

STRESZCZENIE

Artykuł przedstawia na przykładzie twórczości Huntera S. Thompsona pewne tendencje w tzw. "nowej literaturze faktu" /"new nonfiction"/. Ten właśnie typ literatury, do niedawna niezwykle popularny w Stanach Zjednoczonych, wykorzystywał techniki powieści realistycznej do opisywania prawdziwych wydarzeń i cechował się w większości przypadków obiektywnym tonem w ich przedstawianiu i komentowaniu. Twórczość Thompsona, którego zwrócił się zaliczać do "new nonfiction", wychodzi znacząco nie poza konwencje tego gatunku. Autor ten rezygnuje z używania techniki powieści realistycznej na korzyść techniki współczesnej amerykańskiej prozy innowacyjnej, jest skrajnie subiektywny i świadomie miesza fakty z fikcją literacką. Choć trudno przewidzieć czy "new nonfiction" pójdzie drogą wskazywaną przez Thompsona, to teraz już należy zdać sobie sprawę z ważności jego pisarstwa nie tylko dla samej literatury faktu ale i dla całej współczesnej prozy amerykańskiej.

LUBELSKIE MATERIAŁY NEOFILOLOGICZNE — 1978

Joanna Durczak

Biological Perspective in the Writings of Gary Snyder

Gary Snyder is a nature poet in the sense Wendell Berry defined nature poets, i.e. he turns to the natural world for the poetic basis - for inspiration, for subjects and for form. His art, also in Berry's words "has an implicit and essential humility, a reluctance to impose on things, as they are, a willingness to relate to the world as student and servant, a wish to be included in the natural order, rather than to conquer nature, a wish to discover the natural form, rather than to create new forms that would be exclusively human."² With nature thus constituting the primary source and resource of his poetry, Snyder is inevitably engaged in one of the central issues of the contemporary world - the question of relationship between the modern man and the natural world. To the cultural tradition which has throughout centuries subordinated consideration for the latter to the needs of the former, Snyder has, from the beginning of his literary career stood in opposition. Starting from his first book of poetry, his writings have incessantly voiced his criticism of the way modern civilization views and uses nature. At the same time, all along, they have striven to go beyond mere criticizing towards formulating a positive program which would outline why and how has to change in our perception of nature and in our attitude to it. Snyder seems little affected by the doubts Benjamin DeMott attributed to majority of the twentieth century writers who "rarely think they know anything worth teaching...much less...are interested in sharing their knowledge."³ Snyder has a profound sense of almost personal responsibility for the future shape of the relationships between man and the non-human world in which he lives; he believes that the present tendencies and developments are fatal; on top of all this he has

a vision of these relationships as they should be; consequently much of his poetry and prose is an attempt to articulate at least the essentials of that visionary alternative.

A highly personal, poetic response to the issue, Snyder's alternative has to be seen in the broader context out of which it has grown. Prior to presenting it, then, a few things have to be said about Snyder's concept of his role as a poet, and of his vision of man and nature in general.

To describe what he considers to be his calling, Snyder has occasionally referred to himself as a senator for the wilderness. The name was coined by Allen Ginsberg during a backpacking trip the two poets made in the autumn of 1965 into the Glacier Peak Wilderness area. There, as Snyder recalls it in *Earth Household*, standing on the summit of Glacier Peak in view of a staggering sight of an endless wilderness of mountains, Ginsberg asked, "You mean there is a Senator for all this?" - a question which expressed all his admiration and fascination as well as his doubt, a poet's doubt, whether man will ever find a voice in which to render all that beauty, grandeur and magnificence.⁴ This incident has had a special significance for Snyder: almost ten years later in *Turtle Island* he returned to Ginsberg's comment once again, this time putting all stress upon its political rather than upon its metaphorical meaning. "Unfortunately", he wrote, "there isn't a Senator for all that."⁵ Yet elsewhere, he added that "The reason I am here is because I wish to bring a voice from the wilderness - my constituency. I wish to be a spokesman for a realm that is not usually represented either in intellectual chambers or in the chambers of government. /.../ And I would like to think of a new definition of humanism and a new definition of democracy that would include the non-human."⁶

The realm for which Snyder has been a poetic and a political spokesman for the last twenty years is, in fact, much vaster than what the common understanding of "wilderness" implies. The term the poet himself seems to favour is the one used above - the nonhuman - a description much wider in reference and thus more accurate. Though Snyder did start as a poet of the wilderness of his wild and mountainous native Pacific Northwest and though the area never lost its attraction for him, it has in time changed its meaning. A local, territorially defined wilderness has become an emblem of what

Snyder's poetic sensitivity and consciousness have gradually come to encompass, i.e. the whole planet with all aspects of nonhuman existence on it.

