between the farm novel and naturalism ("the phrase 'a naturalistic farm novel' is threatened to become mere pleonasm"; 112) or on the farm epic as literary response to the end of the old-style agrarian way of life in North America. Thus, he leaves readers with a weighty agenda for their future reading and thinking. Yet what the book should be praised for in the first place is the precious reminder it offers to anglophone and francophone Canadianists, as well as to all Americanists—that without taking into account the two other national/cultural groups' responses to the continent, their understanding of North America remains incomplete.

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Lucyna Aleksandrowicz-Pędich. *Memory and Neighborhood: Poles and Poland in Jewish American Fiction after World War Two*. Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 2013. 170 pages.

When asked about images of Poles in American literature most critics and better informed readers would mention Stanley Kowalski from Tennessee Williams' *Streetcar Named Desire* and Sophie Zawistowska from William Styron's *Sophie's Choice*. There are, however, more images and, which is not surprising, most of them, especially in the years after WWII can be found in works by Jewish American authors. Not many studies have been done on this topic. One can mention parts of Thomas Gladsky's study *Princes, Peasants, and Other Polish Selves: Ethnicity in American Literature* (1992), encompassing a very large body of works, and more recently Danusha Goska's *Bieganski. The Brute Polak Stereotype: Its Role in Polish-Jewish Relations and American Popular Culture* (2011).

While the first one, in spite of some drawbacks, is a good and balanced source, the other leaves much to be desired. Therefore the new book by Lucyna Aleksandrowicz-Pędich should be welcome as a new addition. The author made an enormous effort and put under scrutiny more that seventy books by Jewish American authors, discussing them in three main parts entitled: "Collective Portrait," "Memory" and "Other Traces." The first part discusses Polish anti-Semitism, the portrayal of Poles and Polish-Jewish relations in America; the second deals with images of Poland, predominantly as a land of hostility and death resulting mainly from the stigma of the Holocaust; and the last one with various motifs, including references to well-known Poles and Polish Jews, objects associated with

Poland, Polish names and contacts with contemporary Poland. Among the authors and books discussed are both classic works by well-known masters of American literature, including Saul Bellow, Bernard Malamud, Philip Roth and Cynthia Ozick, popular and slightly forgotten authors like Leon Uris, Leslie Epstein, or Edward Lewis Wallant, and a new generation of authors, including Tova Reich or Steve Stern. On account of some Polish motifs Aleksandrowicz-Pędich even included authors with Jewish roots and their works rarely presented as "Jewish," e.g. Joseph Heller's *Catch-22*.

The book is relatively well-balanced and the author tries to be objective, although from time to time she expresses directly or indirectly her regret that the image of Poles and Poland is far from laudatory. She is also worried what happens if one of those books is used as the only source of information, especially by an "unsophisticated reader," and states that "the reader can only hope here that some *licentia poetica* applies both to 'obnoxious Jews' and 'every other single Pole' being an anti-Semite" (39). Such comments seem redundant, as it is fairly obvious that most authors take advantage of poetic license and one can hardly expect from fiction to serve as a faithful and objective representation of historical reality. Belles-letters and especially popular fiction favor exaggerated characters.

It is a great pity that the author has not referred to some earlier studies on images of Poles in Yiddish literature, especially on Isaac Bashevis Singer. She rightly does not include Singer's works in her analysis because he wrote originally in Yiddish (although English versions of his works are treated as second originals and further translations into most languages, including Polish and Hebrew, have been done on the basis of the English versions), but the truth is Bashevis had a great influence on generations of Jewish American authors, especially of the middle and younger generation, and influenced their imagination and style. Additionally, if not via Bashevis, some authors, especially of the older generations, absorbed their images of Poland and Poles from earlier Yiddish literature and culture. The most important types are those of *porets* (landowner) and *poyer* (peasant). The first one is usually an ambivalent figure, violent and arrogant, but can also serve as a protector of Jews in crucial moments, and the other usually negative: brutish and primitive. Contrary to those male portraits, female figures are often idealized, whether they are noblewomen or peasants, and they are often presented as mediators between two antagonistic communities, devoted to Jewish protagonists, sometimes even converting to Judaism. Their idealization encompasses also their physical appearance of an attractive high-cheeked blue-eyed blonde. One can find similar portraits of Polish women in Jewish American literature, or even American literature in general. Styron's Sophie fits very well into such a portrait.

