

MAŁGORZATA ŁUKASZUK

**CONTEMPLATION:
THE HERMENEUTIC CONTEXT OF GENOLOGY**

1

The fourth and final part of Marian Maciejewski's book *Mickiewiczowskie «czucia wieczności»* (*Czas i przestrzeń w liryce lozańskiej*) (*Mickiewicz's 'Premonitions of Eternity: Time and Space in Lausanne Lyric Poems*) was entitled "Kontemplacja" ("Contemplation"). It is obvious that a title-word has very little generic value, or none at all. The lack of a generic definition of the term 'contemplation' is extremely telling, as it appears in a book and in a series which deals with literary theory 'ostentatiously', and in which

[...] we wished to stress a quite obvious conviction about the constant need to verify categories of description, or to look, under pressure of interpreted texts, for new conceptualizations.¹

Perhaps we should assume that in a book of such an intellectual and interpretative level the point of the rapprochement of different genological categories with categories which are not subjects of genology is of little consequence. Maciejewski gave me no reason to ask why an attitude (or a situation) of contemplation is adjacent in his book with an epic (the first part of the book) or with the 'gawęda'²

¹ Marian Maciejewski, *Wprowadzenie*, in Idem, *Poetyka – gatunek – obraz. W kręgu poezji romantycznej*, v. XL VIII, Wrocław 1977, 5.

² Translator's footnote: Czesław Miłosz defines 'gawęda' "as a loose, chatty form of fiction (not unlike what the Russians call *skaz*." See Czesław Miłosz, *The History of Polish Literature*, Macmillan, London, 1969, 255.

to which the second, brilliant part is devoted “Gawęda jako słowo przedstawione” (“Gawęda as a Word Depicted”). He approached not so much the problem of generic form, but rather the problem of generic essence. Therefore, neither the complex origins of the epic (heroic epic, long historical poem) and the *gawęda*, nor the dynamic concept of the genre stressed here³ allowed him to make final judgements on issues still fundamental for the generic conditioning of words, the world, the narrator in the epic and in the *gawęda*. Contemplation which cannot be defined generically achieved a genological foundation because, and Maciejewski was straightforward about it, the genre is implicated in the axiological context. The genre, to put it succinctly, has value at the same—or maybe even higher—level than ideas, which we have tended to perceive as centres of the language and imagination of Romantics.

The ‘axiological context’ of poetry, is of course, at the centre of literary research in Maciejewski’s Lublin. The term ‘axiology’ appears in the titles of many books, publishing series and conferences. The town of Lublin is connected with such names as Roman Ingarden, Czesław Zgorzelski, Stefan Sawicki, Władysław Panas, Andrzej Tyszczyk, Wojciech Kaczmarek, and Bernadetta Kuczera-Chachulska. The diversity in the aesthetics, philosophy and poetics of these works and their axiological character requires a careful and autonomous description, and such a description has often been achieved.⁴ My intentions are humbler, because they are limited to a glance at some intentions of the man who was later to create kerygmatic criticism (“a phenomenon probably unique in Humanities worldwide”⁵). This

³ Here, of course, we should need a footnote about Ireneusz Opacki’s concept of genre-mixing. However, Maciejewski, when he wrote about genology, refers to the works of Stefania Skwarczyńska, Tadeusz Kłak, and particularly of Michail Bachtin,

⁴ Stefan Sawicki, *Problematyka aksjologiczna w badaniach literackich*, w: *Problematyka aksjologiczna w nauce o literaturze*, ed. by Stefan Sawicki, Andrzej Tyszczyk, Lublin 1992, 96–100.

⁵ See *Interpretacja kerygmaticzna. Doświadczenia, re-wizje, perspektywy*, ed. by Jarosław Borowski, Edward Fiała, Ireneusz Piekarski, Lublin 2014. Quoted in:

criticism will not 'fit' in the contextual-axiological explanation, After all, we know that the genre is not a form but a value. But as the genre is a value, not a quality, Maciejewski's line of thought leads me not so much to axiology as to ethics.

