyta Chlebowska, the author of many valuable research papers in this field, can boast of a significant contribution to this type of research. This book includes her article *Norwidowski Dawid w albumie Marii Wodzińskiej* [*Norwid's David in Maria Wodzińska's Album*]. This text contains an in-depth interpretation of Norwid's iconological drawing *Dawid przed Saulem* [*David before Saul*] – that discusses both its artistic origins and the semantics of the techniques its creator applied. The author scrupulously reconstructs the biblical context in which the scene depicted by Norwid should be placed, and then situates it against the background of the iconographic tradition of scenes depicting David before Saul (medieval miniatures, paintings by Bernard Cavallino, Rembrandt, Christian Gottlieb Schick), and also in the context of other motifs Norwid uses (including the old Christian motif of “the hand of God,” images of David and Orestes). Chlebowska describes David in Norwid's drawing as a simpleton and God's fool, “postać heroiczna, ale i bardzo ludzka” [a heroic, but also very human, figure] (p. 41). In her comprehensive comparative analysis the author drew our attention to the principle of linking ancient and Christian iconographic motifs present in Norwid's graphic works (a known fact, but usually only as far as it relates to his poetry) and also their original use by the Polish artist.

The first article in the book, Agata Brajerska-Mazur's translation study *Norwid, "Spartakus" i Internet* [*Norwid, "Spartacus," and the Internet*], is also interdisciplinary in nature. The author uses an original analytic method she developed, according to which an artistic translation should not rely on its translator's artistic intuition, but should above all be a “funkcją pierwowzoru [“function of the original”] (p. 9). Thus, in a good translation, relevant qualities of the original, which can be identified through reference to the interpretational tradition, should find their artistic equivalent. Consistently with these guidelines the value of the artistic translation is measured by the extent to which the translator included the most important structural and semantic features of the original. Brajerska-Mazur's study wonderfully illustrates the advantages of this method. Above all, the researcher was able to show the key semantic-artistic attributes of Norwid's text (that is, the poem's underlying idea of showing the multifaceted conflict of an individual

with the collective, and also such features as the symbolism of inverted meanings, the regularity of the metric structure, the ambiguity of Spartacus's gesture, and finally the characteristic visual shape of the poem, emphasizing certain words and showing the characters' emotions). Later in the essay the author confronted these attributes with Barry Keane's English translation of the poem *Spartakus* [*Spartakus*]. Thanks to these analytical steps – careful, detailed, and based on the most objective possible premises – Brajerska-Mazur was able to thoroughly assess the translator's work, as well as present inspiring remarks on the reception of Norwid's poetry within anglophone culture.

In turn, Zofia Dambek's interesting study *Fragment nieznanego listu Norwida z 1857 r. Wokół Norwidowskiego tłumaczenia "Capitolo fatto in prigione e lode di detta prigione" Benvenuto Celliniego*. [*An Excerpt from an Unknown Letter by Norwid from 1857 about Norwid's Translation of Benvenuto Cellini's "Capitolo fatto in prigione e lode di detta prigione"*] provides us with new editorial guidelines and biographical information. The author scrupulously reconstructed the events from 1855-1857, when Norwid was particularly interested in Benvenuto Cellini (as evidenced by, among other things, his drawing *Cellini w Koloseum* [*Cellini in the Colosseum*] and his translation of fragments from Cellini's autobiography); she also recreated an interesting mail-exchange dialogue (between Jan Koźmian, Andrzej Edward Koźmian, Teofil Lenartowicz, Edmund Bojanowski) about Norwid's attempts to publish fragments of Cellini's *Żywot* [*Life*]. This juxtaposition alone attests to the undeniable quality of Zofia Dambek's work, but her most valuable finding is the discovery and publication of the unknown fragment of Norwid's correspondence – contained in the letter to Andrzej Edward Koźmian from 1857.

