

OPINION

on the dissertation by Venesa Nacheva

Corporeality and Liminality in the Poetry of Eugeniusz Tkaczyszyn-Dycki

(Телесност и граничност в поезията на Еугениуш Ткачишин-Дицки)

by professor Margreta Grigorova, DSn

The professional biography of Venessa Nacheva shows a polonistic activity that combines the field of doctoral studies with other scientific publications, translations, teaching, participation in projects and additional courses useful for her development. The publications on the subject of the dissertation work are sufficient and meet the requirements, and the general list of all publications presents a serious scientific profile.

I am aware of Venessa Nacheva's earlier scientific works and I am convinced of her advantages, scientific good faith, purposefulness and maximalism, as well as her ability to build a topology and clearly present her theses. I think that the dissertation submitted for official defense proves and illustrates these qualities and represents a complete monographic work. The dissertation is distinguished by: the rich scientific literature, used dialogically in the argumentation process, the analytical work with the poetic texts, the ability to draw correct conclusions, the precise scientific language. I consider the present text also as an act of expanding the reception field of the author.

The dissertation work is focused and comprehensive in the chosen topic and at the same time manages to show through it the entire artistic world of the author. Venesa uses it as a key to open one after another many doors, behind which a creative life takes place, marked by the drama of liminality, situated between painful frustration and bliss, the difficult side of which not every doctoral student could cope with. To a large extent, successful reflection is due to the conviction of the key connection between corporeality and liminality, defended as a basic concept ("hypothesis"), to the ability to show the topology and effects of this connection in the poetry of one of the most border poets in Polish contemporary literature. Venesa convincingly proves „that corporeality and liminality are forms of action, dynamic manifestations of the body and the limit in the poetry of Eugeniusz Tkaczyszyn-Dycki, and that their differentiation is impossible. This is so because, on the one hand, corporeality constantly provokes the limit and shifts its parameters, making it a limit in action, that is, liminality, and, on the other hand, the permeability of the limit

creates the conditions for the body to expand and break out of its strictly established forms, which activates its agency, that is, its corporeality” (p. 13). The emphasis on fluidity - substantive and formal, the flow of themes and motifs between the works, which can also be seen as a common text array - is rightly placed. It should also be noted that Dycki's readings are relevant in light of gender studies that is still at the current trends of contemporary literary thought.

The present work (refined after the first discussion, my small recommendations were also taken into attention) impresses with a clear and logical composition (with short, clear and meaningful titles of chapters and sub-chapters). This is evident both in the serious theoretical-methodological foundation in first and second chapters ("Theories of the Corporeal and the Liminal", "The body in Limit Situations"), and in the empirical-analytical part of the third and fourth chapters ("All Possible Bodies", "Liminal Spaces"). Venesa easily identifies, names and analyzes the body's liminal spaces and incarnations.

In her introductory motivation, Venesa enters the topic through the manipulations of the body in the 20-21st century (by wars and dictatorships), goes through changed political paradigm, leading also to a new artistic dynamic, situates the poet among writers of "the last communist generation", which "focuses attention on the body and the various social, gender, etc. roles of human identity" (c. 6). Here Dycki finds himself among women writers: Anna Janko (1957), Izabela Morska/Filipiak (1961), Olga Tokarczuk (1962), Joanna Bator (1968). Venesa highlights the key parallel with Olga Tokarczuk, namely with regard to the theme of borders and liminality, which plays a fundamental role in the work of the Nobel laureate (especially in "House of Day, House of night" and "Flights").

In the conceptual-theoretical chapter "Theories of the Corporeal and the Liminal" the theorizations/the concepts for the two main categories of corporeality and liminality (distinguished from the topos "body" and "liminal") are introduced. The Polish and Bulgarian concepts of corporeality and bordering are presented in a separate subchapter. Regarding corporeality, Venesa reviews the phenomenological ideas of Husserl and the French School, but the main one is Merleau-Ponty's concept of the body as an intermediary between consciousness and the world. Freud and psychoanalysis, feminist theories (French, Anglo-American, third wave) are examined, emphasis is placed on concepts of Yulia Krasteva, Amelia Licheva, Judith Butler) queer studies.