Snyder is a spokesman for the Earth seen as if from a point in the outer space, understood as a whole, as a unit with which man should be able to identify and to which he should owe the same kind of allegiance he has learned to give to some places on its surface. Though his poetry frequently focuses on individual elements of the planet's biosphere, atmosphere and geology, and though he takes for his subjects rocks, volcanoes, soil, water, men, trees, animals and the sky, he rarely considers them in their separateness or uniqueness. On the contrary, they are individualized only for the purpose of being clearly located within complex systems of multiple bonds, relationships and dependencies which link them with the whole - that was out of which they have been extracted for a brief moment of poetic scrutiny.⁷

The following is an example of Snyder's concern. It is a fragment of a larger unit worth quoting since it illustrates Snyder's method.

The grasses are working in the Sun. Turn it green.
Turn it sweet. Turn it green.
Grow our meat. 8

The grasses, isolated here for a brief glimpse are immediately related to the Sun on the one hand and to the speaker of the poem on the other. They are seen not at rest but working, in a symbiotic relationship with both of them, as a link in a complex natural phenomenon which joins the nonhuman with the human. Furthermore it is important that the speaker refers to himself as growing meat and not, say, muscles or strength which might sound more abstract or more unrelated. It has been precisely because of this kind of insistence on relationships and dependencies within a world perceived as a network or a web of life that Snyder has earned the name of a poet-ecologist.

Apprehending the planet as an eco-system Snyder's poetry inevitably considers the question of man, the most explosive of the system's elements. Obviously Snyder is not the one who discovered that human growth unproportionate and out of control, has been taking place at the expense of other species, and that if continued at the present pace, it must become a threat to ecological balance and

ultimately lead to a major catastrophe. Ecologists from Aldo Leopold on have been repeatedly and without any special success writing about this and warning man. However the theme of damage done to a variety of Earth's life forms runs throughout Snyder's writings. It is prominent especially in Myths and Texts 9 and in Turtle Island. In the former collection Snyder's controlling metaphor, logging, is particularly effective in delineating his vision of man's relationship to the land. A logger himself in his youth, the poet perceived in his former job a quick, spectacular and painfully accurate re-enactment of what human greed and thoughtlessness have been doing to the planet for the last several thousand years. Myths and Texts abound with landscapes of ruin:

DB tears through glass-fir
 Scrapes the seed pine
 chipmunks flee,
 A black ant carries an egg
 Aimlessly from the battered ground
 Yellowjackets swarm and circle
 Above the crushed dead log, their home.
 Pitch oozes from barked trees
 still standing,
 Mashed bushes make strange smells.
 Lodgepole pines are brittle
 Camprobers flutter to watch. 10

Similar images of a land left barren and wasted, no longer fit to be a home, permeate Turtle Island. Certainly, even though the book's attention is concerned with other matters, warnings against the Kali-like nature of modern civilization are quite evident, possibly even too explicit in their directness:

Aluminum beer cans, plastic spoons,
 plywood veneer, PVC pipe, vinyl seat covers
 don't exactly burn, don't quite rot,
 flood over us,
 robes and garbs
 of the Kali-yuga
 end of days. 11

This kind of vision links Snyder with a long line of American

writers and poets - critics of civilization. However a qualification has to be made: as has already been said, Snyder, aware as he is of the extent of despoliation of the planet, goes unprecedently far beyond mere mourning or accusing. His voice is primarily that of a reformer, a revolutionary even, with a program for changing and healing. Profound trans-cultural studies in which he has been involved as a student of Zen and of anthropology, allowed him not only a double perspective - that of an outsider and insider - on his native occidental culture, but also have fertilized his mind with an awareness of cultural alternatives. Consequently, while exposing and criticizing what he believes to be the forces responsible for the present ecological crisis, he also proposes in the manner of Thoreau, an alternative. The most straightforward articulation of this alternative is his essay "Four Changes" included in Turtle Island. 12 But the essay only sums up what for the last two decades has been Snyder's message.