Maciejewski, while putting axiology and genology closer to each other, did not make out of them a unified, stable category, or relation. After all, he said a bit later: there is something else in poetry which is important—this, which is indefinable, something which is impossible to "verbalize [...] in natural categories": authentic life, the essence of the world, salvation and the joy of salvation. They cannot be interpreted either from the perspective of genology, or of axiology, they are available only through analogy.⁶

In the ending of a fragment entitled "Rozum i wieczność" ("Reason and Eternity") Maciejewski, while quoting a postulate of Simone Weil ("Attention must be reflected in seeing, not in attachment"), wrote about a new 'higher' poetic quality, about a new, more serious commitment of artists to the world than one which is merely linguistic and stylistic, being concerned with issues, meanings, things. He introduced the notion of 'authenticity' (which is not synonymous with 'autobiographical truth'):

The lyric 'I' of Lausanne lyric poems achieves the level of contemplation, which guarantees 'premonitions of eternity' most authentic [104].⁷

In of the opening paragraphs of the next fragment, entitled "Contemplation", he writes:

Krzysztof Dybczak, [publisher's review].

⁶ Mieczysław A. Krąpiec, *Metafizyka – ogólna teoria rzeczywistości*, in *Wprowadzenie do filozofii*, ed. by Mieczysław A. Krąpiec, Stanisław Kamiński, Zofia Zdybicka, Andrzej Maryniarczyk, Piotr Jaroszyński, Lublin 1998, 112.

⁷ Marian Maciejewski, *Mickiewiczowskie «czucia wieczności»*. (*Czas i przestrzeń w liryce lozańskiej*), in *Idem, Poetyka – gatunek – obraz. W kręgu poezji romantycznej*, op. cit. I give page numbers for quotations from this book in square brackets, directly after quotations

Natural mysteries, which in the sphere of consciousness or human relationships were reflected in dynamic, conflicting tensions, led most often—particularly in Romantic epics—‘to nowhere’, which is another name for Romantic despair. [105]

In the further part of this paper Maciejewski showed the ways in which Mickiewicz’s poetry, and the rest of Romantic poetry as well, moves from ‘attachment’ to ‘seeing’—this is the way which leads poetry not only ‘beyond’ genealogy and ‘beyond’ axiology, but in the direction of authenticity and credibility. One of the paths is the mystical experience, in which, as Maciejewski reminded us in the connection to the poem “Widzenie” (“A Vision”)—“the opposition of what could be seen and what is invisible disappears”, natural senses are no longer needed, as they are replaced by ‘spiritual senses’ [105-197], and particularly the sense of ‘czucie’ (‘premonition’), which as Gwałbert Pawlikowski (quoted by Maciejewski) argued, became for Polish Romantics: an organ of higher cognition. [108] Contemplation, on the other hand, recalled by Maciejewski in the manner of Mediterranean mysticism as a complex of cognitive meaning, gave one more aspect to Romantic poetry: of communication with the world and the Maker through disinterested love. Maciejewski wrote, therefore, that in this poetry the presence of “perceptive verbs” (seeing, listening) becomes important, which (as Maciejewski showed in opposition to Mickiewicz’s epistolography) are semantically equated with joyful, almost euphoric “premonition/feeling” and “descriptions” of nature. [111]

Contemplation of pure beauty and disinterested joy in deepening one’s knowledge may be a generic domain—for example of the elegy, the lullaby,⁸ the prayer. They may also grow bigger than the demands of the genre, even if we understand this genre in a dynamic, progressive sense. It is worth recollecting that Czesław Zgorzelski, in the introductory remarks to a sketch on lyric ‘miniatures’ of Słowacki,

⁸ See, for example, Dariusz Pawelec, *Elegia*, in *Od kołysanki do trenów. Z hermeneutyki form poetyckich*, Katowice 2006, 188.

presented the genology of Słowacki's late poetry. These included 'confessional utterances', 'poems-prophecies', 'songs' and

[...] contemplative poems of meditation, harmoniously quiet and particularly telling in the directness of their intimate lyricism: "Kiedy pierwsze kury Panu spiewają...", (When the First Cocks Sing to the Lord...), "Gdy noc głęboka wszystko uspi i oniemi...", (When A Deep Night Will Bring Sleep and Quiet), "Jest najsmutniejsza godzina na ziemi..." (There is the Saddest Hour on Earth...), "Jak dawniej – oto stoję na ruinach..." (As Before – Here I am Standing on Ruins...), "Dusza się moja zamyśla głęboko..." (My Spirit is Thinking Deep...), "Jeżeli kiedy w tej mojej krainie..." (If Ever in My Land...).⁹

