STUDIA NORWIDIANA 39sp:2021
ENGLISH VERSION

https://doi.org/10.18290/sn39sp.6en

WOJCIECH KUDYBA
ORCID: 0000-0001-5868-3850

NORWID IN CONTEMPORARY POETRY: FORMS OF PRESENCE

I am aware that, apart from the name "Norwid," all the other words used in the title above should be explained. Both the concept of contemporary poetry, the shape of which is being born before our eyes and is still subject to negotiation, and the issue of how Norwidian tradition functions in it, demand a comment. I try to treat both categories in a non-dogmatic manner to avoid entangling them in endless disputes over the periodisation of the history of literature. In line with university usage, I place texts written after 1945 at the centre of my observations, but I retain the right to reach beyond the period – into the years of the WWII occupation and the interwar period. Also, the subject of this research is not exclusively what one would call a reception. I understand the concept of the presence much more broadly – I include in it both a spectrum of explicit, intentional references to Norwid's work or legend as confirmed in texts, as well as the area of implicit, covert references, often beyond the conscious use by a writer, revealed and in that sense (re)constructed by a literary historian. While noting the vastness of the designated intertextual space, the set task is far more modest than the effort of adequately describing it in full. I believe that, before there appears a historical-literary synthesis devoted to the connections of contemporary poetry with the works of the author of *Promethidion*, it is worth attempting to categorise them first; that it is worth answering the question about the status and shape of the references mentioned in the works of poets representative of our contemporary times. That is why I use the concept of forms of presence. Their description is the main goal of my deliberations.

I

I understand the presence of a writer's works not so much as their static presence in the canon of literature, but rather as their dynamic participation in the process of

communication, and thus in the encounter. The question about the way references to Norwid exist in contemporary poetry is therefore for me a question about their function in variously designated literary areas. Although the basic and, in a way, natural area for such inquiry are the works of one author, it should be noted that the history of literature does not avoid community activity, the boundaries of which are determined by such notions as a literary group, trend, or generation.

The first question posed is whether Norwid's presence in our contemporary times, as sometimes sensed by poets, could have an integrating function or could serve to consolidate some existing literary environment. To formulate the question in a slightly more provocative manner, did the voice of the nineteenth-century master dictate twentieth-century writers' programmatic statements? Did it prompt the content of their poetic manifestos? When for an affirmative answer, attention must be drawn to the community of authors gathered around the Warsaw *Kwadryga*. In the years 1926-1933, not only Władysław Sebyła and Konstanty Ildefons Gałczyński collaborated with the magazine, but also such zealous readers of Norwid's legacy as Stanisław Ryszard Dobrowolski (author of a collection of poems devoted to Norwid)[1] and Marian Piechal (author of a popular study on Norwid).[2] According to Lidia Wójcik, thanks to the activity of both writers the project of "socialised poetry," – the identity pillar of the group – was supported by Norwid's clearly visible authority.[3] The journal published program statements in which postulates concerning the social role of poets and their moral obligations, especially towards circles pushed to the margins of social life, were inlaid with various allusions to the thoughts of the author of *Assunta*.[4] Viewed from the perspective of 21st century Norwid studies, those references show a highly selective and rather shallow way of reading the Norwidian tradition. Its multidimensionality and intellectual refinement were not noticed, either for lack of skill or will, being content with gestures resembling epigone homage.[5]

[1] S.R. Dobrowolski, *Nad Norwidem. Poezje wybrane*, Warszawa 1935.

[2] M. Piechal, *O Norwidzie (szkice)*, Warszawa 1937.

[3] L. Wójcik, "Wpływ Norwida na poezję Kwadrygi. (Fragmenty)," *Przegląd Humanistyczny*, No. 4 (1967), pp. 59-84.

[4] L. Wójcik, "Wpływ Norwida na poezję Kwadrygi. (Fragmenty)."

[5] The contemporary researcher and poet writes about the *Kwadryga* members as follows: "the poets who most loudly admit their kinship with Norwid or who most slavishly follow his stylistic patterns are usually his most superficial epigones." S. Barańczak, "Norwid: obecność nieobecnego," in: S. Barańczak, *Tablice z Macondo. Osiemnaście prób wytłumaczenia po co i dlaczego się pisze*, Kraków 2018, p. 127.

The rank of the artistic achievements from Dobrowolski and Piechal may also raise some doubts. However, all that does not change the fact that it was within *Kwadryga* that Norwid's texts appeared for the first time as an ideological and artistic bond of a literary group and the main area of inspiration for many poetic and metapoetic statements. It is thus all the more worth asking whether Norwid's patronage could extend beyond the limits of the literary group and whether poets were able to enter deeper into his difficult work. The answers are provided in the periodical *Sztuka i Naród*.

According to many researchers, in the texts from authors debuting in the dark years of the war and occupation, references to Norwid's tradition are something more than a form of cultural memory.[6] It seems that for Wacław Bojarski, Andrzej Trzebiński, Tadeusz Gajcy and many others, Norwid provided answers, not so much to the question of roots, but rather to questions concerning poetic duties. He told them not only about the past, but also, or even mostly, about the present and the future – about who one is and who one should be – here and now, in no other place, and at no other moment in history.[7] The discoveries made by Przemysław Dakowicz leave no doubt that young writers and critics gathered around the periodical *Sztuka i Naród* during the Nazi occupation made their references to Norwid's work first as a sign of the environment and gradually also the generation to which they belonged[8]. Their turn towards the nineteenth-century master was part of the process of establishing their own literary distinctiveness. The literary tradition of the interwar period was assigned the role of a negative tradition, ostentatiously (though not necessarily consistently) rejected. The frames of the positive, i.e. affirmed, tradition were determined by the works of Norwid. They were read intensively and offered much inspiration, as evidenced by the fact that the young writers derived the very imperative of working on individual and collective self-awareness from the works of their literary ancestor, stressing that amidst the turmoil of war, it was more and

[6] Cf. Z. Jastrzębski, "Pod znakiem Norwida," *Kamena*, No. 16 (1958), pp. 1-2; P. Dakowicz, "*Lecz ty spomnisz wnuku…" Recepcja Norwida w latach 1939-1956. Rzecz o ludziach, książkach i historii*, Warszawa 2011.

[7] Dakowicz cites e.g. the following opinion of Zdzisław Jastrzębski, expressed in the abovementioned article: "young poets learned from Norwid to fight the terror, find a controlled expression. […] That was what it was all about – the consistency of poetry in life. They were actually the first to understand and continue the testament of the author of *Vade mecum*." See P. Dakowicz, "*Lecz ty spomnisz wnuku…*," p. 13.

[8] The periodical was published from April 1942 to July 1944. Just below the magazine's vignette there was a paraphrase of the phrase appearing in the epilogue of *Promethidion.* It sounded like a motto: "The artist is the organizer of national imagination."

more difficult for writers to "«lean into oneself» in Norwid's manner and find a point of support for oneself and one's art in a higher being."[9]

It should also be remembered that the works of the romantic master were used at all other stages of building literary identity as well. It was not so much that Norwid's texts were read for themselves, but rather people read themselves in the face of his works. The quoted study by Dakowicz shows an image of a poetic generation that searches for the truth about themselves and their tasks in the works of the author of *Vade-mecum.* As the researcher writes: "In that search for the truth, the works of Norwid often acted as a signpost, sometimes also becoming a difficult obstacle, evoking «remorse».''[10]

We find out that it was in the works of the author of *Vade-mecum* where answers were sought to not-fully-academic questions about the nature of the art of speech and its relation to action. Attempts were made to find clues in them, allowing one to define the function of the poet at a specific point in history and to establish the social meaning of, not only his linguistic work, but also his moral attitude. In close connection with Norwid's texts, a project of creative and active life was built. It was understood as a cultural mission covering the entire national community. Gradually, the image of an ideal writer emerges from the pages of *Sztuka i Naród* as an artist immersed in the cultural community and its current historical moment, committed to the values it professes, engaged in the search for language capable of supporting community experience and thus serving the truth. Yet, that captivating vision is nothing but the hermeneutics of the works of Norwid seen as a generational mentor. The fact that the phenomenon is less environmental, and more generational in nature, is evidenced by the fact that the works of the author of *Promethidion* perform a similar function in the early works of Karol Wojtyła, which are unrelated to *Sztuka i Naród*, but belong to the same poetic generation.[11]

II

So far, the discussion concerned group activities, circles of artists acquiring self-knowledge as writers thanks to in-depth reading of Norwid's works and defining their place in the literary and non-literary world in relation to the thoughts of the

[9] W. Bojarski, "O nową postawę człowieka tworzącego," quoted after: P. Dakowicz, "*Lecz ty spomnisz wnuku…,*" p. 22.