Snyder's alternative is a concept which draws on a variety of sources, oriental and American Indian as well as on selected western traditions. Influential in shaping it were also the poet's affiliation with the Beat Generation and their anti-establishment values, and the intellectual and emotional climate of the 1960's. 13 As a result several of Snyder's assumptions and propositions inevitably sound unacceptable to the western mind because of diverse ideological, religious and cultural reasons. Snyder's answer to this, however, would be that this is precisely what is wrong with western man, i.e., that he holds a wrong set of values which though advantageous for himself, are harmful to the planet. As if in anticipation of the doubts and objections of those who would maintain that his vision of a restored ecological balance is only wishful thinking, Snyder wrote:

It is actually one of the possible features open to us. To those who stubbornly argue "it's against human nature" we can only patiently reply that you must know your own nature before you can say this. Those who have gone into their natures deeply have, for several thousand years, been reporting that we have nothing to fear if we are willing to train ourselves, to open up, explore and grow. 14

The objective of Snyder's program for change and transformation is to save the planet from destruction. Towards such a sentiment hardly anyone would be unsympathetic. Much present scientific effort is directed to the same end, and futurologists, environmentalists, chemists

and physicists, to name just a few, have for the last several decades worked towards this goal. However what they and the popular mind mean by saving the Earth and what Snyder means are two essentially different things. To the former, the planet must be kept whole because human existence elsewhere on a massive scale remains as yet unfeasible. If man is to survive he has to make intelligent use of the impoverished resources still left at his disposal. This is an emphatically anthropocentric approach to the problem. We have to show some consideration to the world in which we live because otherwise we will perish. Snyder, on the other hand, starts from an assumption diametrically opposed. Consistent with his ecological vision he believes the goal of all action to be preservation not only of the planet for man to use, but also of the magnificent richness and variety of all life forms on it. Man is only one of those life forms so his future has to be worked out with all appropriate consideration shown to what constitutes the majority of the earthly community. The Barth in Snyder's scheme is to be saved not for man but for itself.

When once asked, "What do you fear most?", Snyder reports, he answered, "What the diversity and richness of the gene pool will be destroyed." 15 Elaborating on this point, he explained:

The treasure of life is the richness of stored information in the diverse genes of all living beings. If the human race, following on some sets of catastrophes, were to survive at the expense of many plant and animal species, it would be no victory. 16

This statement indicates beyond any doubt Snyder's non-human bias. It also defines very clearly the difference between him and the majority of American traditional nature writers. A comparison with Thoreau might be useful. The two men are inevitably associated because of their philosophical, psychological and aesthetic affinities. 17 Snyder more than once acknowledged his debt to Thoreau as one of his masters. The same life-long dedication to the scientific interest in the surrounding world is evident in the writings of both. Nature holds the same powerful grip over their imaginations and they share the conviction that it is necessary to raise the question of the future of the wilderness politically. /Thoreau was one of the first American advocates of an organized preservation action. 18 But Thoreau, like all Romantics, was a humanist 19 who for all his fascination with Nature ultimately asked questions like "What is nature unless there is an eventful human life passing

within her?" 20 In contrast to this, Snyder, in the words of an English critic Julian Gizen, "begins with the assumption that.../ man neither individually nor as a species is essential to nature." 21

All this does not mean, however, that there is no place for man in Snyder's vision of a transformed world. The poet's thought is not anthropocentric, but neither is it hostile to man. In his visionary structure mankind is present though reduced in number. 22 /This is one of these points in his program which is bound to raise objections. /Human population is deliberately controlled to remain within those logical limits which are considerate of the needs and the health of other species and of entire inhabited regions. The role for man is that of "a gentle steward of the earth's community of beings" 23, rather than the role he has learned to play - that of a conqueror, master and exploiter. For Snyder the ideal civilization would be a "neolithic culture" which Allen Ginsberg described as "a total back-to-earth integration with plants, flowers and bees." 24 This should not be interpreted either as an ascetic call to a life of self-denial, or as a primitivistic /romantic plea for a simpler, more orderly agrarian utopia. Snyder believes that out of human sense of responsibility towards the planet, there should emerge a culture which would combine at least three elements: the primitive worldview, advanced scientific knowledge and poetic imagination. 25

As primitive cultures were and indeed are, it should be ecologically sensitive and harmony-oriented. "Integration with plants, flowers and bees" means understanding their nature and their functions and then utilizing that knowledge to satisfy needs which presently can only be satisfied by a complex and harmful technology. This elemental ecological program could be supplemented with our present sophisticated technology, provided that the latter could be made safe enough so as not to endanger the environment. As for the inherently human longing for growth and progress, poetic imagination should help to channel it into a non-materialistic, non-acquisitive search for a deeper knowledge of man and of the surrounding world.

