

INTRODUCTION

Olaf Kryowski
(University of Warsaw)

ORCID: 0000-0001-7778-856X

Żaneta Nalewajk
(University of Warsaw)

ORCID: 0000-0002-7156-3519

Romantic Sources of Comparative Studies

We present to you the issue of *Textualia* entitled “Romantic Sources of Comparative Studies” in the English version. Its purpose is to analyze source materials and secondary sources and to further systematize knowledge on the beginnings of comparative literature, which laid the foundation of the scientific discipline developed in Europe in the late eighteenth and the first half of the nineteenth centuries. The subject of this publication is contributions made to the development of comparative-research methodology by scholars, philosophers, and poets from various cultural circles and associated with various academic centers.

Comparative thinking has much in common with the aesthetic ideas of Romanticism and the period that immediately preceded it. Romanticism, in contrast to the classical tradition, which referred to a universal model of ancient Mediterranean literature and culture, was fundamentally built on individualism, regionalism, and diversity. Critical comparisons of literatures recognized as distinct, emanating not from one tradition, i.e., from ancient Greece, but from many diverse folk (national) traditions, became a necessity, while reflecting a modern way of thinking about art, its analysis, and interpretation. Ideas of correspondence and synthesis of the arts – formulated by Novalis, among others, and developed by Baudelaire – inspired the discovery and description of similarities and differences both between them and between these arts’ communicative codes or languages.

Given the importance of its Romantic roots for contemporary comparative literature – which can be traced in works considered in this issue by Gotthold Ephraim Lessing, Johann Gottfried Herder, August Wilhelm von Schlegel, Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, Abel-Francois Villedieu, Jan Kollar, Ludwik Osiński, Leon Borowski, Maurycy Mochnacki, and Adam Mickiewicz – we seek here to reflect on at least some achievements in this field. Articles in the pages that follow are about works stimulating the development of comparative literature outside of Poland: “Germaine de Staël’s Concept of Comparative Studies” by Marta Wyszowska, “German Comparative Studies: Theory, Practice, and Their Romantic Sources” by Bożena Chołuj, “Hegel and Herder as founding fathers

of modern comparative literary studies: A conceptual outline” by Sylwia Borowska, and “The Continuation of Romantic Thought in the Scholarly Work of Alexander Veselovsky and Mykhailo Drahomanov” by Anna Bykova. This issue also includes articles focused on works that laid the foundations for comparative literature developing in Poland: “Wacław Aleksander Maciejowski as a Comparatist: His Supplements to Frédéric Gustav Eichhoff’s *The Literature of Medieval Peoples: Slavs and Germans*” by Katarzyna Westermark, “Between the ‘Real’ and the ‘Ideal’: Criteria of the Comparative Thought in Maurycy Mochnacki’s Critical Writings” by Olaf Kryowski, “Art or Arts? Ways of Defining Relations between Poetry, Painting, and Music in Juliusz Słowacki’s Correspondence and Notes, 1842–1849” by Natalia Szerszeń, and others.

While preparing this issue of *Tekstualia*, we attempted to include, to the best of our abilities, the question of nineteenth-century comparative thought’s role in the development of knowledge about literatures and cultures of individual nations and in shaping the theory of comparative studies in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. Needless to say, the list of problems presented and researcher profiles in this issue’s contents remains open. A pivotal incentive for us to reflect on themes discussed in this issue was the 2010 academic conference *Początki polskiej komparatystyki na tle europejskim. Ludwik Osiński, Mickiewicz, Norwid i inni* (The Beginnings of Polish Comparative Literature in a European Context: Ludwik Osiński, Mickiewicz, Norwid, and Others), organized by Prof. Edward Kasperski and his doctoral student Marta Gaściewicz, at the Faculty of Polish Studies at the University of Warsaw on December 9 and 10 of that year. Professor Kasperski’s advancing illness prevented him from preparing a post-conference volume, yet he generated interest in these problems and left a nearly complete article, “Narodziny komparatystyki polskiej. Wczesny paradygmat,” (“The Beginnings of Polish Comparative Literature: The Early Paradigm”) published in 2019 with an editorial introduction by Żaneta Nalewajk in *Tekstualia*’s 56th issue. In the present issue, we publish it in translation. In presenting this edition dedicated to Romantic-era sources of comparative studies, we hope the articles included here, due to their significance, will make their way into the hands of those who are creatively continuing this work.

Translated by Maria Sawicka

The Polish version of this introduction was published in 1 (68) (2022).



Roussanka Alexandrova-Nowakowska, *Ikar 2*



Roussanka Alexandrova-Nowakowska, *Ikar 3*