[10] P. Dakowicz, "*Lecz ty spomnisz wnuku…,*" p. 43.

[11] Cf. M. Urbanowski, "'Widma lepszych świtań': renesansowy psałterz Karola Wojtyły a poezja pokolenia wojennego," in: *Pisarstwo Karola Wojtyły – Jana Pawła II w oczach krytyków i uczonych*, ed. K. Dybciak, Warszawa 2019, pp. 237-264.

author of *Promethidion.* Yet, the presence of the Norwidian tradition in literary communities is not always manifested in such a clear, or even spectacular way. It is worth recalling that the breakthrough in Poland in 1956 not only opened a new area of literary freedoms, but also a new way of existence for Norwid's works, which were reissued, quoted, and widely commented, and slowly became an element of a commonly available cultural code; almost like air which is breathed almost without knowing. The canonization of the poet's works and their ennoblement in culture also significantly changed the way they functioned in historical-literary and critical-literary discourse. Raised to the rank of a cultural model, they could function as a specific literary measure, serving to evaluate and organize literary production of the time; actually, they were that measure. Stanisław Barańczak asked somewhat rhetorically in the 1980s:

> [...] are there really any currents, tendencies or schools in today's poetry which recognise Norwid as their patron? In other words: does the work of Norwid [...] really constitute a recognisable model of tradition to which the poetry of recent years would refer?
>
> Well, I will say right away that, in my opinion, Norwid left with his usual perversity a certain paradox as legacy to the "grandsons" or great-grandsons. And the paradox is this: Norwid's influence in today's poetry turns out to be shallowest where it is most manifestly revealed; and vice versa, he left his mark most deeply where contemporary poets seemingly do not refer to Norwid's model at all.[12]

An important element of the critic's statement seems to be a sequence of spatial metaphors, clearly separating what is shallow from the deep and the overt from the covert. At the end of the phrase, the researcher imposes a new dichotomy on the distinctions made, greatly extending the semantics of the argument. What is openly visible turns out to be not only shallow, but also merely apparent. What is deep and hidden appears to one's eyes as real. Let us recall, therefore, that it is about Norwid's works, and about their communicative activity in contemporary literature. How this area is understood, however, can only be guessed because the author of the article implies that he is trying to present forms of presence of the Norwidian tradition which cannot be captured in either the area of intertextual references or the consciousness of contemporary writers; he speaks of such references to Norwid which are hidden in the deeper layers of text and cannot always rely on *intentio auctoris* support. So how can their ontological status be defined since their essence is both secretiveness and truthfulness? Perhaps when thinking about it, one approaches the theory of intentional beings, whose existence is rooted both in empiricism (e.g.

[12] S. Barańczak, "Norwid: obecność nieobecnego," p. 120.

textual) and in the consciousness of the person who learns that empiricism.[13] If one were to believe the critic's intuition, then references to Norwid's tradition are sometimes located at the intersection of the text and the consciousness of a literary historian. They are not completely detached from the textual background, but they remain hidden and undeveloped therein. Potential remains in their constitutive feature. They resemble a structural skeleton which not only requires the imagination and competence of a literary historian, but also their will to obtain its full shape.

Therefore, it can be said that there are forms of Norwid's presence in contemporary times that arise not so much from the expectations of literature itself, but rather from the needs of critics and historians of literature, who remember their mission to systematise an exceptionally complex and rich territory, and who are also sensitive to the manners of perceiving the corpus of the works of Norwid functioning in interpretative communities. The main thesis of the quoted article by Barańczak, concerning the function of references to Norwid's work among Polish contemporary poets of the trend coined by the Harvard researcher "ironic moralism," seems to be rooted in such a desire and in such sensitivity. Although a similar trend has never been distinguished in the Polish historical and literary tradition, the situation was different with the foreign reception of the twentieth-century Polish poetry. The change of the perceptual perspective had to result in changing the ordering of phenomena. What may have seemed like an insurmountable difference in Poland, from the perspective of a foreign recipient, was presented as unity in plurality. In the United States, the Polish school of poetry and the deep bonds linking the works of such poets as Czesław Miłosz, Zbigniew Herbert, Tadeusz Różewicz, Wisława Szymborska, Julia Hartwig, Adam Zagajewski and others have been discussed since the 1980s, if not earlier. It was only a matter of time before someone attempted to name those bonds, and thus create a name for the trend. Here, it is worth quoting the entire passage the author combines with the aforementioned references to the Norwidian tradition with a bold attempt to reorganise Polish post-war poetry:

> I mean here a trend which is quite powerful – one that, for lack of a better word, I would banally call "ironic moralism." The chronology of the trend's development is complex. It evolves through successive literary generations, starting with Jastrun and Miłosz, culminating in the work of Zbigniew Herbert, Wisława Szymborska, Julia Hartwig, Artur Międzyrzecki, Wiktor Woroszylski and other authors born in the 1920s, and continuing in "Generation 68," poets born mostly after the war, such as Ewa Lipska, Ryszard Krynicki and Adam Zagajewski. […] "ironic moralists" represent various attitudes and poetics. Yet their common feature is undoubtedly what Błoński called "compulsion of opposition and reservation" – objections and reservations especially to-

[13] Cf. W. Marciszewski, "Problem istnienia przedmiotów intencjonalnych," *Studia Semiotyczne*, No. 4 (1973), pp. 189-206.

wards History, observed from an ethical point of view – and the frequent use of irony as a both offensive and resistance weapon. There is no doubt for me that in those two respects the poets mentioned are heirs of the tradition of Norwid [...] Norwid is the hidden patron of the works of those poets.[14]

First, it should be noted that, like every attempt to organise any phenomena, including the one undertaken by Barańczak, it is related to hierarchisation. He used the Norwidian tradition in a mechanism of evaluating literature. There are many indications that the critic chose what seemed important to him at that specific moment in the history of Poland, which was at the time trying to become independent from the apparatus of the communist oppression of the 1980s, especially in culture. It might be why Barańczak's list of "ironic moralists" does not include Tadeusz Różewicz, who in the 1980s read Norwid intensively.[15] Although the works of the author of *Płaskorzeźba* might have seemed emblematic of the said trend in many respects, he clearly refrained from opposing the totalitarian evil in his writings.

Also, it should immediately be noted that the Harvard lecturer refers to Norwid's tradition indirectly. The direct source of inspiration for him is not the work of the nineteenth-century writer, but its interpretation made by Jan Błoński in the famous article "Norwid wśród prawnuków" (published in *Twórczość* in the late 1960s[16]). The title of the text suggested that the critic had to undertake the difficult task of describing the model of reading the poet's works by a certain interpretive community. The background of the Krakowian researcher's statements seems to hold elements of the ethos of the Polish intelligentsia, which includes – ever since the times of Norwid! – the imperative of opposition to modern forms of limiting the freedom of human consciences, the passion to expose any, and all attempts to distort the world of values, and an ironic distance to the evil present in history. Barańczak concretises the image of that specific community of readers. Instead of a social panorama, he paints a collective portrait in which one recognises the faces of particular writers. He changes Jan Błoński's question about the extent to which Norwid patronised the ethos of the Polish intelligentsia at the end of the twentieth century into a question about the patronage of the author of *Vade-mecum* over the ethos of Polish post-war poetry. In other words, he makes the Norwidian tradition an element of the process of identification and ennoblement of that part of contemporary poetry which has managed to resist both the temptation of aestheticism and of extreme ideologisation.