The only way to attain these goals, Snyder believes, is through revolutionizing human consciousness. "Our own heads: Is where it starts", he wrote in *Twitile Island*. 26 No transformation can be accomplished unless modern man radically reconsiders his image of himself and unless he reviews the notions he holds of his role and place in the world.

The contemporary western concept of where man fits in the scheme of things is rooted in the Judaeo-Christian tradition. For centuries this fundamentally anthropocentric tradition has defined man as the God-assigned master of all creation sent forth, as the Bible says, to "multiply, replenish the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the fowls of the air and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth."²⁷ How powerfully these words retain their grip on the human imagination is evident in the invariably thrilling image of man as the conqueror of the Moon or more recently of the Alaskan hostile and frozen wilderness so spectacularly bound up with the pipeline. This sense of human superiority and mission is further strengthened by the biblical assertion of man's uniqueness as the only creature possessed of a soul. A soulless object given to man for his use, and even then, for a temporary earthly use only, nature never earned in most men's eyes any other status than that of a servant. There certainly were some notable exceptions; an ecologically responsible strain has run underground in western culture all along, and belonging to it, Snyder says, were the witchcraft cults of Europe, the 17th century Diggers, the 19th century romantic poets of England and the American Transcendentalists to name only a few. But this, Snyder said, in an interview, "constitutes another culture."²⁸ The dominant culture embraced the biblical perspective on man and nature and adhered to values which historians of the subject such as Arthur Kerrich, Jr., or Roderick Nash, invariably hold to have been instrumental in bringing about the present ecological crisis.²⁹ Snyder believes the same:

At the root of the problem where our civilization goes wrong is the mistaken belief that Nature is something less than authentic, that nature is not as alive as man is, or as intelligent, that in a sense it is dead, and that animals are of so low an order of intelligence and feeling, we need not take their feelings into account.³⁰

Elsewhere he points to yet another factor - the 19th and 20th century cult of progress and growth which has had an equal share in despoiling the planet:

For several centuries now western civilization has had a priapic drive for material accumulation, continual extensions of political and economic power termed "progress". In the Judaeo-Christian world view men are seen as working out their ultimate destinies /.../ with planet Earth as the stage for the drama - trees and animals were props, nature a vast supply depot. Fed by the

fossil fuel this religio-economic view has become a cancer: uncontrollable growth. It may finally choke itself and drag much else down with it.³¹

But it is not only the consequences of a Judaeo-Christian anthropocentrism that bother Snyder. He is just as much interested in exposing what he considers to be the arrogance and baselessness of its assumptions. One of his most frequent themes is human, and particularly civilized man's, insignificance and helplessness as contrasted with nature's bounty, age, wisdom, and diversity. He likes to juxtapose in his poems, as he for instance does in "What Happened Here Before", facts such as the hundreds of million year long history of the American continent and the 40,000 years of human existence upon its surface /and especially the 400 years of the European man's rule there/.³² Occasionally he resorts to Thoreau-like overstatements by saying, for instance that, "there is more information stored in a few square yards of forest than there is in all libraries of mankind", though he will later add that, "obviously that is a different order of information."³³ This thought appears in several poems to quote only one from Turtle Island:

In the blue night
 Frost haze, the sky glows
 with the moon
 pine tree tops
 bend snow-blue, fade
 into sky, frost, starlight.
 The creak of boots,
 rabbit tracks, deer tracks,
 what do we know.³⁴

Here it is the beauty and the cryptic meaning of the world's elements that create a sense of insignificance. But similar feelings may emerge - and they do in other poems - from a variety of situations, for example a sudden perception of sense and wisdom where none seemed evident /"Control Burn"/³⁵ or the realization of nature's persistence and regenerative powers as in the "Logging" section of Myths and Texts.³⁶ The only stance - says Snyder's poetry - appropriate for man when faced with the mystery of nature is a semi-religious blend of humility, awe and affirmation. Any other response is mere self-deception.

Such a relocating of man in the scheme of things does not,

however, mean degrading or debasing him. In an early poem "F - 2 Tanker Blues" in the Rinlap collection, the poet wrote "I will not cry Inhuman and think that makes us small and nature great, we are, enough, and as we are." ³⁷ If poems like the one just quoted sound an apparently contrary note, it is because they are responses to the self-conceived image man has of himself of being more than what he is. It is also true that Snyder denies man the role of an axis for the whole world to revolve around. Nevertheless it is human imaginative powers and a human sense of responsibility that his hopes for change rest upon. His writings do not strip man of his dignity; they only reassess the reasons for that dignity sifting and discarding the egocentric ones to replace them with reasons of a different kind, most of them adapted from non-christian and non-western sets of values.