It is also a pity that the author did not give enough attention to Leon Uris's novel *Mila 18*, one of the most popular books by this controversial writer, whom Aleksandrowicz-Pędich rightly criticizes for a highly exaggerated portrait of Poles and Polish-Jewish relations as well as for historical errors. However, this particular novel is especially important as it served for a few decades as the most representative portrait of the Warsaw ghetto in American literature and it contains a number of Polish characters, including the idealized portrait of a beautiful and altruistic Polish woman Gabriela Rak devoted to the heroic Jewish protagonist Andrei Androfsky (modeled on the leader of the Jewish Combat Organization Mordechai Anielewicz).

The motif of representation of Poles appears throughout the whole book although the main focus is in Chapter 1 in subchapters "Unpleasant Polish Types" and "Other Poles." This discussion would be clearer if the author used some other distinguishing criteria, such as gender or social status, which are of major importance in this respect.

The best parts of the book are those where the author presents a more in-depth analysis of selected works, e.g. in the subchapter "The Jew and the Polish Inheritance," where she refers to Lillian S. Kremer's and Hana Wirth-Nesher's publications and partly engages in a polemic with them. The most problematic are fragments where she presents a kind of registry of motifs, sometimes in a rather haphazard manner: not every single mention of Poles or Poland in a work is worthy of critical attention. It seems that she tried do record every single case and this surfeit of detail sometimes blurs a more general image.

Occasionally the author as if tried to correct the works she discusses. For instance she states that the character of a Polish cleaner, named Wadja, in Saul Bellow's last novel *Ravelstein* is "unnecessary for the plot" (45). It would be better to express such an opinion in a more careful manner, the more so, that soon after this statement she comes up with a fairly detailed analysis which shows the opposite: that the relationship between the protagonist and his Polish servant is fairly important.

Unfortunately the book is not devoid of factual errors. The Cossack uprising took place in 1648–1649, and not in the eighteenth century (s. 76–77).

It is not true that Chełm figures as the town of fools both in Jewish and Polish folklore. This is specific only for Jewish folklore and serves as a very good example of different cultural topographies. The same places in Poland create different associations in Polish versus Jewish/Yiddish tradition (e.g. Kock, Góra Kalwaria/Ger, Warka). Present Polish inhabitants of Chełm have learnt only recently, due to the wave of interest in Jewish topics in post-Communist Poland, that their hometown evokes such associations.

Joanna Rostropowicz-Clark is not a fictitious figure but a scholar and writer portrayed by Philip Roth (and she in turn portrayed him in one of her works).

It is not quite true that Julian Stryjkowski deals "primarily with the dilemma of the assimilated Polish-Jewish intellectual for whom the tragic memory of a lost culture and a realization of his own Jewishness collides with his commitment to the new Poland" (10). This is correct in reference to Adolf Rudnicki or Artur Sandauer, but not Stryjkowski, and, besides, this does not have anything to do with the end of Yiddish culture in Poland, because none of them ever wrote or intended to write in Yiddish. The author repeats this claim after Thomas Gladsky, who, however, is not an expert in the field of Polish-Jewish or Yiddish literature and makes some errors himself. It would have been better to refer to ample Polish literature on the topic.

Sloppy editing resulted in a number of typos and errors in names in both the main text and index, e.g. Teresa Tuszyńska instead of Agata Tuszyńska (Teresa was a model and actress, Agata is a writer and journalist), Dominic Lacapra instead of Dominick LaCapra, John Paul the Second instead of John Paul II, Byran Cheyette, instead of Bryan, Shoa instead of Shoah etc. It is also a pity that the index does not include titles of works discussed.

The author should have put more emphasis on the historical context and the time when particular works were written. Such events as the pogrom in Kielce of July 1946 or the so-called anti-Zionist, and in fact anti-Semitic, campaign of March 1968, had a lasting impact on representations of Poles and Polish-Jewish relations in the West. If post-war impressions change this rather gloomy picture for a better one, it is the question of recent years, not the whole post-war period as the author claims (131).

On the other hand, perhaps it is good that the author seemed not to fully realize the difficulties she faced while attempting such a study, which requires, next to expertise in American literature, some acquaintance with Yiddish and Polish literature, sociology (the issue of stereotypes) and history, because she might have not written the book. As it is, both the very controversial study by Danusha Goska and the not-free from errors and simplifications study by Lucyna Aleksandrowicz-Pędich encourage discussion, and might stimulate further research on this complex, difficult and insufficiently explored to date topic.

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