Jan Zieliński's article *Zwiotczały Pegaz* [*The Wilted Pegasus*] proves just how many Norwidological riddles we have yet to solve. This text aims to verify a fascinating anecdote starring Norwid, which Władysław Mickiewicz told Tadeusz Skowroński, who was living in Switzerland, in 1917. It concerns the story of a dead horse, which was intended to serve as Norwid's model for a historical painting, being brought to his studio in Rome. The story is so implausible that is hard to accept without some corroborating evidence, especially because it was told by someone whose recollections did not always turn out to be true. However, this is such an unusual and colorful episode that it is simply impossible to ignore. Jan Zieliński deserves much credit for recounting and thoroughly verifying this tale, based on archival field research and the available information on Norwid's biography and work. And the matter is not so simple – it is common knowledge that colourful anecdotes usually contain a grain of truth, but it is not always clear, in which part... Zieliński, like a professional detective, not only got to the source of this story, but above all placed this anecdote in the context of Norwid's biography:

he determined the probable time and place it occurred (May 1844, Florence, and not Rome), identified Norwid's companion in Władysław Mickiewicz's account (Antoni Zaleski, and not Józef or Bronisław Bohdan) and indicated possible traces of this event in Norwid's work (a fragment of a letter to Antoni Zaleski from 2 November 1844, and most importantly, the drawing *Akademia florencka* [*Florentine Academy*], which could be depicting the dead horse). Zieliński's reconstruction is based on circumstantial evidence – which is entirely understandable! – so we cannot be fully certain of its veracity. However, regardless of whether or not we believe the author, we can consider his article an excellent example of biographical microanalysis, thanks to which we have one more juicy anecdote that can take a permanent place in the repertoire of legends about Norwid.

Wiktór Mikucki offered a persuasive solution to the riddle of the two introductions to the poem *Quidam* in his essay *Cypriana Norwida dwa wstępy (do "Quidama")*. *Rejestr pytań i wątpliwości [Cyprian Norwid's Two Introductions (to "Quidam")*. *A Register of Questions and Doubts*]. He began with a detailed chronology of the actions the writer took between 1857-1862 in connection with the first publication of the poem (1863). A meticulous reconstruction of these well-known – it would seem – events, revealed a surprisingly large number of uncertainties. Namely, it turned out that there may be more than meets the eye to some of Norwid's own declarations, which until now have generally been accepted in good faith. According to Mikucki, that is the case with the poet's claims behind the reasons for withdrawing the publication of the poem *Do Walentego Pomiana Z.* [*To Walenty Pomian Z.*] (until now it was believed, based on Norwid's suggestion, that the police confiscated this poem, written in 1857, after Zakrzewski's suicide in 1862, preventing its publication), as well as with the conviction, that the introductory text to *Do Z. K. Wyjatek z listu* [*From a Letter to Z. K.*] is an authentic passage from his correspondence with Krasiński (who died in 1859), which was attached to the poem in lieu of the one confiscated by the police. As to this first issue, Mikucki did not rule out the above possibility, but also indicated another reason behind Norwid's decision – the fact that the explanation on how to interpret the poem contained therein was partially obsolete. As for the second issue, he considered "ewentualność mistyfikacji" [the alternative of mystification] (p. 300) likely; that is, a possibility that the introduction to *Do Z. K. Wyjatek z listu* was re-edited (or even rewritten) three years after Krasiński's death. Mikucki's speculations will remain, of course, enticing hypotheses, because the sources available to us do not allow us to verify whether they are, in fact, true. Much more important, however, are the interpretational consequences that the author derived from his "investigation" – and among them is first and foremost the suggestion that Norwid could have decided to change the

text under the influence of the events that took place in Warsaw just before the January Uprising (i.e. the so-called moral revolution). Hence the change in tone in the text of *Do Z. K.* [*To Z. K.*], hence the absence of critical accents toward Poland and Poles.

The book concludes with an *Indeks osób* [*Index of Persons*] (edited by Włodzimierz Toruń) and an *Indeks tekstów i prac plastycznych Norwida* [*Index of Norwid's Texts and Artworks*] (edited by Edyta Chlebowska).