Here the poet is once again indebted to Zen Buddhism and to primitive Indian cultures. ³⁸ Both of these traditions determine human dignity and worth not by contrasting man with the rest of creation, but by stressing his unity with it. Membership and not mastery provides the focus. ³⁹ For some American Indians, for instance, the world was a community of what they named standing people, flying people, swimming people and sitting people, stressing that each of them was "born from a seed" and each was equally holy and therefore equally necessary. ⁴⁰ In this universal holiness man had his share as well, but his sanctity, unlike in the Judaeo-Christian tradition, was neither unique nor did it require the background of the non-holy and the soulless to stand against. Interdependencies and ties, rather than baffle and confound, were acknowledged with pride and gratitude. They ennobled man by passing onto him some of the glory of the surrounding world. This perception of where human beings fit in the universe is the only one consistent with their ecological vision - hence its value for Snyder. Modern man who is only slowly beginning to learn how to think ecologically, has reached a point where he will admit grudgingly that all species are equal only immediately to correct himself by adding that one of them, however, is more equal than others. And it will be only, Snyder says, when he recreates in his consciousness primitive man's vision of himself that the first step on the way towards total transformation will be made.

It goes beyond the scope of this paper to make value judgements

and to estimate to what extent the alternative Snyder proposes may be feasible and to what extent it is only one more example of idealistic, a-historical, utopian thinking. What can be said is that there is a striking consistency in everything Snyder writes in his poetry and prose essays and says in his public pronouncements, and does in his well publicized life, all of which are oriented to revolutionizing his public's consciousness, the transformation of which he sees as crucial for the saving of the planet. The range of his voice is very wide moving as it does from 'straightforward' propagandizing to lyrical poetry. He frequently combines the two to use his poems for the attainment of his social aims. The result is a bland which works towards creating not only an intellectual but also on emotional levels ecological perspectives and attitudes in men. No matter whether his ultimate vision is or is not acceptable, up to some point Snyder's concerns coincide with those of a most responsible trend in most contemporary cultures. Moving beyond mere passive though regretful recording of the despoliation and wasting of the earth, he speaks forcefully of healing and he outlines a way which, even if not fully acceptable, as a suggestion, disturbs and challenges.

Notes

- 1/ Wendell Berry, "A Secular Pilgrimage", Hudson Review, XIII /1970/, p.401.
- 2/ Ibid..
- 3/ Benjamin DeMott, "California Sweet", Sour and Transcendental - Writers, That Is, Saturday Review, Nov.11, 1976, p.43.
- 4/ Gary Snyder, "Glacier Peak Wilderness Area", Barth Household /New York: New Directions, 1969/, p.101. All future references will be to this edition.
- 5/ Gary Snyder, "The Wilderness", Turtle Island /New York: New Directions, 1974/, p.106. All future references will be to this edition.
- 6/ Ibid..
- 7/ On Snyder as a poet of "the whole" see John Carpenter's review of Regarding Wave in Poetry, vol.120, no.3/1972/, p.168.
- 8/ Turtle Island, p.47.
- 9/ Gary Snyder, Myths and Texts /New York: Totem Press, 1960/. All future references will be to this edition.
- 10/ Myths and Texts, p.10.
- 11/ Turtle Island, p.67.
- 12/ Ibid., pp.91-102.
- 13/ For a detailed discussion of Snyder's debt to various traditions and trends see Bob Steuding's Gary Snyder /Boston: Twayne, 1976/, passim.
- 14/ Barth Household, p.109, emphasis added.
- 15/ Turtle Island, p.103.
- 16/ Ibid..
- 17/ For a comparison of the two authors see Steuding, op.cit., pp.115-119.
- 18/ Roderick Nash, Wilderness and the American Mind /New Haven: Yale U.P., 1967/, pp.102-103.
- 19/ Thoreau's humanistic vision of Nature is discussed in Norman Fierster's Nature in American Literature /New York: Russel, 1958/, reprint of 1923 ed., pp.119-142.
- 20/ Odell Shepard /ed./, The Heart of Thoreau's Journals /New York: Dover, 1961/, p.124.
- 21/ Julian Gitzen, "Gary Snyder and the Poetry of Compassion", Criticism Quarterly, vol.15 no.4 /1973/, p.345.
- 22/ Turtle Island, pp. 91 - 92.

