

Summary

The Memory of Juliusz Słowacki

The book discusses the problem of remembrance, memories and commemorating in the works of Juliusz Słowacki. The aim of this publication, which forms part of the research stream called *memory studies*, is to describe relations and dependencies between individual and collective memory, memory, biography and history in Słowacki's works.

Słowacki's propensity to reconstruct the past or to read future events in it results from the perception of memory as a value that ensures the survival of cultural, social and national traditions. For the poet, however, memory also has an individual, personal dimension. It is a source of a profound experience of the existence and often a metaphysical form of being outside time and matter. Its unique character can be seen in so called Genesian works, written in 1842-1849, where it is an effective tool to learn the truth about the beginning and final purposes of the existence.

The monograph discusses the genology and poetics of memory, the wealth of genres and stylistic resources Słowacki uses to capture memories. In his diaries the word co-exists with the image, forming a coherent intersemiotic mnemonic discourse. To preserve or to recollect memories the writer does not only use diaries, but also epic poems, poems-memoirs and lyrical testaments, which show the mechanisms of metaphorization of memories and forming mnemotops.

The authors reconstruct the ideas, formulae and notions, which form a kind of philosophy of memory in Słowacki's works, in an innovative and multi-faceted way. They find memory in poet's historical and historiosophic reflection, they interpret discussions and his coming to terms with the past and the irony in showing it. They draw attention to the role memories play when the characters relive the present and foresee the future. They analyse the axiological contexts of memory, its relations with the categories of good and evil both in socio-historical and individual and existential dimensions. They show the functions of autobiographical and autothematic discourse in commemorating images of

particular persons. They also describe the myth-forming aspects of memory, listing frequent mythologisations, sacralisations of the past and using a myth as testimony to collective memory. They demonstrate that Słowacki often links memory with a metaphysical experience of being, and shows its hidden dimensions in dreams or prophetic visions.

The research questions posed in the book focus on several issues: 1. the places remembered by the poet and seen in his works; 2. the relations between memory and (auto)biographical consciousness and how memory operates in the text; 3. the memory of senses and imagination and associative processes; 4. Genesian, anamnestic memory, which is a tool to learn the truth about the beginning and final purposes of the existence.

The readings of Słowacki's poetry proposed by Grażyna Halkiewicz-Sojak and Agnieszka Górka belong to the category of "places of memory" (*les lieux de memoire*). Zbigniew Przychodniak and Urszula Makowska focus on [*Raptularz wschodni*] ([*"The Eastern Travel Diary"*]) found in 2010. Przychodniak sees [*Raptularz wschodni*] as a space where poet's memory works, and travel notes, sky maps, drawings and itineraries are treated as a collection of ideas, later to be used in Słowacki's works. Urszula Makowska compares the drawings from [*Raptularz wschodni*] and [*Album rysunkowe z podróży na Wschód*], ([*"The Drawings from The Journey to the East"*]), which she interprets as a way to preserve fleeting landscapes and impressions. Mariya Bracka and Rościsław Radyszewski write about the memory of Ukraine, analysing mnemotops and Ukrainian motifs in the axiological and identity contexts.

Lidia Romaniszyn-Ziomek, Krzysztof Korotkich, Kamil Pilichiewicz, Leszek Libera and Włodzimierz Toruń write about the mechanisms of imagination and memory in creating Słowacki's autobiographical narration. Lidia Romaniszyn-Ziomek draws attention to the process of creating a biography by the poet, which seems to be a dynamic construct, built from deliberately selected facts and created by poet's own ideas. Krzysztof Korotkich analyses the phenomenon of forgetting and the motif of death in poet's correspondence. Kamil Pilichiewicz discusses the relations between autobiographical memory and the notion of metempsychosis in *Godzina myśli* ("An Hour of Thought"). Leszek Libera writes about the presence and absence of Słowacki's stepfather, August Bécu, in poet's life and works. Włodzimierz Toruń paints a collective portrait of priests with whom the poet maintained more or less familiar contacts.

In Słowacki's poetic reflection there are also echoes of very specific literary works. Maria Białobrzeska analyses the traces of inspiration coming from Antoni Młczyński's *Maria*, which can be seen in *Beniowski*, whereas Maciej Szargot writes about Słowacki reading Krasiński and shows the intertextual connection between *Fantazja konania* ("The Fantasy of Dying") and *Król-Duch* ("The Spirit King").

The subsequent sketches discuss the problem of remembering Juliusz Słowacki and his works. Urszula Kowalczyk writes about the reception of poet's biography and works in Ferdynand Hoesick's research. Jolanta Dobrowolska explores Cezary

Jellenta's interest in the poet and his *oeuvre*. Irena Fedorowicz devotes her study to how Słowacki is remembered in Lithuania, which today is possible thanks to the efforts of the Polish minority there. Other articles prove that creators of culture in the 20th and 21st century are still interested in Słowacki. Andrzej Fabianowski analyses *Jul*, a novel written by Paweł Goźliński, Dorota Kulczycka writes about Walerian Borowczyk's film adaptation of *Mazepa* and Maria Makaruk explores the language of *Kordian* in Jakub Skrzywanek's staging.

A separate part of the monograph concerns Słowacki's memory of senses and imagination. Paulina Abriszevska draws attention to the olfactory sensations in the poet's works. Ewa Grzęda writes about floristic memory in Słowacki's poems, whereas Małgorzata Łoboz focuses on the relations between memory and music. Waław Pyczek looks at the category of memory viewed in the context of identity in *Anhelli*. Olga Taranek-Wolańska referring to *Beniowski* points at the anamnestic memory of the poet, which interacts with romantic irony. According to the researcher, this kind of memory determines Słowacki's attitude to literary tradition and, if we also consider cryptomnesia, confirms that he creates his own poetic language, largely free of the referential function.

The book concludes with several sketches collected in the chapter devoted to Genesian memory, whose mechanisms are connected with Słowacki's idea of the spiritual world. Ewa Hoffmann-Piotrowska writes about Słowacki's epistemic memory and its relation to metempsychosis. Ewa Szczegliacka-Pawłowska demonstrates that the question of body, especially sickness, solitude and transience in Słowacki's works is inextricably linked to the creation act. Olaf Kryowski explores the co-existence of memory and remembrance motifs in *Wspomnienie pani de St. Marcel z domu Chau[mont]* ("The Remembrance of Madame de St. Marcel nee Chau[mont]") with the eschatological perspective, analysing the poem in the context of iconographic themes in European painting. Karol Samsel shows the possibilities of comparative research on Słowacki's works in relation to English literature, especially the poetry of William Blake, William Wordsworth and Matthew Arnold. Grzegorz Kubiński focuses on the relation of *Genezis z Ducha* ("Genesis from the Spirit") to St. Augustine's *Confessions*. Natalia Szerszeń explores beauty and art in *Samuel Zborowski*, whereas Jarosław Ławski describes a strange phenomenon of escaping from the framework of culture to explore the divine, "mystical world" in *Król-Duch* ("The Spirit King").

The analyses collected in this monograph prove the essential role of memory studies in the research on Słowacki's works. Without accurate recognition of the phenomena of memory, remembrance and commemorating it is not possible to explore the problems of autcreation, artistic imagination or Genesian thought so characteristic of Słowacki's works. These problems, discussed in detail in this volume, open new perspectives for the interpretations of Juliusz Słowacki's literary and visual *oeuvre*.

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