SEVERAL CONCLUSORY REMARKS

That was the essence of the individual articles collected in *Strona Norwida*. Let us return, then, to the issue brought up in the introduction and ask: what image of Norwidology do they reveal? And what image of the writer himself? Answering the last question first, I would say that it seems as though our “modern” Norwid has somewhat lost his bronze monumentality: he has simply become an outstanding “poet and master” (Polish and European), a discerning (though fallible) thinker, a man involved in his time much more strongly than previously thought. To answer the first question, I would use an expression borrowed from Przemysław Czapliński: “norwidologia w czasie normalnym”⁴ [“Norwidology in normal times”] has been born before our very eyes and is thriving. Suffice it to say, that the developmental impulses in this field are no longer prompted by the necessity of re-establishing Norwid’s work in collective memory, nor the dramatic legend of the cursed poet, nor the noble fame of his infallible authority, nor the burning social or ethical questions, whose resolving requires drawing from Norwid’s well of wisdom. Reproachful remarks on the consequences of the writer’s rejection by his contemporaries have almost entirely disappeared from Norwidological research papers; the instances of referring to the author of *Promethidion* as the spiritual patron of modernity are less frequent, and the “axiological orientation,” which not so long ago dominated the research on the life and work of Norwid,⁵ is no longer a top choice. I would like to qualify this statement, though, by emphasizing that the contemporary researchers of Norwid’s work have not, in all probability, stopped believing in the unique ideological and artistic value of his work. Rather, I believe that the writer’s relevance is now

⁴ I am paraphrasing P. Czapliński’s expression from the subtitle of the book *Efekt bierności. Literatura w czasie normalnym* (Kraków 2004).

⁵ According to M. Ingot, “axiological orientation” dominated Norwidological discourse at the turn of the 20th and 21st centuries. Cf. IDEM, *Badania nad życiem i twórczością Cypriana Norwida w latach 1990-2002* (first edition 2004) – quoted from: IDEM, *Drogami pielgrzymia. Studia i artykuły o twórczości „czwartego wieszca”*, Lublin 2007, p. 383.

the subject of universal, though silent, acceptance, and this is exactly why there is such an intense interest in the work of the author of *Quidam*.

The thesis about “metodologicznym zastoju w norwidologii”⁶ [Norwidology’s methodological stagnation] is equally impossible to uphold today. On the contrary – one can see a systematic development of this discipline, the increasing influence of new methodological inspirations and original interpretive concepts. A reader of *Strona Norwida* may therefore rest assured that the writer enjoys the exceptional interest of today’s researchers – not only literary historians of the Romantic period, but also literary editors and theoreticians, theologians and teatrologists, philologists and comparatists, art historians, thought historians, and translationists are all interested in his work. Most importantly, however, the state of today’s Norwidology is the result of not only a systematic increase in detailed research papers, articles and contributions about the life and work of the writer. There have been three absolutely fundamental research projects carried out in recent years that have had a decisive influence on its shape: the new, critical edition of *Dziela wszystkie*⁷ [*The Complete Works*], which involves a team of the most prominent editors headed by Stefan Sawicki, *Kalendarz życia i twórczości Cypriana Norwida*⁸ [*A Calendar of the Life and Work of Cyprian Norwid*], compiled by a group of researchers in Poznań, and also the *Internetowy słownik języka Cypriana Norwida* [*Online Dictionary of Cyprian Norwid’s Language*], edited by scholars from the Warsaw research centre.⁹ I would even venture to say that it is, among other things, thanks to these initiatives that Norwidology has such a distinct identity; it draws its impressive energy from them.

The greatest credit, of course, is due to Professor Stefan Sawicki, whose contribution to the development and organization of Norwidological research is simply unfathomable. Professor Sawicki’s excellent scientific works and various forms of organizational and didactic activities confirmed just how multidimensional and complicated a phenomena Norwid’s oeuvre is, thus inspiring several generations of researchers to explore increasingly new areas of it. Today we gather the excellent fruit of his labor. I can only add that the vast majority of currently active

⁶ This is how M. Ingot diagnosed the situation of Norwidology over a dozen years ago (ibid., p. 383).

⁷ C. NORWID. *Dziela wszystkie*, Lublin: Towarzystwo Naukowe Katolickiego Uniwersytetu Lubelskiego Jana Pawła II. The book is expected to have 17 volumes (7 of which have already been published). The first volume was published in 2007.

