of criticism compared to the position of literary scholarship on the one hand, and literature on the other. Skórczewski formulates the thesis about criticism as a distinct writing discipline situated between literary studies and literature and thus closer to the German tradition of narrow *das Kritik* rather than the English pattern of wide-ranging "literary criticism." Second, he seeks to answer the question of how this new type of awareness regarding the unique character of critical discourse influenced the critics' choices of genre and style, as well as their public function as mediators between authors and audience. In this part of his dissertation Skórczewski brilliantly demonstrates how critics managed to defend their autonomy in the literary life of the new Poland in spite of fierce attacks by the consolidated literary milieu that was hostile to scholarly criticism. Third, the author considers the struggles for criteria between critics representing different ideological orientations, such as Christian personalism, right-wing nationalism, progressive liberalism, and Marxism. Skórczewski argues that, based on Stanisław Brzozowski's and Karol Irzykowski's writings, the young critics of the so-called "1910 generation" such as Ludwik Fryde and Kazimierz Wyka established a new model of critical activity which blended two opposite approaches toward literary values: the esthetic (or "formalist"), and the ethical. The author interestingly shows how, by integrating the realm of "arts" with the sphere of "life," literary criticism in Poland actually became a moral activity and a tool in shaping both the artists' consciousness and society's moral sensitivity. This in turn resulted in assigning to critics a role that, according to the Polish Romantic tradition, should have been played by poets.

The book concludes with a flash-forward of the conditions of postwar literary criticism in Poland, showing connections with as well as differences from what was achieved in the theory of literary criticism during the interwar period. **Δ**

Selected Poems

by Adam Czerniawski. Translated with an introduction by Iain Higgins. Amsterdam: Harwood Academic Publishers, 2000. xviii+221 pages. ISBN 9057551063. CD included. Hardcover. $65.00.

Joanna Nižyńska

Adam Czerniawski (b. 1934) reached England in 1947 at the age of thirteen after spending a "disturbed childhood" during World War II wandering through the Middle East. In Poland, the country of his birth, he is recognized as a poet, essayist, prose writer, and translator, but despite his active participation in the intellectual life of England, Czerniawski is known to English speakers almost solely as a translator of Polish literature. Czerniawski's *Selected Poems*, therefore, reflects editor Spike Hawkins' goal to "present collections of poems by significant poets whose work is not available in existing publications" in his new series, "Poets' Voices." This bilingual Polish-English anthology of Czerniawski's work surveys his poetic development from his first volume of poetry, published in 1955, through his most recent works. The publication is accompanied by a CD of readings in Polish (by Czerniawski) and English (by Irena Czerniawska-Edgcumbe and Iain Higgins) and introduced by its translator, Iain Higgins.

As a translator, Czerniawski has made an enormous contribution, especially through his translations of Tadeusz Różewicz and, more recently, of Jan Kochanowski's *Treny*. Nevertheless, he has never done himself the favor of translating his own poetic output. His seven volumes of poetry were all written in Polish (and published in Paris, England, and Kraków), and only a few poems were previously available in English translations (i.e., those included in Czerniawski's own anthology of Polish poetry, *The Burning Forest* [1988], and additional poems scattered in such British poetry magazines as *Modern Poetry in Translation*, *Rialto*, and *Poetry Review*).

Reading Czerniawski's poetry in this handy bilingual edition and listening to his poems gives one a sense that a gap in English translations long obvious to Poles has finally been filled. The organization of *Selected Poems*, however, is puzzling. The volume consists of six parts, but the selection seems somewhat arbitrary and follows neither a chronological nor a coherent thematic order. To add to the confusion, the editors do not consistently indicate the dates of the poems nor where they were originally published. Even though this volume does not allow one to trace Czerniawski's poetic trajectory, nothing can diminish pleasure of encountering Czerniawski's skillful and moving works in these very readable translations.