Zgorzelski's remarks about the specific, 'personal' character of Słowacki's 'utterances-miniatures' are particularly important:

Far removed from epigrammatic punch lines, as if removed from a wider context, naturally open towards emotional consequences of the generally drawn lyric situation and towards meanings not fully expressed, suggested in the jerky form of expression—they create a tone of maximum density of lyricism, as if spontaneous, natural in its directness, almost offhand expressions of a speaking persona.¹⁰

The genological formation of contemplative meditation and the density of lyricism become, for Zgorzelski, the basis for the description of poetic events as an expression of directly 'speaking persona'. In this way, Zgorzelski, the master of structuralism, went beyond formalism to a 'live' basis of the poetic language: spontaneity and directness in expressing the 'emotions of a speaking individual' and 'live' consequences of the reception of poetic art: emotional reaction

⁹ Czesław Zgorzelski, «Miniatury» liryczne, in Idem, *Liryka w pełni romantyczna. Studia i szkice o wierszach Słowackiego*, Warszawa 1981, 184. On the importance of Zgorzelski's position see, for example, *Miniatura i Mikrologia literacka*, ed. by Aleksandra Nawareckiego, Katowice 2000.

¹⁰ Ibidem.

to a situation and its meaning. Here he came close to hermeneutics, which combines the understanding of artistic merits with an insight into the drama of life and with the conviction, expressed by Hans Gadamer that the poetic word, as such, is a guarantee of what is conveyed.

2

In Maciejewski's book, when we take into consideration the first three sketches, the axiological context of the genre is not limited to the sphere of authors' decisions—when an artist selects received figures to articulate contents deemed precious and worthy of popularization. The genre's value here is a reality and, to a large extent, an autonomous feature of a 'subject', who is pre-stylistic, who as if intrinsically, as if theretofore, forces the users to accept that both formal pietism, and deliberate shapelessness are marked as to their values and hierarchical. It is not about a traditional hierarchy of grandeur and simplicity of style, because the value—and not only the form—for Maciejewski is not only the epic. "Under the pressure of interpreted texts" the genericity marked with value requires new categories of description, but first of all, it forces an interpreter to recognize a world earlier than the literary one; the first and true world of human existence. It is not limited to the incidental circumstance of life understood as the useless burden of memory. Memory—if we are to go back to the postulates of Ricoeur's hermeneutics, so often quoted by Maciejewski—is in such an interpretation withheld, while the quality of being incidental, as Gadamer wrote, is enclosed in the work itself.

Also, contemplation, although in literary discourse it is treated not so much as a quasi-generic notion, but as a notion beyond the genre, has been placed in Maciejewski's book alongside pre-genological situation, and in this way it has become an object of studies of very neat poetics. It should be stated here that Maciejewski as a historian and theoretician of literature differentiated and confronted textual and non-textual categories and showed them as links in the holistic artistic intention, but first of all of existential intention, concerned to express the content of life, being not the only real and precious context of literature, but also personal—as it is poetic—contact with

the live tradition. Thanks to this, a reader, a listener or a spectator who is a subject can understand an author (a bearer of words), can understand the consolidation and seriousness of this different type of 'autobiography'. Bakhtin, also often quoted by Maciejewski, wrote:

4. Contexts of understanding. The problem of *remote contexts*. The eternal renewal of meanings in new contexts[...]infinite and unfinalized dialogue in which no meaning dies.¹¹

Maciejewski, as a scholar researching Mickiewicz's lyric poetry, was asking most important questions in the field of Humanities: about the purpose of artistic creation, about the sense of plans and endeavours, about the final dimension of a transformation which has been accomplished in a work of art because first it was accomplished in life. Contemplation, similarly, for example, to lyricism, turned out to be a category useful in research, because a researcher, starting from a picture of a private man, reached for a picture of man located before this work of art and also before 'genetic' privacy—not only in tradition, but in the remote context of 'refreshing meanings', in the tilt towards eternity.