[14] S. Barańczak, "Norwid: obecność nieobecnego," p. 136.

[15] Cf. K. Lisowski, "Z Tadeuszem Różewiczem nie tylko o Norwidzie," *Odra*, No. 4/5 (2000), pp. 7-16.

[16] J. Błoński, "Norwid wśród prawnuków," *Twórczość* 1967, vol. 5, pp. 67-94.

For it is precisely the isolation and embedding in the collective consciousness of the ethical inclinations of our contemporary poetry that seems to be the main focus of the Harvard Polish philologist, who announced *Antologia poezji świadectwa i sprzeciwu 1944-1984. Poeta pamięta*[17] almost simultaneously with the article quoted above. The efforts of the literary historian not only reveal the need to universalise the diagnoses made, but also their clear entanglement in the context of the martial law era. In the introduction to the anthology, the author states:

I simply think that by giving witness to our times and by expressing opposition to their injustice or insanity, poetry does not take others' functions as its own, but fulfils precisely those for which it is called most – due to its individual, specific and anti-slogan nature. Anyone who dreams of returning to "pure poetry" today forgets not only that it is not entirely pure to write "pure poetry" in dirty times, but also that pure poetry has never really existed. At least, it was not written by Dante, John Donne, Goethe, or Norwid.[18]

In the fragment quoted above, one can also see Barańczak's characteristic concern for ethical references of literature. This time, however, the circle of tradition expands and encompasses not only the work of Norwid, but also canonical works of European literature. The critic entrusts the Norwidian tradition both the role of a frame of reference for the ethical passion of contemporary poets, and the function of setting their achievements in the context of the literary canon of the Western world, from which we have been cut off by the Iron Curtain against our will. Although Barańczak does not provide a sufficiently extensive analysis of the literary material to make such a hypothesis unquestionable, it is difficult to deny that his suggestive arguments present inspiring power and fervour. The shortcomings of the discussed text were largely supplemented by Arent van Nieukerken in his treatise *Ironiczny konceptyzm. Nowoczesna polska poezja metafizyczna w kontekście anglosaskiego modernizmu*.[19] As its reviewer notes:

van Nieukerken develops Barańczak's diagnosis and indicates a second source of inspiration in post-war Polish poetry: Anglo-Saxon modernism, the reception of which was mainly due to reading poems by Thomas Stearns Eliot and Wystan Hugh Auden.[20]

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[17] *Antologia poezji świadectwa i sprzeciwu 1944-1984. Poeta pamięta*, selection by S. Barańczak, London 1984.

[18] *Antologia poezji świadectwa i sprzeciwu 1944-1984*, p. 9.

[19] A. van Nieukerken, *Ironiczny konceptyzm. Nowoczesna polska poezja metafizyczna w kontekście anglosaskiego modernizmu*, Kraków 1998.

[20] A. Kluba, A. van Nieukerken, "Ironiczny konceptyzm. Nowoczesna polska poezja metafizyczna w kontekście anglosaskiego modernizmu," *Pamiętnik Literacki* 2001, Vol. 1, p. 246.

Both in that study and in his next, the Dutch researcher provides extensive arguments in favour of the thesis about Norwid's Europeanness and the role of the Norwid tradition in integrating Polish poetry with the literary canon of the West[21].

III

Nevertheless, in the aforementioned article by Stanisław Barańczak, it is not so easy to distinguish intersubjective from deeply personal and to separate what may be a description of a dialogue between contemporary poetry and the Norwidian tradition from what that dialogue actually is. The author of the text is not only a literary historian and a critic, but also an important representative of the trend he discusses. His observations regarding Norwid's patronage over "ironic moralists" are part of a narrative of an identity character; they have the value of a personal confession and carry the burden of a manifesto of poetic self-awareness. Reading Barańczak's program statements, e.g. from the *Etyka i poetyka* volume, there is no doubt that they harmonise with Norwid's metapoetic thought. If in the work of the nineteenth-century master the contemporary author sees the imperative of criticism, ironic distance and a passion for exposing all forms of falsehood or depreciation of fundamental values, it is worth recalling at least some of his theses about the obligations of poetry contained in his famous manifesto from 1970: "It should be distrust. Criticism. A whistleblower. It should be all this until the last lie, the last demagogy and the last act of violence disappear from this Earth."[22]

Today it is difficult to say to what extent the contemporary poet knew Norwid's work when he wrote down those sentences, but it would be equally difficult to deny that they are an essential part of Barańczak's dialogue with the author of *Rzecz o wolności słowa* [*On the Freedom of Speech*]. It went on for many years and left many traces, especially in the late works of the New Wave poet. One of them has already accumulated quite a large amount of literature on itself as a subject – I mean the poem *Garden party*, which has a clear intertextual connection with Norwid's *Ostatni despotyzm* [*The Last Despotism*].[23] Others with less clear traces still require attention. Let the poet's declaration sound like an obligation for future researchers:

[21] A. van Nieukerken, *Ironiczny konceptyzm*, pp. 86-110. Cf. also A. van Nieukerken, *Perspektywiczność sacrum – szkice o Norwidowskim romantyzmie*, Warszawa 2007.

[22] S. Barańczak, "Kilka przypuszczeń na temat poezji współczesnej," in: S. Barańczak, *Etyka i poetyka. Szkice 1970-1978*, Paris 1979, p. 264.

[23] Cf. A. Skrendo, "Stanisław Barańczak: widma poezji," *Teksty Drugie*, No. 2: 2014, pp. 284-306. A. van Nieukerken, "Norwid Europejski," *Studia Norwidiana*, Vol. 11: 1993, pp. 25-26. D. Pawelec, *Czytając Barańczaka*, Katowice 1995, p. 129. M. Tomczyk, *Jak czytać wiersze?*, Bielsko-Biała 2007, pp. 156-168.

"for me personally, the tradition of Norwid is probably the most important in the entire history of Polish poetry."[24]

Abandoning the circle of poetic "collective organisms," the discussion moves to bilateral relations. While in the first of the previously mentioned fields, the presence of Norwid must be closely related to the framework of a group identity; in the second it is about the relationship of the individual with someone else's creativity and treated as a manifestation of a specific writer's "I."[25] However, it happens that, especially when talking about implicit traces of Norwid's presence in contemporary poetry, the plane of relations between writers' texts is not referred to by interpreters. Sometimes dialogue as a research category disappears from their field of observation and the corpus of Norwid's works is treated by interpreters only through their context; it becomes a kind of association, a mirror that allows the researcher to more fully present some properties of the work of a selected author or a motif that appears therein. Those and similar cases of instrumental uses of Norwid's works remain beyond the scope of observations herein. The synthetic nature of these considerations dictated a focus on the most important forms of functioning of the author of *Quidam* in our present day, those that reach the dimension of the encounter, whether successful or not.

The presence of Norwid in the collections of contemporary poems is thus of special interest if his work is a statement therein – something that in some manner broadens the literary identity of their authors and prompts them to seek a new, more perfect form of literary existence. Here I think first about the poetry of Mieczysław Jastrun, because probably in no other case is this dimension of the dialogue with the author of *Vade-mecum* so clearly visible. To recall, even during the Second World War, the poet and zealous reader of *Promethidion* was actively involved in the work of the communist apparatus of power, and played a significant role in introducing fragments of Norwid's works into the school reading canon.[26] He also often referred

[24] "'Poezja musi być wieczną czujnością.' Rozmowa z Piotrem Wierzchosławskim," in: S. Barańczak, *Zaufać nieufności. Osiem rozmów o sensie poezji*, Kraków 1993, p. 71.

