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MIGRATIONS OF BAROQUE IDEAS IN THE LANDS OF THE SLAVS.

JUSTYNA ROMANOWSKA, *Polsko-ukraińsko-rosyjskie konteksty poezji metafizycznej serbskiego baroku [Polish-Ukrainian-Russian contexts of Serbian Baroque metaphysical poetry]*, Wydawnictwo Scriptum, Kraków 2022, pp. 262*.

Cultural transfers between different parts of the Slavic region have rarely been, so far, the subject of comparative literary research within Slavic studies. It is all the more interesting to look at Justyna Romanowska's¹ publication entitled *Polish-Ukrainian-Russian contexts of Serbian Baroque metaphysical poetry*, in which the author analyzes the influence of Polish and Ukrainian-Russian Baroque metaphysical poetry on Serbian poetic works. Therefore, she sets herself the ambitious goal of presenting Serbian poetry of the 18th century in a broad cultural context.

The introductory part of the work already indicates great interpretive skills and a very good mastery of research techniques of old literature. The *Introduction* (p. 9–19) includes a brief overview of research areas, a presentation of basic problems, as well as characteristics of previous research on the Baroque in the Slavic world². In this part of the work, the author

also presents the theoretical and methodological premises that enabled her to organize the rich literary material of diverse provenance. In this regard, the publications of D. Đurišin³ and E. Sarnowska-Temeriusz⁴ have been found particularly helpful.

In the first chapter (*Polish-Ukrainian-Russian influence on Serbian culture of the Baroque era*, p. 21–65), the author presents an extensive research scope in a historical and literary context, which she then elaborates further in subsequent chapters. This approach seems to be most justified, as it allows the reader to learn about the gradual development of the Baroque in the land of the Slavs. This chapter consists of three sub-segments. In the first one, Justyna Romanowska characterizes Baroque tendencies in the lands of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, with particular emphasis on Ukrainian areas. She points out the role that education played in this process, especially the Kyiv-Mohyla Academy. It should also be noted that the author is very well versed in

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¹ Justyna Romanowska is a part of the young generation of Slavists. Her interests include the culture and literature of Serbs in the 18th century. In addition to the reviewed publication, the author has written a valuable article on the work of Hristofor Žefarović. Cf. H. ŽEFAROVIĆ, *Stematografija Hristofora Žefarovicia jako dokument kulturnych i narodowych džeń Serbów w pierwszej połowie XVIII wieku*, *Ade* 4, 2014, p. 22–34.

² At this point, it is worth mentioning at least a few of the canonical works on the Slavic Baroque, which

were used by the author of the reviewed publication. Cf. E. ANGYAL, *Świat słowiańskiego baroku*, Warszawa 1972; M. PAVIĆ, *Istorija srpske književnosti baroknog doba (XVII i XVIII vek)*, Beograd 1970; D. MEDAKOVIĆ, *Barok kod Srba*, Zagreb 1988; W. KOT, *Barok serbski w kontekście polsko-ukraińskim*, *RKH* 25, 1988, p. 181–191.

³ Cf. D. ĐURIŠIN, *Podstawowe typy związków i zależności literackich*, *PLit* 59, 1968, p. 345–357.

⁴ Cf. *Problemy metodologiczne współczesnego literaturoznawstwa*, ed. H. MARKIEWICZ, J. SŁAWIŃSKI, Kraków 1976.

the ethnic-confessional situation of the Polish-Lithuanian state, and she can also accurately describe the Polish-Ukrainian influence on Russian culture in the late 17th and early 18th centuries, which contributed to the spread of new literary trends in the Tsarist state. The second part of the first chapter seems to be the most valuable and, at the same time, crucial to understanding the entire reviewed publication, as it explains the reasons for the popularity of the Russian orientation in the lands inhabited by Serbs⁵. Justyna Romanowska draws attention to the circulation of Russian liturgical books among Serbs, the presence of Russo-Slavic and Latin-Slavic schools, the activities of East Slavic teachers (e.g., Maxim Suvorov, Emanuel Kozaciński), as well as Russian emissaries active in the Habsburg monarchy. In the case of the last component, it would be worthwhile to expand the narrative by characterizing the activities of Ludwik Łączyński (1680–1752), who made a significant contribution to spreading a positive image of the Russian state among 18th-century Serbs⁶. The author also introduced the reader to the polemics between researchers regarding the periodization of the Baroque in Serbian literature. She rightly noted that the landmark date, not only in the political and social life of the Serbs, but also in the literary one, was 1690, the time of the Great Migration of the Serbs, led by Patriarch Arsenije III Čarnojević (1633–1703). While Justyna Romanowska is undoubtedly well versed in the intricacies of Serbian history, it should be noted, somewhat out of the reviewer's duty, that the term "Vojvodinian Serbs" (p. 45) is not the best name for 18th-century Serbs, since the term "Vojvodina" was not introduced until the end of the first half of the 19th cen-

