

those relationships from the Middle Ages up to the present. However, even taking into consideration the large number of valuable publications in this field, the picture of these relationships has not yet been completed. A good deal of room for detailed critical studies still remains even in such an often explored period as Romanticism. The book under review is a new attempt to take a closer look at one aspect of the subject of the reception of Russian literature in Poland during the Romantic period. (According to the accepted periodization of Polish literary history, the Romantic movement was prominent in Poland from 1822 to 1863.) The author attempts a detailed analysis—from various points of view—of translations of Russian poetry. Her main focus is the reflection of the original genre structure in those translations, their adequacy and artistic value, and finally the position of specific genres of Russian Romantic literature in Polish literary life, especially in that part of the country which was under Russian partition. Thus, it is primarily the generic approach to the subject matter which has determined the structure of the book. It contains three chapters which analyze translations of ballads, epic poems, and lyrics.

In many cases, the author attempts the first literary reviews ever of translations which so far have been known only from bibliographical descriptions. She provides information about the translators and establishes the chronology of the appearance in Poland of particular poetic genres typical of Russian Romantic literature. She also describes the chronology of the popularity of leading Russian Romantic poets, among whom three names are preeminent: Zhukovskii, Pushkin, and Lermontov. The value of the book is increased by the author's emphasis on how the changing reception of Russian Romantic poetry in Poland depended on changes in Romanticism within partitioned Poland itself. This approach helps explain the original choice of works to be translated as well as the reasons why the translators made certain changes in the texts they chose to translate.

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WITOLD GOMBROWICZ I ŚWIAT JEGO MŁODOŚCI. 2nd ed. By *Tadeusz Kępiński*. Cracow: Wydawnictwo literackie, 1976. 406 pp. 70 zł.

The first edition of Tadeusz Kępiński's *Witold Gombrowicz and the World of his Youth* was published in 1974. The appearance of the second edition two years later indicates the great interest in Gombrowicz in Poland, where his works last appeared in 1958. The text of the second edition is unchanged. The only difference is the addition of four photographs and the inclusion of a very helpful index of names. Of the many memoirs about Gombrowicz (the most important of which is by his brother Jerzy), this one is by far the longest (four hundred pages) and the most detailed. Tadeusz Kępiński was a classmate of Gombrowicz's at the gymnasium as well as a lifetime friend from early adolescence. His book contains two potential attractions, for it not only goes behind the scenes, but it does so at the most crucial period of the author's life—the time of immaturity, so important to his world view.

Kępiński is not a professional writer, and he states that his book aims only at providing the atmosphere and realia of Gombrowicz's youth. Of biographical interest is the emphasis on Gombrowicz's sense of humor and his attraction to practical jokes, including those directed against him. In addition, Gombrowicz is shown as a naturally sociable person who enjoyed the companionship of close friends, a fact which balances the image—projected in his *Diary* and elsewhere—of a prevailing desire for solitude. The book is generally disappointing, however, and it often succumbs to nostalgia, trivia, and psychological speculations that are both obtrusive and inadequate. Furthermore, Kępiński makes direct connections between the author's life and works, a procedure that is particularly unacceptable in the case of Gombrowicz, a writer who emphasized the mediating principle of form which transmutes raw material into art.

The most valuable aspect of the book is the documents included in it. In descending order of importance they are: Gombrowicz's preface to his first published work, which he had removed before publication; his explanation of the mysterious anagram which replaced the preface (reconstructed it was to have read "This doesn't mean anything at all"); his marginal comments in a copy of the book, which reveal, among other things, his secret debt to Schopenhauer; excerpts from six reviews of this work unlisted in any bibliography; approximately twenty-five letters to Keipiński and the Skamander poet Stanisław Baliński; and forty-six photographs of Gombrowicz and his family, friends, and teachers.

In sum, Keipiński's memoir is rather marginal, despite the documents and biographical information it provides. It is ironic that this version of Gombrowicz has had two editions, totaling twenty thousand copies in three years, while the publication of Gombrowicz's collected works in Poland, promised four years ago but not yet published, is to be limited to two thousand copies—barely enough for libraries. Obviously, there is a demand for Gombrowicz in Poland, but when, and to what extent, his own writings will be made accessible to those who want to read them is still an open question.

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THE NEW POLISH POETRY: A BILINGUAL COLLECTION. Compiled and edited by *Milne Holton* and *Paul Vangelisti*. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1978. xviii, 119 pp. \$7.95, cloth. \$4.50, paper.

This anthology of Polish poetry since 1956 is the result of a project undertaken by many individuals. It grew out of an English-language summer seminar held in 1976 at the University of Poznań. Fifteen Polish students of English philology and two American editors participated.

The editors' stated purpose is to provide English-speaking readers with a sequel to Czesław Miłosz's *Postwar Polish Poetry* (1965). They disavow claims to comprehensiveness and suggest that the anthology provides only a sampling of poems they admire. Considering this modest goal, the poets and the poems are generally well chosen. The anthology includes seventy-five poems by twenty-seven poets. One may question the wisdom of presenting so few poems by so many (for example, the brilliant and prolific poet of the "linguistic" school, Stanisław Barańczak, is represented by a single undistinguished poem). One may even disagree with the selection of atypical and inferior poems over better and equally translatable possibilities. Most of the poems, however, were selected intelligently: they are brief, reflect straightforward thoughts reinforced by repetitions and short lines with simple syntax.

Despite the above commendation, the potential merits of this volume have not been realized because of inept translations and careless editing. Flaws in this collection embrace the entire range of translators' pitfalls.

It is not surprising that the Polish translators encounter the traditional difficulty for Slavic speakers of English—that is, the correct usage of articles and verb tenses. Good editing could have removed such errors. Worse still, the translators do not always interpret the Polish text correctly, they have a shaky knowledge of English vocabulary and idiomatic usage, and they display gross cultural ignorance. They confuse "daily" with "everyday" (thus Nowak's "Psalm codzienny" is translated "An Everyday Psalm") and use "civility" for "civilization" (p. 87); the title of Szymborska's poem "Dwie małpy Breugla" is translated "Two Apes of Breughel" instead of "Two Monkeys of Breughel"; in Kornhauser's "Moja żona śpi, Iliczu" the first word in the Bolshevik slogan "zemia trudniashchimsia" is rendered as "earth" rather than "land," the metaphorical expression "kwadratowe okienka partii," meaning "chess-board," is mechanically rendered in the inapplicable sense of "chess game," and the