[25] The area of individual references to Norwid's poetry and legend in contemporary poetry is – as one can guess – difficult to grasp. The author of *Vade-mecum* was for many years the most frequently quoted author in Poland – also in the field of poetry. Special anthologies were created, collecting contemporary poems containing references to his work. A good example of this type of activity is the initiative of the Krakow branch of SPP, crowned with the anthology *Z Norwidem. III Wigilia Słowa*, edited by J. Lubart-Krzysica, Kraków 1992. The observations I made are subordinated to the idea of representation. I focus only on those textual areas that contain traces of the most intense relations with Norwid's work.

[26] Cf. M. Inglot, "Mieczysława Jastruna lwowskie spotkania z Norwidem (1939-1941)," *Studia Norwidiana*, Vol. 7: 1989, pp. 119-126.

in his poems to the predecessor's works, creating a program of poetry involved "in the nation's struggle for freedom and social liberation,"[27] and immediately after the war he made an effort to "adapt the work of the author of *Vade-mecum* for the needs of a socialist-realist vision of reality."[28] Further, he used the authority of Norwid "to legitimise the "contemporariness," i.e. the communist system being born."[29] However, soon his views on the world, and thus on the works of the nineteenth-century master, changed radically. Przemysław Dakowicz's apt statement: "Jastrun begins his polemics with supporters of party control over literature and art by referring to... Norwid,"[30] is practically a symbol. He seems to capture the essential determinants of the inner transformation of a contemporary poet, the very essence of the process in which the author of *Vade-mecum* actually draws a young writer to himself, makes that writer follow him, and acts as a guide on the difficult path to the truth about reality.

From the quoted study by Dakowicz, there slowly emerges a fascinating picture of an authentic, profound relationship between the two writers. Philosophers of the encounter sometimes point out that the encounter is not so much a threat to the "I" identity as much as a chance for its fulfilment. "I" needs "you" to become fully oneself.[31] The dialogue between Jastrun and Norwid is the encounter in such a sense. As the norwidologist shows, it is reading the works of the author of *Rzecz o wolności słowa* [*On the Freedom of Speech*] that makes the young writer perceive his current perspective on the world through the filter of communist ideology as more and more problematic and insistently makes him look for a new, different perspective on literary and non-literary reality. It might be said that in some sense, thanks to Norwid he feels questioned in his current world-sensation; thanks to his predecessor he discovers in himself some oppressive "non-I" and recognises his own inauthenticity and enslavement. Therefore, he cannot help asking himself questions about his own identity and what is most rudimentary about it – he cannot help looking for what he recognises as deeply his own. Following the traces of Norwid's presence in the writings of the contemporary author step by step, scrupulously analysing the dense network of Jastrun's allusions to the predecessor's expressions, as well as paraphrases and quotes from his statements, Dakowicz convincingly proves that reading the works of the romantic master helped the young poet to rediscover an imperative not so much of an ideological but of an ethical concern in himself, and

[27] J. Trznadel, *O poezji Mieczysława Jastruna*, Wrocław 1954, p. 70.

[28] P. Dakowicz, "*Lecz ty spomnisz wnuku…*," p. 256.

[29] P. Dakowicz, "*Lecz ty spomnisz wnuku…*," p. 249.

[30] P. Dakowicz, "*Lecz ty spomnisz wnuku…*," p. 262.

[31] Cf. J. Bukowski, *Filozofia spotkania*, Kraków 1987, p. 123.

to formulate a concept of poetry serving not so much utopia as truth. The encounter with Norwid allows the author to come to terms with his own entanglement in Stalinism and helps him become himself again to some extent. "There are many indications that in early 1955 Mieczysław Jastrun, while reading Norwid once again, found his true voice, [which had been] at least partially muffled and suppressed in the era of socialist realism – the voice of a moralist, a strict guardian of values," concludes the researcher.[32] In his view, the poetry project formulated by the writer in the late 1950s and executed afterwards – poetry whose duty is to testify to values and bear witness to the truth – has its roots in Norwid's tradition. It is around that tradition that the contemporary poet entwines the successive volumes of his poems in which – as with Norwid – "conscience" and "truth" become the key words.[33] Jastrun's sarcasm turns out to be a reflection of Norwid's irony.[34] The historiosophy inscribed in the poems by Jastrun is an echo of Norwid's reflection on the meaning of history.[35] The passion for tracing contemporary lies (a continuation of morality straight from *Vade-mecum.* Also as an intellectual and as a poet of culture, "Jastrun is the heir of Norwid")[36] remains in spite of that, or perhaps because of that, a fully original Polish poet of the second half of the 20th century.

Jastrun's adventure with the author of *Quidam* thus seems to be an almost model example of a relationship in which a contemporary author not only discovers the openness of Norwid's works towards our present day and his communicative attractiveness, but also tries to overcome his own limitations and, as a writer, opens up to someone else's voice. At stake of his efforts is a dialogue that leads him to reformulate his own place in literature and discover a new perspective of the world and language. Whether many writers wanted back then, at the turn of the 1950s and 1960s, to play for similar stakes is, of course, a separate problem...

The struggles of Julian Przyboś, whose attitude towards Norwid is full of tensions and irremovable contradictions, particularly give food for thought. Mieczysław Jastrun was not alone in his fascination with Norwid. In the difficulties linked to placing the poet in the socialist reading canon, Jastrun was actively supported by the leader of the Kraków Avant-garde, who over time became a valued interpreter of several poems by the author of *Assunta*. A separate monograph has recently been published on Przyboś as a commentator and populariser of Norwid's texts, written

[32] P. Dakowicz, "*Lecz ty spomnisz wnuku…*," p. 263.

[33] P. Dakowicz, "*Lecz ty spomnisz wnuku…*," pp. 266-271.

[34] P. Dakowicz, "*Lecz ty spomnisz wnuku…*," pp. 280-281.

[35] P. Dakowicz, "*Lecz ty spomnisz wnuku…*," pp. 282-285.

[36] P. Dakowicz, "*Lecz ty spomnisz wnuku…*," pp. 286-287.

by Małgorzata Rygielska.[37] Treating Przyboś's Norwidological texts as a kind of reading palimpsests, with great care and determination the author reveals successive layers of the interpreter's conditioning – his erudition and emotions, but also his entanglement in a specific poetic doctrine. The researcher makes it clear that the avant-garde poet does not get to know Norwid's works entirely selflessly, but rather tries to check their compliance with the professed poetic doctrine. That he writes not so much about them, but about his own theory of poetry and his own horizon of expectations towards it.[38] Looking at a similar model of reading through the prism of the philosophy of the encounter, one could conclude that Przyboś equates what is different with what is foreign – he seems to depreciate and reject everything that does not fit within the framework of the avant-garde doctrine – even if it was a constitutive element for Norwid's poetry.[39] Przemysław Dakowicz, however, emphasises that many of the interpreter's observations are still strikingly accurate, which suggests "Przyboś is able to go beyond his own prejudices and penetrate the inner reality of the poet with a completely different worldview and professed system of values."[40] The researcher notices hesitation in the attitude of the avant-garde poet as if he were reluctant to participate in the conversation. He says:

> Norwid attracts and fascinates as a master of poetry, an author with rare artistic self-awareness, he repulses and arouses discouragement when he turns poetry into a fight for the transformation of the world and poeople, for the reconstruction of reality based on the moral teaching of the Church.[41]

Przyboś seems to organize his relations with the romantic author in a similar way in his own poetry. He relatively rarely refers to the Norwidian tradition, and the plane of possible dialogue between the two poets seems to be determined only by the similarity of certain elements of the poetic language and the concept of poetry as the art of the word. Even in that area, however, it is difficult to speak of the encounter. As Dakowicz shows, Norwid's "praca w mowie" [work in speech] has a completely different goal than Przyboś's "działania na języku" [linguistic activities]: "In Norwid's works [...] language was not the goal, but the means of reaching the essence of humanity in relation to God and supernatural reality."[42] The

[37] M. Rygielska, *Przyboś czyta Norwida*, Katowice 2012.