3

While planning the scope of my sketch I took, of course, into consideration the presence of themes of contemplation in the analysis of dominants in Mickiewicz's late poems, but also in the analysis of dominants of Maciejewski's research methods.¹² I am not making a systematic survey of attitudes and definitions; but I want to draw attention to is the still topical significance of choice, which Maciejewski

¹¹ This category was introduced by Mikhail Bakhtin in his late semiotic and hermeneutic study: "Toward a Methodology of Human Sciences" in *Speech Genres and Other Late Essays*, translated by Vern W. McGee, University of Texas Press, Austin, 1986. 169. See also Małgorzata Łukaszuk, *Wstęp*, in Eadem, *Doświadczenie i hermeneutyka Prace o polskiej poezji nienowoczesnej*, Warszawa–Lublin 2015.

¹² See, for example, Bernadetta Kuczera-Chachulska, *Posłowie. Poezja i kontemplacja*, in Marian Maciejewski, «Wrzucony do bytu otchłani». *Liryka lożańska i jej konteksty*, Lublin 2012, 157–175

made already in his first book. He not only introduced an indefinable category of contemplation to the set of research tools useful in the history of literature and in the art of textual criticism. He not only put contemplation alongside categories from, for example, the field of historical poetics. He not only added to it a comprehensive, intensive exemplification in his quotations and commentaries. Maciejewski did something more, because in his important and brilliantly executed paper about the nature of Romantic poetry (and therefore the nature of poetry as such) he put contemplation in the central place, central because located so crucially at the end.

Firstly, the choice of genological notions, made by Maciejewski, when he approached the exquisite Romantic poetry, preserves the fundamental question of the Humanities: “Who am I?”. This is not just a customary question in the so called traditional Humanities. This is a question which is more important in the interpretation of poems than all other questions, however possible or attractive they may be. Secondly, Maciejewski did not stop at the choice of tools effective in terms of interpretation—they also had to be used honestly, in order to explain carefully things more important in poetry than its structure: communicative acts and dynamics. While methodological formalisms (structuralism or semiotics) still consider ‘structure’ to be an adequate concrete thing of literature, Maciejewski—also thanks to a powerful introduction of contemplation to literary tools available to scholars of Polish literature—found, named and passed on a concrete thing most important in literature: the personal and contextual concrete aspect of eternity, grounded in the ‘here and now’.

Contemplation (thinking, consideration) in theological thinking and therefore in the Humanities at large, also has characteristic features of truth, humility, fidelity, wisdom and universality.¹³ In aesthetic writings, particularly in the reception of music, aesthetic contemplation means calm and peace, not emotions accompanying

¹³ Stefan Swieżawski, *Zapatrzenie. Ze Stefanem Swieżawskim rozmawiali Anna Karoń-Ostrowska, Józef Majewski, Zbigniew Nosowski*, Warszawa 2006; quoted by Bernadetta Kuczera-Chachulska, *Posłowie. Poezja i kontemplacja*, op. cit., 157.

objectification but the will itself.¹⁴ In popular usage contemplation may be defined as a prayer or meditation, as deep thinking or seeing attentively. It is therefore a type of conscious activity (at the crossroads of intellect and will), it requires adequate conditions (isolation) and objects (solemnity), it belongs to the spiritual sphere, and 'happens' between a concrete subject (seeing, but primarily experiencing) and a concrete object (being seen, but primarily being experienced). But, according to Maciejewski, who collected many philosophical definitions and theological explications of contemplation, it only has a partially mediating role between 'I' and the world.

Contemplation became for Maciejewski a part of poetic language, but also a category describing poetic events. In his research the notions of language and poetry are made reliable thanks to remote contexts (not only of tradition or culture, but also of the Christian way of life) and go far beyond what is considered today to be the linguistic organization of a text. More qualifications are necessary here: values and genology meet here in a specific, poetic place. Maciejewski, while qualifying understanding of the epic wrote—following Ingarden—about the value as a phenomenon which "holds in itself a kind of postulate of realization". A bit later Maciejewski wrote that "obligation of being" which is demanded by the value is not synonymous with "persuasive definition", which was postulated by the normative generic classifications which existed at that time, but is not exhausted in the practice "of influencing convictions or attitudes through means different than persuasion".¹⁵ In Maciejewski's writings the value, when it became a subject of poetry, was given to realization, although this obligation cannot be fulfilled by genological rigour. Generic consistency, as wrote Bakhtin, quoted on many occasions by Maciejewski, "begins to feel like a stylization, a stylization taken

¹⁴ See, for example, Charles Taylor, *Sources of the Self: The Making of Modern Identity*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass., 1989.