ture. Therefore, it is better to refer to them as Serbs living in the Habsburg monarchy, making it possible to include in the main consideration the representatives of the ethnos who lived not only in the territory of today's Vojvodina, but also in the Military Frontier, Slavonia, areas of the middle course of the Danube, etc. It should also be noted that the second migration of Serbs under the leadership of Arsenije IV Jovanović Šakabenta (1698–1748), which is mentioned by the author (p. 43, 54), did not take place in 1740, i.e., after the end of the Austro-Turkish War of 1737–1739, but during its course⁷. Furthermore, Nova Srbija and Slavenosrbija were not Serbian settlements, but separate districts (consisting of settlements) within the Russian Empire⁸.

The subsequent three chapters – which form the essential core of the reviewed work – focused on the analysis of poetic texts from three cultural areas of the land of the Slavs (Serbian, Ukrainian-Russian and Polish). These sections of Justyna Romanowska's book organize selected themes and toposes as the author attempts to *answer questions about common thematic areas and the ways and effects of adapting Polish-Ukrainian-Russian patterns in Baroque Serbian literature* (p. 65).

Thus, the second chapter, entitled *Man and the World* (p. 67–123), consists of two segments: *Harmoni mundi* and *Disharmonia mundi*, which are a sort of catalog of the toposes most frequently found in the texts studied by the author. Romanowska introduces her reader to visions of the cosmos, as well as the place of the individual in the universe, which were prevalent among 18th-century writers. An important place in the reflection of this chapter is given to the influence of the Holy Bible on the creativity of poets, but also its importance in the shaping of spatial imagery. Innovative conclusions are contained in the *Disharmonia mundi* segment, in which

⁵ The author primarily focuses on the areas of the Habsburg monarchy where Serbs settled after the so-called Great Migration of the Serbs (Serbian *Velika seoba Srba*) of 1690. Cf. S. ČAKIĆ, *Velika seoba Srba 1689/1690 i patrijarh Arsenije Crnojević*, Novi Sad 1990.

⁶ Ludwik Łączyński (1680–1752) was a Russian diplomat of Polish origin who was on a Russian outpost in Vienna in the mid-18th century. One of his tasks was to recruit Serbs into the Russian army. Cf. С.Г. НЕЛИПОВИЧ, *Русско-австрийский военный альянс второй четверти XVIII*, Москва 2010.

⁷ Cf. J. LANGER, *Nord-Albaniens und der Herzogovina Unterwerfungs-Anerbieten an Oesterreich 1737–1739*, Wien 1880; M. KOSTIĆ, *Ustanak Srba i Arbanasa u Staroj Srbiji protiv Turaka 1737–1739 i seoba u Ugarsku*, GSND 7–8, 1930, p. 203–235.

⁸ M. KOSTIĆ, *Srpske naselja u Rusiji. Nova Srbija i Slavenosrbija*, Beograd 1923.

the author depicts a world deprived of harmony, characterized by evil and suffering, which is perhaps best evidenced by one of the cited works, *Nadgrobnno slovo Beogradu* by Arsenije IV Jovanović Šakabenta, which is a specific description of the triumph of evil in the world, as well as the receding of order under the pressure of chaos (p. 121–122). The *vanitas* motif – which was one of the most productive toposes in Baroque literature, including the Slavic Baroque as well – is quite prominently emphasized in this part of the book, as evidenced by the poets cited by Romanowska, including Lazar Baranovych (1617–1693), Zbigniew Morsztyn (1628–1689), Symeon of Polotsk (1629–1680), and Gavriilo Stefanović Venclović (1680–1749).