[38] The reviewer of the book also points to this. Cf. A. Kwiatkowska, M. Rygielska, "Przyboś czyta Norwida," *Pamiętnik Literacki* 2015, Vol. 4, pp. 233-240.

[39] This is also mentioned by Barańczak in "Norwid: obecność nieobecnego," p. 139.

[40] P. Dakowicz, "*Lecz ty spomnisz wnuku…*," p. 304.

[41] P. Dakowicz, "*Lecz ty spomnisz wnuku…*," p. 304.

[42] P. Dakowicz, "*Lecz ty spomnisz wnuku…*," p. 325.

encounter threshold is probably the best way of describing the relationship between the avant-garde poet and the romantic art-master.

Speaking of Przyboś's disagreement with the author of *Assunta*, or more precisely, about the difficult dialogue of both writers, the question immediately arises of how to talk about such encounters which either did not take place in such an overt space as interpretations of specific poems, or did not leave any clear traces in the lyrical material of a contemporary author? The works of e.g. Zbigniew Herbert come to mind, in which we can see only a few intertextual references to the works from the author of *Quidam*,[43] but at the same time we are able to indicate the elements of real dialogue in them, concerning such areas as care for the dignity of speech,[44] understanding beauty,[45] culture, history, or attitude toward tradition[46] and fundamental values[47]. It seems that it is again the sphere of Norwid's presence in the textual world of contemporary authors which should be accorded the status of an intentional being, ontically grounded not only in literature, but also in the consciousness of its readers. That mediated character of the dialogue of twentieth-century writers with the Norwidian tradition is particularly vivid in the works of authors who openly, and often even declaratively, denied their ties with Norwid. The case of Czesław Miłosz seems exceptionally vivid as he repeatedly manifested his aversion to the "Lechitic" nature of the author of *Promethidion* and its promoters and placed his works closer to Adam Mickiewicz than Cyprian Norwid. Were it not for the valuable monograph by Tomasz Garbol, perhaps the poet's assurances

[43] The poet speaks of a "black and white Norwid" in the poem *Pora.* Interpretations of the text can be found in the work of M. Mikołajczak, *Światy z marzenia. Echa romantyczne w poezji Zbigniewa Herberta*, Kraków 2013, pp. 111-120.

[44] Cf. M. Adamiec, "Troska o prawdziwe dostojeństwo mowy," in: *Dialog i spór. Zbigniew Herbert a inni poeci i eseiści*, ed. J. Ruszar, Lublin 2006, pp. 46-63.

[45] Cf. M. Mikołajczak, "Czy piękno ocala? O jednym z wątków dialogu Herbert – Norwid," in: Mikołajczak, *Światy z marzenia*, pp. 93-110.

[46] M. Mikołajczak, "Czy piękno ocala?," pp. 121-129.

[47] Apart from the works on the dialogue between Herbert and Norwid mentioned so far, it is also worth mentioning the articles in the volume *Bór nici. Wątki klasyczne i romantyczne w twórczości Zbigniewa Herberta*, ed. M. Mikołajczak, Kraków 2011. (Cf. e.g. J. Zach, "'Czas wzbogacony.' Norwid i Herbert – próba zbliżenia," pp.183-195; M. Adamiec, "Na co? Po co? I dlaczego? O relacjach Norwid – Herbert kilka myśli," pp. 219-231; P. Abriszewska, "Literacka refleksja Cypriana Norwida i Zbigniewa Herberta nad historią tryumfalną i historią ukrytą," pp. 249-268; W. Toruń, "'Syn – minie pismo, lecz ty spomnisz, wnuku.' Herbert − Norwid," pp. 269-278; W. Toruń, "Rozmyślania o cierpieniu: Norwid – Herbert," pp. 279-292; P. Michałowski, "(Prze) milczenie współczesności u Norwida i Herberta," pp. 303-320.) The need for a comprehensive, monographic analysis of the intertextual relations between Herbert and Norwid becomes stronger and stronger.

would still be believed to this day.[48] However, the researcher from Lublin decided not to stay content with the opinions of the author of *Dolina Issy* and looked deeper into his works, carefully analysing the meanings hidden in them. The results of his research are surprising. It turns out that, in the depths of Miłosz's literary work, a space for an intriguing correspondence between his thoughts and Norwid's thoughts opens.

According to Tomasz Garbol, the platform of the encounter of both authors is created by the great theme of the Fall. Parallels are revealed in the very way of presenting the theme. Unlike Mickiewicz, but similar to Norwid, the contemporary writer does not focus on emotions; he favours intellect ostentatiously turned towards theology over "racje serca" [the arguments of the heart]. Like the author of "Do Najświętszej Panny Marii. Litania" [To the Blessed Virgin Mary. Litany], he admittedly considers its formulas insufficient but still important and grasping various aspects of existential experiences. According to Garbol, Miłosz restrains emotions, just like the author of *Rzecz o wolności słowa* [*On the Freedom of Speech*], even in the face of the scandal of evil and keeps his distance from the slogan of "national deed" unpreceded by rational reflection. His ideological affinity with Norwid is even clearer where both writers collide with what may be termed the eternal problems of humanity. Miłosz's monographer convincingly proves that, when confronted with the problem of the sources of evil, the author of *Metafizyczna pauza* clearly defies the romantic opposition of "good nature – bad human." Like Norwid, he notices the deep contamination of Nature and the possibility of its final "repair" through the Incarnation of Christ and Parousia. Thus, he finds unacceptable both Mickiewicz's belief that humans themselves are capable (by means of metempsychosis) to improve themselves and the world, and Mickiewicz's doubt of the possibility of salvation of what is corporeal. Also, Miłosz's answer to the question about the sense of history is not, as with the author of *Księgi narodu polskiego i pielgrzymstwa polskiego,* Messianism. Like Norwid, he is offended by the narrowing of the Gospel message to a "national matter." Although, according to the Lublin researcher, it would be difficult to ascribe to Miłosz an unwavering faith in the sense of history, his historiosophy is not too far from Norwid's universalism and the hope to "przepalenie globu – sumieniem" [burn the globe through – with conscience]. Similar to the author of *Vade-mecum*, the Promethean sense of uniqueness and elevation above the "crowd," which is clear in *Dziady*, is contrasted by the 20th-century poet with the problem of "forgetting" about the "royal" dignity of every human being and... the attitude of childlike delight in the world. In each of the

[48] They were firmly established in studies on Miłosz for quite some time. Cf. A. Fiut, "Spór z Lechitą," in: A. Fiut, *W stronę Miłosza*, Kraków 2003, pp. 91-92.

theses above, Garbol precedes with extensive textual analysis, showing that there is a real osmosis of ideas. Although on the surface, in the sphere of opinions, Miłosz seems to avoid dialogue with Norwid, yet deep in his works he constantly converses with the nineteenth-century predecessor...

Norwid's presence in Tadeusz Różewicz's poetry is different. At first glance, it is difficult to see among the great ideas and themes of the author of *Szara strefa* any dialogue with the nineteenth-century master. Różewicz did not become an interpreter of his works, either, although he did intend to write a book about Norwid[49]. Yet starting with the volume *Płaskorzeźba*, the poet successively weaved into his works threads of a dense network of quotations, hidden quotations, paraphrases of fragments of poems by the author of *Vade-mecum* or allusions to them, skilfully enriching the sense of his own poetry.[50] He also mentioned his fascination with various elements of the work of the author of *Promethidion* in many self-referential statements.[51] He spoke of a long-term familiarity with the work of the author of *Quidam.* Thus, is it an authentic encounter between an emblematic postmodern poet and a romantic? Does Różewicz really mean dialogue, or is it only a kind of literary game? Several researchers have faced similar questions, and a monograph on the Różewicz-Norwid relationship is being prepared by Grażyna Halkiewicz-Sojak.[52]

Referring to the already existing studies,[53] I would like to sketch, even with the roughest line, the shape of the encounter with Norwid in Różewicz's late work. Let

[49] Cf. T. Różewicz, "To, co zostało z nienapisanej książki o Norwidzie," *Kwartalnik Artystyczny* 2002, No. 3, pp. 9-25.