¹⁵ Marian Maciejewski, *Sławianie – synowie sławy (epos jako wartość)*, op. cit., 15.

to the point of parody, despite the artistic intent of the author”.¹⁶ Contemplation, free from tradition of normative poetics, would therefore become in Maciejewski’s considerations a Romantic way of fulfilling the ‘obligation of realization’ of value in poetic events; in a ‘pre-genological’ fashion, realized in a concrete text by a concrete person, in the time and space of a concrete life. Because while the chance of a traditional genre was “to put an authorial mask from a previous period, and therefore of a death mask”,¹⁷ the chance of new Romantic poetry was taking off masks, which signified a contemplative attitude. And contemplation in Mickiewicz’s texts was exactly the way of realization of the obligation of being through taking off a mask: for example, of stylistic ornaments of the sonnet’s genology.

4

In contemporary literary research contemplation and contemplative attitude serve as a concept, a phantasm, a metaphor, or an *ersatz*, etc. They can be supplemented by equally gracious stylistic tricks such as epiphanies, fragmentary and mimetic features, etc. In Maciejewski’s book, on the other hand, contemplation is really a new and identified value of literary criticism; it is placed between the deadness of a subjective structure and the live speech of an empirical event. It can be reduced neither to an act of stylization nor to the authenticity of an autobiography. As all other states of existence (a biography trapped in words), it will be freed by Maciejewski, from manacles of metaphors, but at the same time its linguistic and figural foundations will not be disqualified. Maciejewski will call contemplation—when it will be ‘used’ to approach epistemological resolutions in Mickiewicz’s poetry—a new and functional value of time and space, and in this way he will accept its concrete-essential aspect.

¹⁶ Michail Bakhtin, “Epic and Novel”, in *The Dialogic Imagination*, ed. by Michael Holquist, transl. by Caryl Emerson and Michael Holquist, Texas University Press, Austin, 6.

¹⁷ Marian Maciejewski, *Gawęda jako słowo przedstawione*, in *Poetyka – gatunek – obraz. W kręgu poezji romantycznej*, op. cit., 33.

Maciejewski's research method is often commented upon in terms of axiology. However, I suppose that the book about Mickiewicz's late poems is not really an ennoblement of an axiological aspect of genology, but a critique of a cognitive-axiological approach. Axiology *sensu stricto* had little impact on Maciejewski's passages on genology. Also, it could not be a final point of reference for his hermeneutics when he wanted to approach Mickiewicz's poetry holistically, and through its essence, his poetry beyond time, beyond tendencies, beyond periods. After describing the structural paradigm of Mickiewicz's last lyric poems (Przyboś, Kleiner, Zgorzelski), and raising questions about their semantic filling (Lisiecka), Maciejewski stated:

This stopping point halfway 'between heaven and earth' defines their truth and unusual beauty. [75]

This sentence defines understanding of the hermeneutical aspect of axiology, which not only carefully verifies the stylistic skills of Mickiewicz as non-subjective values, but it also makes—on the level of interpretation and its effect— the differentiation and, simultaneously, synchronization of literary events, explained through 'formal words', and events of literary expression explained with a 'live word'. My attention is also focused on the extent to which Maciejewski was sensitive to marks of endeavour, on the intention of transformation and 'gain', which was achieved through poetic means, but which reaches 'before' poetry—into man's existence in truth, care and simplicity. It is important that in Maciejewski's literary research, 'gain' is a category going beyond literature and is not identical with egoism and does not negate an artistic code, which is subjected to historical poetics. At the end of his sketch on "premonitions of eternity", after summing up the subjective and personal attitudes of Mickiewicz lyric poetry written in Crimea and Lausanne, Maciejewski wrote:

And maybe it is even like this, that the poet introduces both procedures of constructing metaphors (transformation of time into

space and space into time) in order to gain new time and new space for contemplation, and for the fact that traces of this struggle remain [...] we can only be grateful to Mickiewicz. [117]

5

Now I would like to focus on the differentiation (separation) of figures Maciejewski made in the context of the hermeneutic branch of literary studies. Differentiation—not dilution or exclusion of any of them in his own readings—would attain, in Maciejewski’s later works, a clearly ‘didactic’ shape, because they were closely connected with kerygmatic notions, which postulate to change the world and its inhabitants. In Maciejewski’s earlier works we can also discern a clear distinction, for example, of the category of subject (subjectivity) and person (personality). In Maciejewski’s sketch on lyric poetry this distinction was verified and checked through the holistic and intensive understanding of poetic art—“the continuity of poetic thinking, revealing itself in the almost dialogic correspondence of texts”. [105]

The key moment in this continuity came, according to Maciejewski, in the poems [“Polały się łzy me czyste...” [“I Shed Pure Tears, Countless Tears...”] and [“Gdy tu mój trup...” [“While My Carcass...”]. Maciejewski wrote that after mystical ‘immortality’ identified with timeless space [“Nad wodą wielką i czystą...” [“Over the water grand and clear...”], [“Snuć miłość...” [“Spin Love...”]), there comes a painful ‘act of destruction’, life gets broken into ‘two halves’, a human space is now “a kind of void filled with landscapes”, a type of isolated islands unaware of one another, which are not visited by anyone who is alive. [90-92] Polish poetry, as Maciejewski stated, was sentenced for a long time to look for a moral and mythical homeland in itself. However, this homeland was illusory, because it was “recreated from elements of immortalized memory”. [94]

Maciejewski was a severe reader of Mickiewicz’s poems-mirages, and later, for example of Miłosz’s “W mojej ojczyźnie” (“In My Homeland”), and “Równina” (“The Plain”). He was sensitized to the falsity and usurpations of existential utopias (self-rescue, myth creation); he found and analysed the best parts of Mickiewicz’s poetry,

in which Mickiewicz answered the weakness of conventionalized words with the strength of meta-words, limitations of language with the accuracy of meta-language. Despite the fact that, as Ricoeur wrote, understanding and exploration of the world does not happen "only in the mind or in language", Maciejewski, as a literary researcher and dutiful disciple of the hermeneutic school, was not tempted to ignore real shapes. Neither a spatial 'jump towards eternity', and the immortalizing of bits of memory ('of a frozen time'), nor a motif of the stopping of time ('a drop of eternity') exhausted his understanding of Mickiewicz's Lausanne lyric poems. Maciejewski searched for the truth and beauty of these poems beyond such a 'caricature of eternity', and therefore he looked for space in this poetry, in which the value demanding realization exceeded both the level of dissociation and contamination, pushed aside the genological structure and transformed figures of language.

Maciejewski did not treat interpretative figures as plastic containers: freely shaped and irresponsibly filled. Contemplation, which appears in the title of the fragment of his book, is closest to—although with some reservations I am going to deal with later—meditation. According to Eliade, meditation is a prayer without words. For Maciejewski all words and their relationships are important. Teresa Kostkiewiczowa wrote about meditation in the aspect which is simultaneously subjected and maximally personal. For Maciejewski, it is personal identity which is more important, perceptible during the intensive reading of a text. Contemplation in such a reading is no longer a notion beyond texts and beyond genology. It becomes a way of understanding and the realization of values, which are located 'before' texts and genology.¹⁸

¹⁸ Teresa Kostkiewiczowa, *Medytacja – wstępne spostrzeżenia i uwagi*, in *Medytacja. Postawa intelektualna, sposób poznania, gatunek dyskursu. Studia*, ed. by Teresy Kostkiewiczowej i Magdaleny Saganiak, Warszawa 2010, 11: "The understanding of meditation as an attitude shows at the same time its deeply subjective character [...] It is achieved through maximum concentration on a thing. It has, in a way, two dimensions: on the one hand it requires a distance towards an object of attention, of separating it, [...] on the other hand—it leads to its actualising approach,

