shown as a result of unhappy coincidence, — the heroes of *Pelham* and *Eugene Aram* were victims of tragic misunderstanding. With all their wickedness they were not the cause of crime. The readers liked them.

Which of these dependencies — 18th-century or Romantic — had greater influence on the profile of the Gothic novel from 1830 — 1860? If as typical features of Gothic novels we accept progressing psychological interpretation of the heroes' inner life and the analysis of behaviour of tragically splitted man — so distinctly emphasized by Bulwer and Ainsworth — then their dependency on closer Romanticism seems conspicuous. If, on the other hand, we notice that new Gothic novels lack supernatural elements (for instance in Ainsworth's *Auriol*), that wonders and interference of supernatural forces is replaced by unrevealed mystery, the fantastic by realistic and detailed descriptions (like in Bulwer's *The Haunted and the Haunters*), then we shall point to their 18th-century origin, to renaissance of gothic forms and methods in the Victorian Age. The atmosphere of terror and weirdness in which the action takes place and finally gothic set of plots and motifs straight from the 18th century, have been in smaller or greater degree used by Ainsworth and Bulwer.

The craft of creating and gradating moods of fear and mystery also comes from the 18th-century masters: Mrs. Radcliffe and H. Walpole. Traditional gothic device of piling up mysteries and allusions had its fullest expression in Bulwer's *A Strange Story*. On the level of story-telling there exists at the same time a concurrence of dependencies coming from different literary epochs.

In Ainsworth's *Auriol*, the first occultist Gothic novel, the story is based on a journey-in-time motif. Parts and plans of this work closely resemble the structure of A. R. Lesage's *Le Diable boiteux*. In another Ainsworth's novel *Rookwood* we have typically gothic motifs as for instance: regained inheritance, revenge, ambition brought to the point of obsession, folk and picaresque element.

There is, nevertheless, no figure of gothic rogue and heroine persecuted by sinister tyrant. Lady Rookwood resembles rather a figure of femme fatale, so popular in Romantic literature. Here the influence of the epoch closer to the Victorian Age seems to prevail.

A useful book by A. M. Rustowski, examining the problems from the field of literary genetics on rich historical and social background, intelligibly written, makes it possible to arrive at many such illuminating conclusions, important for the scholars working on literature from the turn of the 18th century.

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Transl. by *Ewa Stachniak*

Richard Bjornson, THE PICARESQUE HERO IN EUROPEAN FICTION. University of Wisconsin Press, 1977, 308 pp.

Richard Bjornson's book marks a culmination of interest among scholars nowadays in the genre of the picaresque. Though much indebted to critics writing before him on the subject, Bjornson has succeeded in producing a highly original study whose thesis he puts explicitly thus: "The present study will be devoted to individual picaresque novels and the ways in which their authors adapted conventions and influences to express their conceptions of the world" (p. 11). Such a design seems to combine the approach of a critic from the "school of interpretation" with that of a literary historian, yet the study could not be fully appreciated without taking into account its other aim, more ambitious though stated only implicitly: to trace the evolution of a genre in terms of its changing ideological content, or, in other words, of the changing world-view expressed by the author of a given novel. The alteration of the ideology can best be registered through scrutinizing the concept of the hero in picaresque fiction as used by various authors writing in the years 1550 — 1750. European picares-

que fiction is a complex phenomenon which can only be characterized adequately "by focusing upon three of its most significant aspects: the primitive prenovelistic 'mode' or myth of the lowerclass, wandering hero, the thematic and structural convention which became associated with it, and the specific works which integrate these conventions into individualized forms with their own ideological, aesthetic and moral assumptions" (p. 5—6). Chief among these elements is the picaresque "myth", an original Spanish product, which in the course of time was assimilated into the indigenous culture of other European countries, thus yielding in each case a work whose basic structural outline was relatively unchanged, but whose meaning was completely different.

Two early Spanish novels are responsible for establishing the picaresque myth: *Lazarillo de Tormes* (publ. 1554) and *Guzman de Alfarache* (1599, 1604). Each presents a lower-class character-narrator forced to live by his wits in a world governed by moral duplicity. The harsh conditions of life submit the picaro to a kind of socializing process until he loses sight of authentic human values and conforms to the rules of the dehumanized society. At the end of an eventful life the protagonist records all his past misfortunes for the benefit of the prospective reader (the autobiographical perspective integrates the loose episodic construction of the story).