[50] Cf. K. Gutkowska, *Intertekst, historia i (auto)ironia: szkice o twórczości Tadeusza Różewicza*, Katowice 2012, especially chap. *Gra Mistrzów: Różewicz i Norwid*.

[51] Cf. K. Sawicka, "Norwid Tadeusza Różewicza — deklaracje," in: *Polska literatura współczesna wobec romantyzmu*, ed. M. Łukaszuk, D. Seweryn, Lublin 2007, pp. 129-141. As well as K. Sawicka, "Różewicz-Norwid," in: *Dialogi romantyczne*, ed. E. Kasperski, T. Mackiewicz, Warszawa-Pułtusk 2008, pp. 391-409.

[52] It is worth emphasising that Halkiewicz-Sojak, observing the scale of the phenomenon, proposed a diachronic approach, allowing us to follow the dynamics of the relations between both authors. Let me thank the author at this point for letting me have an insight into the first part of her monograph being prepared.

[53] Among the texts devoted to the relationship of Różewicz and Norwid, Halkiewicz-Sojak mentions e.g. the following: W. Rzońca, "Norwid – uwarunkowania ponowoczesności dzieła," in: *Norwid z perspektywy XXI wieku*, ed. J. Rohoziński, Pułtusk 2003; K. Sawicka, "Słowo wobec rzeczywistości – o poezji Tadeusza Różewicza," *Słupskie Prace Filologiczne*, Vol. 7 (2009), pp. 136-159; A. Jarzyna, *"Pójście za Norwidem",* Lublin 2013 (especially chapter *Różewicz czyta Norwida "od prawie 60 lat"*); A. Bagłajewski, *Obecność romantyzmu*, Lublin 2015 (especially chapter *Norwidowskie ślady i obecności*).

us focus for a moment on one poem that seems to be particularly characteristic of the said relationship: the poem "Taki to mistrz" [Such a Master]:

budzi się
rozgląda dookoła
z rzeczy świata tego
powinno coś zostać
ale co?
odfrunęły anioły
Trochę pijany
snem winem
napojony żółcią
i octem
stary poeta
usiłuje sobie przypomnieć
co miało pozostać
z rzeczy tego świata
poezja i miłość
a może poezja i dobroć
bezzębny przeżuwa słowa
dobroć chyba dobroć
i piękno?
a może miłosierdzie?
oddala się
żeby lepiej zobaczyć Warszawę
Tamta była piękna i zła
jej „siostra" dobra i brzydka
taki to mistrz
co gra choć odpycha
zaciemnia aby wyjaśniać
zamyka oczy widzi stopy dwie
gwoździem przebite
te odlatują z planety[54]

he wakes up
looks around
of the things of this world
something should be left
but what?
the angels flew away
A bit drunk
With sleep with wine

[54] T. Różewicz, *Wyjście*, Wrocław 2004, p. 18.

given gall to drink
and vinegar
the old poet
is trying to remember
what was supposed to remain
of the things of this world
poetry and love
or maybe poetry and goodness
toothless he chews on words
goodness I think goodness
and beauty?
or maybe mercy?
he moves away
to see Warsaw better
That one was beautiful and bad
her "sister" good and ugly
such a master
who plays though pushes away
obscures to explain
closes his eyes sees two feet
pierced by a nail
these fleet from the planet

With some satisfaction, readers of Norwid may notice in this work the presence of fragments of as many as three works from the romantic master. Katarzyna Gutkowska notes that Różewicz uses the ending of the poem "Do Bronisława Z." [To Bronisław Z.]:

Z rzeczy świata tego zostaną tylko dwie,
Dwie tylko: poezja i dobroć... i więcej nic...
(PWsz II, 238)

Of the things of this world only two will remain,
Two only: poetry and goodness... and nothing else...[55]

That he paraphrases the ending of the poem "Do Zeszłej" [To the Deceased]:

– Tam – stopy dwie, gwoździmi przebite,
Uciekające z planety...
* * * * * * * * * * * * * * * *

[55] English translation by A. Czerniawski, in: Cyprian Norwid, *Selected Poems*, London 2004, p. 92.

Tam – milion moich słów; tam – lecą i te.
(PWsz II, 120)

There, two feet, pierced by nails –
Fleeting – from the planet ...
* * * * * * * * * * * * * * * *
There, a million of my words – there, fly also these.[56]

And that he slightly transforms the sentence from "Fortepian Szopena" [Chopin's Grand Piano]: "Czy taki Mistrz!... że gra... choć odpycha?..."[57] [Is he such a Master!... who plays... though pushes away?...].

It seems that Różewicz recontextualises such fragments of the works of the author of *Vade-mecum* which have the status of "winged words" and have entered the treasury of Polish culture. The contemporary poet uses those special linguistic resources of the Polish language, choosing the phrases he is interested in and transferring them from their native environment to his own work. What was an integral part of Norwid's text, Różewicz makes again a verbal matter to which he entrusts the role of structural elements in the poem he creates. Yet, that process of poetic borrowing made during the creative act, in the case of "Taki to mistrz" poem, is difficult to perceive as appropriation depriving the phrases of the nineteenth-century poet of their original meaning. There are a lot of indications that, transferred into the framework of another text, they retain the essential part of their semantic profile. The change consists not so much in eliminating their original meanings, but rather in extending their scope to include everything that results from placing them in the environment of Różewicz's poetic idiom.The *topoi* of the "departing God," "vanishing sacred" or the "recognized master" and "old poet" present in the quoted work, and inscribed in Norwid's archetexts, are at the same time an integral part of Różewicz's poetic *imaginarium* and appear in many other works of his. The modern poet's endeavours may thus be somewhat reminiscent of the work of a translator. The writer translates Norwid's sentences into his own poetic language and makes a specific translation of the meanings of Norwid's original into the meanings of his own work. He makes what is potentially present in the source text into something actually functioning in the language of contemporary poetry. He re-incorporates the words of the author of *Promethidion* into the circulation of contemporary literature, removing the odium of a past text from them. Thus, he radically changes the status

[56] English translation by Danuta Borchardt in collaboration with Agata Brajerska-Mazur, in: Cyprian Norwid, *Poems*, New York 2011, p. 59.

[57] K. Gutkowska, *Intertekst, historia i (auto) ironia*, pp. 19-24.

of the nineteenth-century artist, making him a partner in the conversation which takes place here and now, and therefore to some extent making him a poet of the 21st century...

The impression is reinforced by Różewicz's references to the legend of Norwid, the loner, established in the culture from the end of the 19th century. It is not known whether the author of "Wyjście" knew e.g. the memoirs of Jan Rosen, who wrote the following: "Norwid, already old by then and toothless, as sloppy on himself as he was around him [...] and his breath smelt of alcoholic beverages, which, as we know, he used and abused."[58] The image of the old master which appears in the poem seems particularly close to the one painted by Rosen. Różewicz clearly brings out the motives of physical old age and ugliness or drunkenness. However, it should be added that he does not make them a semantic dominant but a pretext for counterpoint images of existential longing, the horizon of which surpasses the visible world and turns towards transcendence. Thus, the portrait of the old poet acquires a completely different meaning. Although it does not lack naturalistic features, the message radically exceeds the framework of any realism. There are many indications that Norwid's "black legend" was universalised in Różewicz's poem and inscribed in the contemporary myth of the "old poet." As in many other works by the author of *Szara strefa*, the analysed poem also features the *topos* of a lonely master whose existence happens in the middle of a world stripped of values and is filled with a longing for meaning and transcendence. In the face of Norwid, which appears in the poem under discussion, one can see the features of Różewicz's face. The portrait of the old master, drawn by a contemporary poet, has many features of a self-portrait. If Różewicz's style of referencing Norwid's tradition might be called an attempt to include it in the bloodstream of his own poetry, it is worth emphasising that the transfusion metaphor expresses what is called brotherhood. The contemporary poet wants to be connected to Norwid by blood ties ...

