

Agnieszka Sienicka, *Early-Romantic “Balladomania” in Poland, phenomenon, history, influence*

This dissertation is titled *Early-Romantic “Balladomania” in Poland, phenomenon, history, influence* shows the history of “balladomania” before the November Uprising in Poland (1822-1830) The main objective of the dissertation is to analyze this phenomenon from both a historical and a sociological point of view: defining its time frame, determining the scope of research material, describing the ideals and aesthetic foundations of ballad popularity, researching typological studies, a focus on the characteristics of the infrastructure that accompanied literature at that time, and carrying out relevant quantitative analyzes.

This dissertation indicates the need for a historical and systematic approach to this issue. The most important assumption of this work was the breakthrough of historical and literary stereotypes and descriptions of the early-romantic phenomenon from a perspective that was yet to be considered, for example from the perspective of literary fashion, which is a collective imitation of artistic patterns, fulfilling the requirements of novelty and triggering the need for “social adaptation” and “desire for differentiation” (G. Simmel) as well as raising “accidental circumstances and factors to the necessary and universal rank” (R. Barthes). This approach allows us to emphasize the importance of accomplishment of this genre, both foreign (including J. W. Goethe, F. Schiller, G. A. Bürger, W. Wordsworth, S. T. Coleridge, W. Scott, W. Żukowski) and native, (mainly J. U. Niemcewicz and A. Mickiewicz) for the birth and history of “Balladomania” in Poland. At the same time, it allows us to analyse the role of lesser known or neglected authors in the history of Polish literature.

In the third chapter entitled “Balladomania” as a literary fashion, there is a description of the phenomenon from a perspective of literary fashion and elements that contributed towards it. In this part of the work, the most important categories related to the fashion theory were applied, such as patterns, motives, fascination, youth, audience, and theatrecality of the phenomenon. Fashion, a phenomenon based on the imitation mechanism, was presented here from the perspective of the most often repeated motifs, referring to the Niemcewicz and Mickiewicz traditions. From the deliberations of this dissertation, “Balladomania” was a phenomenon completely unprecedented in the history of the Romantic literature period, since it was based on the collective imitation of artistic

designs (among other ballads by Niemcewicz and *Ballads and Romances* written by Mickiewicz) which met the requirements of novelty. Moreover, early-romantic literary fashion was a dynamic phenomenon, as well as an important component of social life, characterizing the need to refresh the literary landscape at that time. The presented approach allows us to verify a number of historical-literary stereotypes that were related to the phenomenon of “Balladomania” in Poland (such as the belief of its epigonal character), and emphasizes the importance of the outstanding implementation of this genre from its conception through its development (foreign as well as native) and to highlight the role of lesser known authors.