- 23/ Ibid., p.91.
- 24/ Gordon Bell /ed./, Allen Verbatim /New York: McGraw-Hill, 1974/, p.218.
- 25/ Barth Household, p.128.
- 26/ Turtle Island, p.102.
- 27/ Gen., 1:28.
- 28/ Bruce Cook, The Beat Generation /New York: Charles Scribner's, 1971/, p.34.
- 29/ see Arthur Krutch, Jr.'s Man and Nature in America /New York: Columbia U.P., 1963/ and Roderick Nash's Wilderness and the American Mind /New Haven: Yale U.P., 1967/, especially the second chapter "Old World Roots of opinion", pp.13-23.
- 30/ Turtle Island, p.107.
- 31/ Ibid., p.103.
- 32/ Ibid., pp.79-81.
- 33/ Ibid., p.108.
- 34/ Ibid., p.33.
- 35/ Ibid., p.19.
- 36/ Myths and Texts, p.6.
- 37/ Gary Snyder, Riprap and Gold Mountain Poems /San Francisco: Four Seasons, 1958/, p.27.
- 38/ Snyder sees the two traditions as clearly related. See "Why Tribe" in Barth Household, pp.114-115 and "Dharma Queries" in the same book, pp.132-133.
- 39/ Discussed in Steuding, op.cit., pp.55-57.
- 40/ Turtle Island, p.108.

Streszczenie

Artykuł omawia twórczość poetycką i esejistyczną współczesnego poety amerykańskiego Gary Snydera, którego zainteresowania od drugiego już czasu skupiają się wokół problemów natury i ekologii. Autor kontynuuje tradycję zapoczątkowaną przez Thoreau i rozwija ją przez wielu innych poetów i pisarzy amerykańskich - krytyków cywilizacji. Snyder idzie jednak dalej od poprzedników przedstawiając własną oryginalną koncepcję ochrony natury i całej planety przed zniszczeniem. Koncepcja ta nie ogranicza się jedynie do sugerowania możliwości i systemu wartości człowieka zachodniego. Artykuł przedstawia między innymi źródła koncepcji Snydera i sposób w jaki używa on swojej poezji do popularyzacji swoich idei.

LUBELSKIE MATERIAŁY NEOFILOLOGICZNE — 1978

Leon Gasiorowski

Ima Tolstoj'a droga do ludu

Lew Tolstoj był w okresie ożywionych sporów o kształt współczesnej mu literatury, odpowiadającej rzeczywistości ówczesnemu społeczeństwu rosyjskiemu; sporów o treść, o formę, o adresata. Kłócono się o tragdyje, oglądając się w przeszłość, podnoszono jedne wartości - deprecjonowano inne. Ale w czasie tych dyskusji i namiętych polemik - prowadzonych już to w kręgu specjalistów, bądź też na szerszym forum społecznym - literatura coraz bardziej traciła swój charakter odświeżony i coraz bliższa się stawała codziennemu życiu.

Jak wiadomo, literatura rosyjska początku XIX wieku nie wyrosła z podglebia żywota wieśniaczego i robotniczego. Roteż nie była ona zwierciadłem życia tych klas społecznych. Była ona literaturą warstw uprzywilejowanych. Jeżeli zajmowała się ludem, to interesowała się nim jako barwnym tematem, ponieważ egzotycznym, jako materiałą o pewnej wartości społecznej. Ale już od połowy lat dwudziestych można zanotować szereg zmian: przeniknięcie do poezji elementów epickich i bujny rozkwit powieści środowiskowej; dążność pisarzy do syntez i rewizji przeszłości. Równocześnie obserwuje się próbę oceny terakniejszości i kształtowanie się dość jednolitego stylu realistycznego. Pisarze zaczynają już nie tylko opisywać nowe stosunki społeczne i dawać świadectwo nowym wartościom humanistycznym przez tworzenie nowego typu bohatera. Zaczynają tworzyć literaturę odkrywczą, która, ukazując sprzeczności życia, dawałaby równocześnie próby ich rozwiązania.

Wynikiem tych zmian była też rotacja tematyki powstających utworów. W połowie wieku takim tematem, stała się sprawa chłopów. Ten też temat przejęli pisarze drugiej połowy wieku XIX, a