Understanding meditation on the level beyond texts made it into a spiritual attitude of clear axiological intent respect for the mystery of being, world, person. Such an understanding of meditation would change it into a suggestive phase of reaching intimacy with the world, maybe of celebrating things belonging to it, as 'given to be read', worthy of continuation in utterances of artistic value. Contemplation— here I make a shortcut in the analysis of the status and origins of this notion—however, for Maciejewski was not only a new aspect of time and space. It was a new and more important cognitive value. And an ontological value. It was new time. New space. And contemplation's final context was not reality but 'eternal life': true and only, achieved at this moment by the power of the concrete 'here and now'. This attitude is not only useful when it comes to literary events or an intellectual-emotional situation, and it is not only a spiritual or axiological *summa*, included in biographical events as the exotic element. Contemplation, already in this sketch of Maciejewski, reached for the horizon of salvation. It is personal, but it does not come from a subject. It is not the truth of the world, although it comes from its things: clear, transparent, immobile, and refracting. It is not an illusion, mirage or convention. It is concrete, it is knowledge, a kernel of a look 'towards' and 'beyond'. At the same time—already at the level of the organization of languages—it explains a text 'from within', as an intentional message which is pre-textual.

Contemplation offered a solid basis for the Lausanne brooding poems with no clear genological background. Contemplation, in Maciejewski's works, received a particular power in the context of literary research; it explained authors' decisions—from punctuation, through lexis and versification, to metaphors and visions. And finally, it drew our attention to things which spread poetic aspects 'before' language and metaphors: towards an idea, spirit, eternity, infinity, truth, beauty, salvation.

of entering with it into a strong, personal bond allowing one to look deep into its nature and expanding its horizon of seeing. Meditation is realized in the process [...] of entering into intimate contact with it.”

6

One of the most important effects of Maciejewski's turning to contemplation while describing poems turned out to be the specific concept of a subject as a person. Most researchers at that time spoke about a textual subject, an element of organized structure. Maciejewski's perfect, detailed analyses "of repetitions of verbal motives" proved that he was writing not about a subject or authorial protagonist, but about a personal man of poetry. Therefore, in his sketch on the Lausanne lyric poems Maciejewski wrote, following Durandoux, about the "rhythmic chanting of being". Following Poulet he asked:

Does a spiritual stability not exist in which man pondering constantly about himself may keep himself in stationary time without evanescence? [116]

The rhythm of repetition and motionlessness—these are the ways of beings appearance perceived by Maciejewski in Mickiewicz's last lyric poems. Maciejewski carefully prepared this investigation. He compiled definitions of contemplation as an important mode of perception, moving "beyond the literalness of the cause and effect world". Following August Poullain he wrote about contemplation as a "simple glance accompanied by love". [110]. Following Boudoun, he stressed the teleological aspect of contemplation, differentiating it from meditation

Contemplation is a simple and full feeling, a glance at a thing, without considerations, [...] meditation searches for what contemplation already possesses [110].

In poetry, eternity and omniscience are attached to the 'here and now', attached to the concreteness of a catalogue of things for which a lyric poet reaches: feeling, but predominantly experiencing, exploring, but mostly wanting to understand and accept his world, and a safe part of it. The intention of Maciejewski's choice of his reading technique was clear: the careful and patient reader should explain a text, should follow an author—when this author did not

waste his passion and skills. Therefore, a researcher had to select a research tool and a mode of literary criticism so as not to belie the poems and not to become a slave of one methodology or another. Maciejewski wrote:

Treating the Lausanne lyric poems as, among other things, records of acts of contemplation [...] says a lot about them. Thus, their simplicity is explained, and also some synthetic aspect, totality of approach, and ‘finality’, but mostly a look at everything with disinterested love [...] with maximum objectivity [...] [110–111].

The notions used in the above quotation are not a hypothesis. They are not a concept. They are not to negate or confirm convention. They are to explain what is earlier and more serious than convention. The fragment called “Contemplation” —it is worth repeating this—is the last part of the sketch fundamental to understanding not only Romantic poetry. And as Mickiewicz, patiently and carefully, was reporting his experience, cognition and understanding, his researcher, patiently and carefully, was preparing his readers for his own proposal of a lesson of a poetic masterpiece.