The next chapter (*Man and Time*) was dedicated *in extenso* to artistic expressions dealing with human transience, evanescence, or the inevitability of the ending of human life. Again, in this part of the book, the *vanitas* motif and biblical concepts of understanding time are quite clearly emphasized. The interpretations of the poems included in this chapter are set in a theological and philosophical context, which has greatly enriched the essential reading of the book and made it possible to present the sources of the theme of death in various Slavic literatures. Romanowska rightly notes the important role that the Kyiv-Mohyla Academy played in the distribution of existential reflection in the *Slavia Orthodoxa* area. She sees borrowings and themes conveyed in this context in the works of Gavriilo Stefanović Venclović, Jovan Rajić, or Emanuel Kozačinski, who resided in Serbian lands. The content of this part of the reviewed publication should be considered very precise and, at the same time, clear to the reader.

The book *Polish-Ukrainian-Russian contexts of Serbian Baroque metaphysical poetry* would undoubtedly be incomplete if it was not for the fourth chapter (*Man and God*), in which the author characterized man's bond with Divine Providence (p. 189–237). In this part of the work, the research attention was focused on writings from the monastic circle. The texts composed for the two most important Christian feasts – Christmas and Easter – are also discussed here. The works of Jovan Rajić and Gavriilo Stefanović Venclović

were particularly highlighted. It should also be noted that the poetic works were interpreted with a great deal of knowledge of literature theory, which allowed Justyna Romanowska to catch many symbols, concepts, metaphors, rhetorical figures, or references to the Bible. In addition, the author noted the Polish-Ukrainian-Russian influence on the development of mystery plays, Christmas plays and theatrical performances in Serbian culture. The result of this extended chapter is a comprehensive presentation of the man-God relationship in the Baroque literature of the *Slavia Orthodoxa* circle.

Justyna Romanowska's book is concluded with a short ending, which seemingly may appear quite inadequate for the volume of the publication (p. 239–241). The author summarizes her research and the theses set forth in the introduction in a condensed, yet extremely clear manner. She explains the role that the Baroque played in the development of Serbian literature. She again emphasizes both the importance of modern Serbian migrations since the late 17th century and Polish-Russian-Serbian interference on the transformations that occurred in Serbian culture during the 18th century. Above all, she points out the game-changing artists of the Serbian Baroque – Gavriilo Stefanović Venclović and Zaharije Orfelin (1726–1785). In the last paragraph, she outlines further research directions on Serbian poetry of the Baroque era, pointing out several research postulates, such as the contribution of the antique tradition in shaping the literature of the period and reflection on love poetry or humorous poetry. Justyna Romanowska also stresses the need for in-depth research on Serbian 18th-century bourgeois poetry (*Serbian gradanska poezija*), although in this last case, the answers to the author's questions can be found in the existing literature on the subject⁹.

In addition to an introduction, four extremely well-structured chapters and a conclusion, the book *Polish-Ukrainian-Russian contexts of*

⁹ In addition to the work by Marija KLEUT (*Srpsko gradansko pesništvo*, Novi Sad 1991) cited by Justyna Romanowska, Serbian bourgeois poetry was also studied by Mirjana D. Stefanović. Cf. EADEM, *Srpska gradanska poezija. Ogled iz istorije stih*, Valjevo 1992.

Serbian Baroque metaphysical poetry also includes an extensive bibliography (consisting of a compilation of source texts and subject literature), as well as a summary written in English. However, the reviewed publication would be worth expanding with an index of people and geography, as well as a summary in Serbian, as the work could certainly be of interest to Serbian humanities.

Even though in the *Introduction*, Justyna Romanowska very modestly points out that *this book is an attempt to fulfill some of the postulates and introduce additions to the still insufficiently recognized area, which appears to be the metaphysical poetry of the Serbian Baroque, so far almost absent from the ground of Polish Slavic studies* (p. 19) it should be clearly noted that the reviewed publication is a very successful and thorough humanistic study, which can be fruitfully used by Slavists, historians, anthropologists and other researchers of the Serbian cultural sphere.

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