The second chapter starts from Jaspers' basic concept of the liminal situation and traces four main liminal situations of the body (existence, death, struggle, guilt), showing their place in Dycki's poetry.

In chapter three, "All Possible Bodies", seven bodies are traced (The Lyrical I, The Mother, The Father, God, Norvid, The Kin, The Friends/Lovers). The clarity of the findings with which the doctoral student enters the evidentiary part and its detailing is impressive. Thus, for example, the lyrical I is defined as "amorphous", existing "in a multitude of different mutually occurring and sometimes mutually exclusive images", "instability is its permanent condition" (p. 87). This is followed by naming and textual illustrations of this variability brought about by pain, loss and anger, by observations on name disappearance, reversals of the family roles, "carnival masks". The "station" is shown as the topos of liberation (in the last chapter such a topos is the "forest"). The image of the mother is analyzed in the field of psycho-physical suffering, between the ugly, pain and sanctity. The father is situated in the field of aggressiveness, of traumatic absence and broken relationship, which leads to the prayer-confessional conversation with God (deliverer, but also avenger, giver of inspiration), whom the lyrical I asks to help Others. The observations of Norvid's presence (in verse and prose commentary) as a "spiritual mentor" who "as God, performs paternal functions in relation to the lyrical self" (p. 129) are tied to the absence of the father figure and the continuous attempts to is compensated. The ancestral body (the dual image of the grandmother, the image of the grandfather placed in the field of violence, family history as a well) is a traumatic field of the Ukrainian-Polish split ("the monsters on both sides of the mirror" - a quote from Dycki) and "difficult heredity", attempts to overcome it, salvation is in poetry. "The way out of the complicated past, and hence the present, is in the poems" (p. 134), which are an alternative rewriting of history in which the mother will avoid the operation "Wisła" (for mass forced emigration of the Ukrainian population) and the grandfather will be responsible for his participation in the retaliatory massacres of the Poles. Here, Venesa sees Dycki's creative deliverance between the real and the imaginary, paying attention to the function of naming (saving from extinction), points out that "the images of the friends/lovers not only merge, but become an integral part of the Self" (p. 140).

In the fourth chapter, as I already mentioned, Venessa enters with a wealth of previous experience in exploring artistic spaces. She defines a ten key topos of liminality in the spatial map of Dycki's poetry. Here, the composition leads from the domestic to the public space (home and

room, brothel, toilet, city, station, hospital/psychiatry), juxtaposes seemingly polar spaces - intellectual (the library), profane (the brothel, toilet), sacred (the church), natural (the forest), definitively (the cemeteries) and shows the interflow and transformation between them as the main quality of Ditsky's poetry, which can be considered as a single feeling organism (one of the conclusions in the conclusion of the dissertation). Each one of the topos is deciphered as a psychophysiological and existential abode of the self, of its fluid biography, stretched between the opening and healing of the wound, loneliness and the search for a way out of it, and the striving for its impossible filling, drastic self-exposition and the painful sinking into oneself, the hidden and the open, prison and freedom, alienation and intimacy, the intimate and the public, between brutal and gentle truths.

And in all these "betweens" are located the aspects of liminal corporeality that the author of the work seeks and finds.

Clarity and order as the main quality of the doctoral work are evident in the final conclusions, which show the goals have been achieved. Each of the structural elements finds a place in the conclusions as an object of deductive inference. Thus, Dycki's poetry, which has passed through the analysis, proves its unity, and the topic of the scientific work - its dissertationability.

I am convinced that the work submitted for defense is successful and Venessa Nacheva fully deserves the scientific and educational degree "doctor" in direction 2.1. Philology, doctoral program "Literature of the Peoples of Europe, Africa, Asia, America and Australia" (History of Polish Literature).