7

The first paragraph of “Contemplation” expanded the thought with which “Reason and Eternity” ended. Simone Weil, opposes cognitive-axiological stereotypes (“attachment”) with meta-axiological categories of observing, seeing and mindfulness. The differentiation of ‘attachment’ from ‘seeing’ allows, as Maciejewski claimed, a persona from the Lausanne lyric poems to attain a level of contemplation. This is the level higher than the one which the protagonist of *Crimean Sonnets* reaches. “Perspectives of seeing” as Mickiewicz put “over the abyss in the Tschufut-Kale” opened into “infinity”, while infinity and indistinguishability were protected by “the law of mystery” with which Romantic poets replaced “the Enlightenment puzzle” (104). In the view of these ambitions, the role of Mirza—a sentinel, a priest of mystery—was repressive: through bans and orders Mirza limited sight and touch, which the Pilgrim had at his disposal in Crimean

landscapes. And predominantly—as Maciejewski wrote—Mirza, as a local man, quelled temptations of thoughts, that is of consciousness, which a newcomer has brought with his presence to alien nature. The Pilgrim, therefore, could act in a Promethean way, he could want to break the sacred bond through actions of the body and senses. He could not, however, cross the border of eternity: cognitively, speculatively, in terms of awareness. He was looking where he was not supposed to look; while looking, however, he did not achieve the most important gain, because he did not find words “live in language” to express what he had seen. [105] Genres, conventions and metaphors opened for him a mystery of the world, but they did not include words to pronounce it.

Maciejewski opposed the power of the cognitive ambitions of Romantics with the fragile talent, accessible to them, of “verbalization of the essence of the world”. He opposed the knowledge of mysteries with the weakness of language, which Romantics knew, cherished and postulated (also in genological forms). He opposed the cognitive optimism of Romantic poetry (analysed so often) with linguistic reductionism, and in this way he treated the actions of an individual to self-identification as an illusion. In such a reading, a man in Romantic poetry, who not only emotionally reached for eternity, and even reached its shadow, a man who was powerful in action, turned out to be a dwarf of consciousness. Because he did not acquire the simplest, the most elementary skill of speech. He did not have words, he did not learn a ‘code’, to pass on the knowledge which he achieved through a daredevil action, to share it, to give it, that is, to use it non-egoistically. Eventually, he reached not nature or God, but despair.

8

The basic problem which confronts a researcher who wants to include a non-genological category in a book of such formal assumptions, was not that contemplation is not subjected to formal rigours, and that it is not, speaking in very general terms, a definable textual category. This would be, in any case, relatively easy to explain thanks to, for example, a category of lyricism understood as a type of emotional, monologue

stylization. After all, Ostap Ortwin wrote many years later that it was only lyricism—“live and changing speech”— which “creates” and “develops” non-textual forms of “contemplative acts” into their “external picture”, in formally diverse, textual “shapes of words”.¹⁹

Maciejewski, while confronting with one another genres and pre-genological attitudes, found in Mickiewicz’s poetry an issue more important than the stylistic valour of literature. On the one hand, Mickiewicz’s poems became testimonies of tension between layers of rhetorical conventions, and layers of live, spontaneous speech. On the other hand, these poems became testimonies of tension between subjective attitudes of remorse, despair and communicative failures and a personal attitude of joy and affirmation. In the final poems of Mickiewicz, carefully interpreted by Maciejewski, joy was revealed, a different type of joy than the one which is the result of ownership or power. [111-112] It was joy resulting from contemplation, understood as the throwing away of prejudices, of freeing oneself from “attachments”, limiting oneself—as Simone Weil instructed—to seeing: careful and final; or, to use hermeneutical terms, to treat the world as a value which removes from individual consciousness what is in this consciousness superfluous, faulty or hasty.

¹⁹ Ostap Ortwin, *O liryce i wartościach lirycznych*, quoted in Michał Głowiński, *Portret krytyka: Ostap Ortwin*, in Idem, *Ekspresja i empatia. Studia o młodopolskiej krytyce literackiej*, Kraków 1997, 380–381.