⁸ *Kalendarz życia i twórczości Cypriana Norwida*, vol. I-III, ed. Z. Trojanowiczowa, Z. Dambek, E. Lijewska and I. Grzeszczak, Poznań: Wydawnictwo Poznańskie 2007.

⁹ J. PUZYŃNINA, T. KORPYSZ. *Internetowy słownik języka Cypriana Norwida*, <http://sownikjezykanorwida.uw.edu.pl/>.

Norwidologists are aware of the intellectual debt they owe Professor Sawicki and would probably gladly subscribe to the general idea of the jubilee volume *Strona Norwida* – as a gift of gratitude from the entire “Norwid community” to the Professor. The undersigned included

Translated by Monika Lutostanski

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O NAUKOWYM DARZE DLA PROFESORA STEFANA SAWICKIEGO, Z PRZYŁĄCZENIEM UWAG OGÓLNYCH NAD WSPÓŁCZESNĄ SZKOŁĄ NORWIDOLOGICZNĄ

S t r e s z c z e n i e

Artykuł jest recenzją monografii zbiorowej pt. *Strona Norwida. Studia i szkice ofiarowane Profesorowi Stefanowi Sawickiemu* (pod red. P. Chlebowskiego, W. Torunia, E. Żwirkowej, E. Chlebowskiej, Lublin 2008). Omówienie zawartości 28 zamieszczonych tu artykułów naukowych stanowi punkt wyjścia do naszkicowania panoramy współczesnej norwidologii oraz określenia wkładu prof. Stefana Sawickiego w rozwój tej dyscypliny.

Słowa kluczowe: Cyprian Norwid; Stefan Sawicki; norwidologia; jubileusz.

ON THE SCIENTIFIC GIFT FOR PROFESSOR STEFAN SAWICKI, WITH GENERAL REMARKS ON MODERN NORWID STUDIES

S u m m a r y

The article presents a review of the collective monograph *Strona Norwida. Studia I szkice ofiarowane Profesorowi Stefanowi Sawickiemu* (edited by P. Chlebowski, W. Toruń, E. Żwir-

kowska and E. Chlebowska, Lublin 2008). The discussion of the contents of all 28 scientific articles published in the volume is the starting point for sketching a panorama of contemporary Norwid Studies and determining the contribution of Professor Stefan Sawicki to the development of this discipline.

Key words: Cyprian Norwid; Stefan Sawicki; Norwid Studies; jubilee.

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Paweł Tańsk i – NORWID’S EXPANDING COSMOS

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Anita Jarzyna wrote a book that was worth waiting for. “*Pójście za Norwidem*” (w polskiej poezji współczesnej)¹ [“*Following Norwid*” (in Polish contemporary poetry)] is a diligent work, showing the author’s fine philological skills and enriching our knowledge of poetry. The study – an MA thesis completed in 2008 – was developed under the supervision of the outstanding expert of Polish poem, Prof. Piotr Śliwiński. The book was published five years later, without unnecessary haste, in a good rhythm, in accordance with the spirit of the idea of the person whose work it describes. Being perverse as usual, I think it was a good thing that Norwid’s work was discovered long after his passing away; his contemporaries and subsequent generations of readers were not prepared to accept such an unprecedented artistic phenomenon as the writings of the author of *Moja piosnka* (I) [*My Song* (I)]. I have the impression that even we, the devourers of books from the beginning of the 21st century, are not yet fully prepared to read Norwid’s utterly original work. It is excellent that so many studies have been created on this work and new ones are constantly being developed in order to illuminate the art of the word of the author of *Vade-mecum*. Anita Jarzyna proved in her book that the poets discussed by her draw by the handful from Norwid’s poetic world, that

¹ Lublin 2013: Towarzystwo Naukowe Katolickiego Uniwersytetu Lubelskiego Jana Pawła II, Ośrodek Badań nad Twórczością Cypriana Norwida KUL [The Learned Society of the John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin, Cyprian Norwid Literature Research Department KUL], pp. 254.