IV

Finally, the area of poetry of authors debuting after 1989 should also be reviewed. Although many of them entered the Parnassus under the sign of postmodern games with the codes of literary culture and others were rarely directed by references to the neoclassical trend towards Norwid's tradition, it is worth mentioning at least two interesting examples of Norwid's presence in those not yet fully explored territories. One of the works has already received some comment. Mieczysław

[58] J. Rosen, *Wspomnienia 1860-1925*, Warszawa 1933, p. 66.

Inglot[59] and Kamila Byrtek[60] devoted a handful of comments to Jacek Podsiadło's poem "***Atakowany o północy," presenting radically different ways of reading, thus reaching contradictory conclusions. Inglot seems to focus on the presentation of the protagonist of the text and the ideas or even ideological message of the work (unnecessarily, in my opinion[61]), while the young interpreter sees the fundamental value of Podsiadło's text in a sophisticated literary game. The first two stanzas of the text are recalled below:

> Atakowany o północy
> subitem opon, gdy jak z procy
> pijany szczyl startuje mazdą –
> tęsknię do tego kraju, gdzie grzechem jest popsuć bocianom gniazdo.
> Budzony przez bas, przez dudnienie,
> bo sąsiad na full w citroenie
> zapuścił techno, nowy remix –
> tęsknię do tego kraju, gdzie podnosi się kromkę Chleba z ziemi[62]
>
> [Attacked at midnight
> with a *subito* of tires when like from a slingshot
> a drunk pissy takes off in a Mazda –
> I long for the country where it is a sin to damage the storks' nest.
> Woken up by bass, by beat
> because the neighbour in his Citroen
> lets go with techno, new remix, full sound –
> I long for the country where a slice of Bread is raised from the ground]

On the efforts of the poet, skilfully juggling fragments of two sentences taken from a well-known poem, Byrtek writes as follows:

> The particularly clear contrast of styles, images and rhythms visible in the quoted fragment of the poem establishes both its order (24 stanzas, composed according to the successive letters of the alphabet), and its delimiting refrain, which is a reflection of a phrase from Norwid's poem "Moja Piosnka II" [My Song II]. The contrasted rhythm and style of repetition (an inaccurate

[59] M. Inglot, "W kręgu nawiązań do Norwida," *Polonistyka* 1998, No. 10, pp. 652-656.

[60] K. Byrtek, "Poezja Jacka Podsiadły: między kulturą wysoką a popkulturą," *Kwartalnik Opolski* 2018, No. 2/3, pp. 31-44.

[61] I wrote about it in *Studia Norwidiana*. See W. Kudyba, "Norwid w szkole," *Studia Norwidiana*, Vol. 19: 2002, pp. 186-191.

[62] The text is available online, cf. www.wolnelektury.pl/media/book/pdf/podsiadlo-atakowany-o-polnocy.pdf (access: 27 December 2020).

quote from Norwid) creates a juxtaposition of the old and the present (decontextualisation / recontextualisation), and shows and evaluates various images of the world.[63]

While accurately characterising Podsiadło's intertextual play, the author does not discuss all the consequences of his actions. One may wonder e.g. what the function of Norwid's archetext in the poem is and what semantic changes it undergoes. It is clearly visible that the counterculture poet, known for his mocking lyrical strategies, plays with the ancestor's phrasing not particularly caring about its original context or source meanings. Quite the contrary: the intention of the play is to deprive Norwid's phrase of any connections with its original environment and place it in a radically alien context. Using the highly stylistic marking of the well-known phrase, the author skilfully juxtaposes it not only with contemporary colloquial idiom but also the mediocrity of our reality. In this way he builds a comic tension between the two poles which takes nothing away from the images of the present, but significantly impoverishes the impact of Norwid's phrase; it not only takes away its seriousness but also its meaning. Norwid's words seem to be only tokens in the literary, ludic game in the poem, or little more.

All that, however, does not mean that an authentic meeting of contemporary poets with Norwid is impossible today. For many years there have been fruitful discussions with the romantic tradition in the circle of authors associated with Sopot "Topos." Let one example suffice; In 2013, the "Topos Library" published a collection of poems by Przemysław Dakowicz, *Teoria wiersza polskiego.* The volume was widely commented and its author received important literary awards. The book has, among others, the following work:

Niechybnie !

Dlatego niechętnie chodziłem do Cyprjana
Norwida mieszkanie jego wspomina
Jan Rosen przedstawiało obraz
Nędzy i Rozpaczy Brud i Złe
Powietrze panowały tam
niepodzielnie

sam Norwid stary już wówczas
i Bezzębny równie Niechlujny
na sobie jak wokoło siebie Gwizdał
przeraźliwie mówiąc

I Ział

[63] K. Byrtek, "Poezja Jacka Podsiadły: między kulturą wysoką a popkulturą," p. 34.

Napojami Wyskokowemi których
jak wiadomo używał i nadużywał
mówił chętnie i obficie
ale mglisto

Pantaleon Szyndler
teorie mistyczne Norwida przekształcił
w fanatyczną wiarę i

niestety

pod wpływem Norwida
zaczął Pić umarł w zakładzie
dla obłąkanych w Częstochowie

[w Częstochowie!]

po licznych atakach

Delirium Tremens
nie odbierałem też
w obcowaniu z nim
[Norwidem]
wrażenia wielkości
ducha

ten brak dbałości o
zewnętrzny wygląd
ta oczywista Niechlujność
(na nim i wokoło niego)
przyczyniać się musiały

niechybnie

do
niepowodzeń
jego

Warszawa 1933 – Łódź 2012[64]

[64] P. Dakowicz, *Teoria wiersza polskiego*, Sopot 2013, pp. 37-38.

Certainly!

That's why I was reluctant to go to Cyprian
Norwid's his apartment is recalled
by Jan Rosen it presented the picture
of Poverty and Despair Dirt and Bad
Air reigned there
absolutely

Norwid himself already old by that time
and Toothless as Sloppy
on him as around him He whistled
sharply speaking

And Smelled on his breath

with Alcoholic Drinks which
as we know he used and abused
he spoke willingly and profusely
but foggily

Pantaleon Szyndler
transformed Norwid's mystical theories
in fanatical faith and

unfortunately

influenced by Norwid
he began to Drink died at an institution
for the insane in Częstochowa

[in Częstochowa!]

after numerous attacks

of Delirium Tremens
I did not get either
in associating with him
[Norwid]
an impression of greatness
of the spirit

that lack of care for

external appearance
that obvious Sloppiness
(on him and around him)
had to contribute

certainly

to
his
failures

Warsaw 1933 – Łódź 2012

Remembering the fragment of Jan Rosen's book quoted in the interpretation of Różewicz's text, it is easy to see that Dakowicz is simply splitting the painter's recollections into verse lines (supplementing them with inclusions in square brackets). He reveals their source in the paratext, stating both the place and date of the memoir, as well as his own place of residence and the year of work of the poem. However, it does not mean that he gives up the possibility of meaningfully modelling Rosen's memories. On the contrary, with a few simple devices he radically changes their meaning. The first device is, of course, delimitation. The fragmentation of the recollective narrative into lines opened the possibility of placing semantic accents in completely different places than intended by its author. And the skilful use of enjambment deprived the discourse of its obvious meanings and imposed careful reading with suspicion and focus on the deep layers of the text. Capital letters seem to perform the same function. In the memoir they only signal the beginning of a sentence, while in Dakowicz's case they become a kind of code undermining the superficial meaning of individual phrases and directing the reader toward what is hidden.