On the whole, the picaresque myth exhibited in these two novels seems to correspond to, as well as reflect, the complex historical situation in 16th-century Spain. As opposed to other European countries, Spain offered a lack of opportunities for an ambitious commoner to climb socially (due to a rigid class hierarchy and religious oppression). This, combined with a universal drive to imitate the patterns of noble deportment, helped to foster the ethic of maintaining appearances and moral compromising. The authors of *Lazarillo* and *Guzman* represented a nascent bourgeois ideology in the sense that they showed their protagonists undergoing a process of "education" in a hostile deceptive world.

The subsequent development of the genre of the picaresque is a matter not only of direct descent from *Lazarillo* and *Guzman.* Certain sociological aspects must be considered here. In 17th-century Spain the novels appearing in the wake of *Guzman* ceased to reflect a coherent moral vision connected with the picaro's struggle for survival. The hero was no longer seen as process but became an inherent nature, a comic caricature, a mere adventurer whose role was to provide amusement for the aristocratic audience. The authors of secondary picaresque tales in Spain had to mould their hero to the expectations of a particular reading public, who doubtless revelled in the adventures of rogues, but whose prevalent belief in the stability of the world order could hardly be undermined. One reason for this was that the reception of early picaresque novels had changed and the reader was no longer able to discern the subtle irony and implicit social criticism beyond their narrative perspective. In general, the followers denied the portrayal of character as process and returned to the traditional notion that character is a function of one's nature. Thus the essential format of the picaresque was kept but only as a core round which concentrated various other conventions: that of a comic novel, adventure story, or romance. The picaros of Ubeda or Espinel employ ruses like Lazarillo, but unlike Lazarillo they employ them only for humorous effect. The ideology of the inheritors in the tradition did not mirror actual historical conditions but conformed to the tastes of the upper class (ch. 4).

Further changes followed with numerous translations and adaptations outside Spain. The original as well as the secondary picaresque romances (which themselves gradually froze into a convention) entered into relationships with the native traditions of France, Germany and England. Because the audiences in these countries were different (bourgeoisie as opposed to aristocracy in Spain) the

ideological *Einstellung* was bound to change, too.

For a picaro in Renaissance Spain it was virtually impossible to climb socially. Prospects of making a career were closed to a resilient commoner. Not so in other countries, where an indigent vagabond could improve his station in life — by marrying, for instance — and become included in the respectable spheres of society (p. 165). Though a rascal and a wanderer, like his Spanish predecessor, the European rogue did not necessarily have to sacrifice his moral values in order to survive, and his figure suited the pattern of bourgeois career-making aspirations. Consequently, the 17th- and 18th-century publishers took advantage of the diminishing role of noble patronage (which still played a major part in Spain) and stimulated the production of picaresque fiction which complied with the demands of middle-class readers. This social factor cannot be overlooked in the dissemination of the picaresque outside Spain (ch. 7).

Bjornson, however, does not restrict himself to registering the impact of social phenomena on the progress of the genre. Important for him as well is the adaptation of the picaresque to the literary and ethical conventions in France, Germany etc. Two examples may serve to illustrate this. Lesage, in his extremely popular *Gil Blas* (1715—1735), created an image of the picaro as a noble adventurer who gains his rewards after a life in a ruthless world. He is rewarded not for virtuous actions but for his innately good character. Such a conception of the hero was more in line with the literary convention of the comic novel than with the Spanish picaresque canon. Lesage was drawing amply on the comic novels of Scarron and Sorel, among others, and used the Spanish rogue tales primarily as a source for clever tricks which he could adopt for comic effects demanded of him by the reading public. The use of a literary tradition here was a direct function of a social factor.

A similar situation occurs when Defoe depicts the character of Moll Flanders. Moll, in true fact, is more of a villain than a genuine picara. Her morality allows her for a moment to consider murdering a child for profit. Yet her guilt is palliated since it forms part of her efforts to sustain herself by all available methods; Moll's picaresque journey is set in the context of the Protestant tradesman ethic; like Lazarillo, she starts from a low quarter and undergoes a socializing process, but unlike him, she succeeds in life. Defoe's novel achieved popularity since it was only superficially a picaresque romance; in reality it constituted a variant of a success story, so much in vogue in view of the nascent bourgeois *Weltanschauung*. Again, the genesis of *Moll Flanders* (1722) cannot be dissociated from the conception of the contemporary reader.