Consistently labeled in Polish criticism as a "poet of culture," Czerniawski, like Czesław Miłosz, belongs to the category of writers who express their struggle with culture and history in profoundly personal terms. His poetry is marked by a return to mythological topoi (e.g., "Miłość" ["Love"]) and to such classical motifs as *ars longa vita brevis* (e.g., "Pamiątka" ["Token of

Remembrance"]). These returns, however, offer no consolation for the sense of historical and existential displacement; rather, culture tempts with the promise of aesthetic redemption (in this, Czerniawski also resembles Zbigniew Herbert) but ultimately agitates by bringing into the open that from which one longs to escape—the palpability of history, of "today, though somewhat far." Czerniawski's sense of history reflects both the experience of his generation and his own "obsessive memory [of an] annihilated childhood." He comments, for instance, on the traumatic divide in his biography, "for those tainted with the consciousness of 'other days'…biography falls into *before* and *after*." He recalls the emotional impact of the outbreak of the war on the child that he was: "So not even a global picture of the September campaign, but simply stray scenes rooted in the memory of the child. They are enough. And who would have thought that already at that age it is possible to shoulder the humiliation of an entire people" ("*Mówią wieki*, czyli co nowego w historii" ["*The Ages Speak*, or what's new in History"]).

These "stray scenes" seem to disrupt the impulse to escape into culture. The realization that culture offers no shelter manifests itself most straightforwardly in Czerniawski's quasi-ekphrastic ("quasi" as the ekphrasis functions only as a point of departure for the personal) poems on paintings whose titles correspond to their visual counterparts. In these poems, the entire sphere of cultural history comes to be inscribed into the poet's intermingled awareness of pain and desire for Arcadia. Thus, for instance, Jan Vermeer's "A View of Delft" or Caspar David Friedrich's "Girl at the Window" become "a palimpsest laid over a poem which in some places betrayed Arcadian elements, in others traces of the Passion" ("Oczyszczanie starego wiersza" ["Cleaning an Old Poem"]).

Just as culture negates what it promises in such poems as "Św. Sebastian" ("St. Sebastian," where a painting of the redeemed Sebastian is transformed into a scene of wartime execution before becoming the "Hardened naked flesh decayed"), so nature simultaneously hides the horrific and betrays it in the most unexpected places. Thus, in "Bawaria 1956" ("Bavaria 1956") an idyllic landscape only brings to the foreground the atrocities of the death camp while an orderly English landscape triggers "a moment"…in homage to those ignorant/of peace, those cut to shreds, thrown to the wall, whose ashes fall by night/on verandahs, lawns, flowerbeds" ("W ładzie angielskiego krajobrazu" ["In the Order of an English Landscape"]).

The disruptions of the seemingly "classical," discursive, and logopoetic (to use the Poundian category) in Czerniawski's poetry also permeates its formal features. Without fixed metrical forms and full of unclear grammatical antecedents, sentence fragments, or titles which function as opening lines, Czerniawski's "Rzecz o poezji" ("Discourse on Poetry"), clearly manifest the Norwidian tradition**.** No wonder Iain Higgins associates Czerniawski's opaqueness with that of his American contemporary, John Ashbery, despite their dramatically different poetic backgrounds. For Czerniawski, poetry is a Protean tool that communicates only if one dares to handle the rawness of "words multiform and greasy vulgar and trivial/unpredictable golden lustful stubborn and harsh" ("Lingua Adamica").

Higgins strives to be faithful to Czerniawski's style and tone (including the use of British English to reflect the author's environment), and those able to follow both the Polish and English can appreciate the consistency of his renditions (in some of which Czerniawski assisted). Occasionally Higgins's choices are strange. One wonders, for instance, over the closing of the masterful "Mirrors and Reflections," where Higgins renders the answer to the question "How to extricate oneself from the talons of reflections" as "don't be yourself." In Polish, the answer is "być nie sobą," literally "by being not-oneself." Generally, however, Higgins's translations read smoothly and show respect for the original. Similar qualities come across in Higgins's sensitive introduction to this generally laudable volume—would that the copyeditor had shown a similar respect and corrected the numerous typographical mistakes in the Polish text! **Δ**

Political Borders and Cross-Border Identities at the Boundaries of Europe

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The papers in this collection were originally presented in a workshop on cross-border relationships held at the International Institute for the Sociology of Law in Onati,