So, what does it mean that the senses of the text rewritten by Dakowicz lie outside of Rosen's text itself? It seems that irony is the answer to this question. It permeates not only the entire *Teoria wiersza polskiego*, but it is also an extremely important element of Dakowicz's poetics. Although the matter likely requires careful research, the thesis may be risked that it has much to do with romantic irony – it is a poetic response to the evils of history and a record of disagreement with a world which is not as it should be. The ironic meaning of the text is suggested above all by its title formula, marked by bitter irony. The title "Certainly" seems to contain all the bitterness of consent to a miserable fate and rebellion against, what exactly? History? Society? The aim of the contemporary poet is not to undermine the legend of Norwid and to discredit the public image of the "fourth bard," but to sarcastically oppose the situation fate has prepared for the outstanding writer. It should be added

that the volume does not concern an individual fate, but rather a collective, Polish fate, dictated by historical events. Similar to Różewicz, Norwid becomes one of us, a contemporary – inheriting a fate which, to some extent, is also ours. Also here, under the historical mask, one discovers the face of a contemporary author and his moral sensitivity. Is this the case with all the works of the contemporary poet? There are many indications that it is. Traces of a deep immersion in Norwid's tradition can be found in various layers of Dakowicz's poetry – in the structure of his poems, in his predilection for cyclicality, in his thinking about culture and community, in a specific hint of moral sensitivity, and above all in a shade of irony which closely resembles Norwid's irony. It is time to take a closer look at Dakowicz's encounter with the author of *Assunta.* The already considerable literary output of the Łódź poet and Norwidologist requires a more thorough comparative analysis. Regrettably, there is not enough space for them in this study.

As previously mentioned, this introductory essay is paving the way to a future monograph. Its authors face a difficult task. It seems that Norwid's tradition is not only present in the texts of many contemporary poets but is also so often referred to by researchers that it is now difficult to find an outstanding Polish writer of the 20th century who has never been portrayed with Norwid in the background. The folklorism of Tadeusz Nowak,[65] the "obscurity" of Grochowiak,[66] the musicality of Czechowicz[67] – to mention just the most distinct examples of the tendency – gain way a noble lineage and thus also an appropriate historical-literary rank. It does not mean, however, that they hold an actual dialogue with the author of *Quidam*. Sometimes a selected fragment of Norwid's legacy appears as a convenient context in the reading of individual works, allowing one to broaden the horizon of interpretation with elements of intertextual analyses[68]. It sometimes happens that the motifs appearing in Norwid and a selected contemporary poet are juxtaposed for that very purpose[69]. Similar procedures may, of course, encourage attempts to call such references a dialogue, but they are not it... That subjective dimension, the dimension of a

[65] Cf. J.Z. Brudnicki, *Tadeusz Nowak*, Warszawa 1978, p. 54.

[66] Cf. J. Kwiatkowski, "Ciemne wiersze Grochowiaka," in: J. Kwiatkowski, *Klucze do wyobraźni. Szkice o poetach współczesnych*, 2nd edition, Kraków 1973, pp. 123-131.

[67] Cf. J. Fert, "Norwid i Czechowicz: poszukiwanie 'czystego tonu,'" *Ethos* 2006, No. 1/2, pp. 231-247.

[68] Cf. W. Kudyba, "Świętość słowa w wierszu 'Do Ryszarda Krynickiego – list,'" in: *"Nie powinien przysyłać Syna,"* ed. J. Ruszar, Kraków 2018, pp. 185-196.

[69] Cf. e.g. M. Inglot, "'A Dorio ad Phrygium' Cypriana Norwida i 'apollińskie' wiersze Zbigniewa Herberta. Paralele," in: M. Inglot, *Wyobraźnia poetycka Norwida*, Warszawa 1988, pp. 49-61; J. Fert, "Norwid – Herbert. Epizod z guzikami," *Roczniki Humanistyczne* 1999, Vol. 1, pp. 97-118.

personal encounter, seems to me to be the most interesting in comparative research. Perhaps a synthesis devoted to the presence of Norwid's tradition in contemporary poetry will at some point have to take the shape of a panorama of individual encounters between particular writers and the author of *Assunta*?

Transl. Agnieszka Gernand

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NORWID W POEZJI WSPÓŁCZESNEJ. FORMY OBECNOŚCI

Streszczenie

Artykuł odpowiada na pytanie o to, jaki kształt mają odniesienia do Norwida w tekstach poetów reprezentatywnych dla naszej współczesności. Przedmiotem opisu są funkcje takich intertekstualnych nawiązań – najpierw na terenie świadomości zbiorowej. Okazuje się, że w dwudziestoleciu międzywojennym i w czasie wojny sięgano do dzieł romantycznego mistrza na wszystkich etapach budowania własnej literackiej tożsamości. Czytano nie tyle teksty Norwida, ile raczej samych siebie w obliczu jego dzieł. Natomiast po 1956 roku obecność Norwida we wspólnotach pisarzy wyrasta raczej z potrzeb historyków literatury niż z rzeczywistych odniesień międzytekstowych. Ta tendencja obecna jest także na terenie badań twórczości pojedynczych autorów. Zdarza się – zwłaszcza wtedy, gdy mówimy o implicytnych śladach obecności Norwida w poezji współczesnej – że płaszczyzna relacji pomiędzy autorami nie jest przez interpretatorów przywoływana. Bywa, że dialog jako kategoria badawcza znika z pola ich obserwacji, a korpus dzieł Norwida jest traktowany jedynie kontekstowo – staje się pewnego rodzaju lustrem, które służy pełniejszej prezentacji jakieś właściwości twórczości wybranego autora lub motywu, który w niej występuje. Najważniejszych formy funkcjonowania autora *Quidama* w naszej współczesności to te, które osiągają wymiar spotkania (udanego lub nieudanego). Tak dzieje się w przypadku fascynacji poezją Norwida obecnej m.in. w tekstach Mieczysława Jastruna, Juliana Przybosia, czy też Tadeusza Różewicza.

Słowa kluczowe: Norwid; intertekstualność; poezja współczesna.

NORWID IN CONTEMPORARY POETRY. FORMS OF PRESENCE

Summary

The article attempts to establish the character of references to Norwid in texts by poets representative of Polish modernity, accounting for functions of intertextual allusions, initially in the area of collective consciousness. As it turns out, during the interwar period and the Second World War, works by the romantic master were referenced at all stages of developing a distinct literary identity. Poets would not just read Norwid's texts, but regard themselves as mirroring his works. However, after 1956 Norwid's presence in literary life was rooted in the needs of litera-

ry scholars rather than in actual intertextual references. This tendency also manifests in studies of works by individual authors. It happens that, especially when we speak of implicit traces of Norwid in contemporary poetry, the plane of relations between authors is not addressed by interpreters. Sometimes, dialogue as a research category disappears from their view, while the body of Norwid's works is treated merely as a context, becoming a kind of mirror meant to display more fully a certain theme or characteristic of somebody's writing. However, the most important forms of Norwid's functioning in contemporary times are ones that facilitate the encounters (successful or not), as demonstrated by the fascination with Norwid's poetry recognizable in texts by authors such as Mieczysław Jastrun, Julian Przyboś and Tadeusz Różewicz.

Keywords: Norwid; intertextuality; contemporary poetry.

Wojciech Kudyba – prof. dr hab., head of the Department of 20th Century Literature at Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński University in Warsaw, book author *„Aby mowę chrześcijańską odtworzyć na nowo... Norwida mówienie o Bogu* (Lublin 2000) and several monographs on contemporary poetry: *Rana która przyzywa Boga. O twórczości poetyckiej Janusza St. Pasierba* (Lublin 2007); *Wiersze wobec Innego* (Sopot 2012); *Generacja źle obecna* (Sopot 2014), *Próba bólu. O wierszach Joanny Pollakówny* (Warszawa 2016); *Pamięć i godność. O poezji Jana Polkowskiego* (Warszawa 2019), also scientific articles published, among others, in *Studia Norwidiana*, *Pamiętnik Literacki*, *Teksty Drugie, Ethos*, *Roczniki Humanistyczne KUL* and *Ruch Literacki*.