One of Bjornson's major observations is that in Spain the picaro terminates unhappily while outside Spain he is successful. In the process of evolution and adaptation in Europe, differences in the social and literary conventions of each country caused a change in the hero and, despite a continuity of technique, produced "points of view which are diametrically opposed to those commonly associated with the earlier Spanish novel" (p. 13—14). Only: whose points of view? Author's, narrator's, reader's? It is this slight lack of precision which diminishes our interest in the book. While indicating doubts of this kind we may return briefly to the initial thesis of Richard Bjornson. Is it plausible that in the course of the development of the picaresque different authors "adopted conventions and influences to express *their* conceptions of the world" rather than that they worked out their own world views within the context of a particular awareness, literary and/or social? In other words, should not the ideological content of each novel be made less dependent on the author than on the potential reader?

Such quandaries cannot of course lessen the intrinsic value of Bjornson's study, useful not only to the student of the picaresque. In the abundance of arguments and interpretations the author

uses while delineating the history of the picaresque, especially commendable is his stress on the sociological aspect of the genre's development. Also the technique in which the book is composed deserves praise. It falls naturally into two parts. The first is the critical text itself, highly readable even for a nonprofessional. The second, which supplements and enriches the first, is made up of a substantial section of notes plus an index of authors, works and subjects. The notes contain a critical bibliography as well as a host of polemics, arguments, and minor information which has rightly been removed from the text to the reference part. The book is beautifully illustrated and equipped with maps. All these devices will contribute significantly to the reader's engagement with Bjornson's valuable study.

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Eugeniusz Czaplejewicz, WSTĘP DO POETYKI PRAGMATYCZNEJ (INTRODUCTION TO PRAGMATIC POETICS). Wydawnictwa Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego, Warszawa 1977, 197 pp.

That is how the author defines the purpose of pragmatic poetics: its aim is "to build such a theory of a literary work of art, which would take into account and expose its active participation in social life and social practice, as well as its relations with real people who use it" (p 114). Numerous definitions of pragmatic poetics scattered in the text imply one general assumption: literature should be examined in terms of influence, relations should be found between literature and non-literary activities, between "word and action." A postulate of examining literary devices according to their role and usefulness in communication and their function in a process of formation of meanings sounds innovatory and refreshing, particularly as compared to contemporary theory of literature,

dominated by structuralism and trends related to it. The impression of novelty results from the fact that synthetic discussion of the theory of literature from the pragmatic point of view is a very recent phenomenon and has not yet achieved a full rank of opposition in relation to aesthecizing theories.

Pragmatic poetics has rich tradition: two chapters of the dissertation, namely "Plato's pragmatic theory of word" and "Two trends in poetics: Platonic and Aristotelian" supply the reader with necessary evidence and provide the basis for the discussion of the influence of literature as well as its dialogue-like and ideological character. The author begins from pointing out the contradictions, structural trends found themselves entangled in. The poetics of syntactic structuralism, for instance, made a sign in art its autonomous world needing no justification from the outside, the fact led to a break with non-literary reality to which the sign referred and to the loss of its semantic aspect. That such an attitude leads to intellectual acrobatics and breaks a relation of a literary work of art with life, was already stated by Mukařovsky, although he was not able to find a proper way-out from the deadlock, what is more, he was not able to avoid one essential danger, i.e. that of bringing poetics too close to linguistics. According to the author the above contradictions resulted from the fact that structural poetics brought Aristotle's suggestions into extreme. Accepting his treatment of literature structural poetics treated it as a set of devices used to cause certain effects and announced disinterestedness of aesthetic experience. Aristotelian trend in poetics, comprising various forms of classical poetics and its many modern currents, has ruled for centuries creating rich tradition, but for all its merits has built a concept of literature that must evoke many reservations. The author rejects such phenomena as: autonomy and aestheticism of poetry, freeing literature from practical aims, placing it "beyond good and evil," reluctance of poetics to evaluate abstract