

SUMMARY OF ARTICLES

„PERSONALITY IS THE SUPRIME JOY OF THE CHILDREN OF THE EARTH” An interview with Prof. Maria Janion held by Zbigniew Benedyktowicz and Czesław Robotycki

This conversation with a prominent historian of literature, literary critic and expert on Romanticism focuses on the situation of the humanities in the contemporary world, and in particular in Poland.

The author discusses basic tendencies in present-day culture: hermeneutics and postmodernism.

1. She stresses a transition from the people, idealized by the Romantic current, to the mass person, devoid of imagination and personality: „we struggled for a free market of dreams and ideas, and experience a free market for mass culture”.

2. Prof. Janion sees the contemporary tendencies of postmodernism as a threat to the hermeneutic tradition and the concepts of the unity of personality, connected with the former in assorted ways (Jung, Freud).

3. In her reflections on contemporary phenomena in literature and Polish culture as well as current social and political life, the author points to Goethe's „Bildung” – a vision which contains an equilibrium between elements of humanism and demonism.

4. Prof. Janion shares her recollections of books read as a child and young girl which had subsequently moulded her creative biography.

Jerzy S. Wasilewski SHOW ME YOUR FIELDNOTES

Following the Cliffordian triad *inscription – transcription – description*, the author browses through his fieldnotes from his ethnographic research in Mongolia and Central Asia. Among his personal notes which did not fit to print he identifies: discoveries that came too late, shameful matter, pictures of Romantic travelling, juvenile logorhea and selfreflexory presentation vis à vis the Ethnographic Other.

Janusz Barański THE MYTHICAL

The constructive feature of every language and every use of a word is mythical. The degree of its permeation depends on the type of discourse: from poetry to science. This linguistic correlate makes possible the process of mythicizing, the creation of secondary meanings, and one of the mechanisms of participation in culture as such. It also allows us to speak about the constant presence in culture of elements of cosmology. Such a comprehension of the mythical is a superior concept vis à vis arbitrariness, magic, connotation, non-aspection, figurativeness, enthymemes or the topical employment of a word and the description of the world. This thesis is yet another expanded version of the famous view that „myth is word” (Barthes).

Jacek Borowski THE PHILOSOPHICAL CONTENTS OF THE MAN-BIRD SYMBOL. MYTH AND ART

At the very outset, the author accepts a definition of the symbol and myth by basing himself on the hermeneutics of Ricoeur. Subsequently, he starts with a review of the symbolics of the bird, and demonstrates the universal appearance of the symbolic form of the man-bird in various cultures. The main part of the study analyses the fundamental philosophical contents of this symbol. The author uses select examples (paintings on rocks and cliffs, the Babylonian epos, contemporary literature and sculpture) to indicate the extremely marked motif of irreversible change – death or insanity – present in all the works of art and contained in the symbol of the man-bird.

Monika Sznajderman PRIEST OR JESTER? THE METAPHORS OF DON QUIXOTE IN THE WORKS OF MANN AND KAFKA

The author bases herself on the reflections of the American anthropologist James Clifford, and analyses the mythological contents of Thomas Mann's essay *Journey across the Ocean with Don Quixote*, which she treats as Cliffordian „saving fiction”, and compares with other select examples of his works, this time approached as „naked truth” and „naked reality”. She conducts this analysis in the context of Mann's interpretation of Don Quixote who assumes the features of a priest guarding the past, rules and holy books, rather than those of a jester; buffoonery in the twentieth-century philosophical, literary, political and common context takes on the symptoms and hues of an insanity which strives towards totalitarianism. In this manner, the essay written by Mann during an ocean cruise, becomes a moment of respite

from the insanity of the world, a single instant extracted from reality. An entirely different Don Quixote, who comprises a sui generis symbol of our times, is located on the opposite extreme; his metaphorical figure is discovered in the works of Franz Kafka. This Don Quixote is an excellently composed element of a comic, and actually a tragic vision of the contemporary world – he symbolizes the fate of man envisaged as a puppet in the hands of the Great Jester.

Kazimiera Szczuka THE CURSE OF NARCISSUS

This is an interpretation of Gustav Flaubert's *Madame Bovary* conceived as a myth about Narcissus. Starting from a description of the lifelessness and motionless of the inner world of the heroine, the author of the article seeks the spatial figure concealed in the novel, namely, the main heroine who is duplicated by her own mirror reflection, or, symbolically, by Emma's ideal „I”. The latter is situated in literary texts, in the figures of the lovers, poetic dreams or countless ideal fragments of the realistic plane of events such as the ball. The author refers to the interpretation of the myth of Narcissus proposed by Freud and Lacan, and indicates the connection between Flaubert's text and the text of the myth written down by Ovid. By placing *Madame Bovary* within the context of the history of literature, she regards the novel to be a missing link in the history of the person and the motif of Narcissus, which is to be found between the Enlightenment-era allegory and the modernist symbol of the artist.

Magdalena Saganak THE MACABRE IN THE MYSTICAL THEATRE OF JULIUSZ SŁOWACKI

In his mystical dramas, Juliusz Słowacki presented a new model of man. Using the conception of reincarnation as his point of departure, he freely assimilated various neo-Platonian, gnostic and Christian motifs. The centre of identity is conceived not as the human body or spirit, but as the soul which exists from the beginning of the world and independently determines its own form; through inanimate forms – human and animal – it strives towards the perfect form of God.

Such a conception of man as a being which transgresses its own status, and which via death and suffering arrives at new forms, is closely connected with an experimental literary form. The basic determinants of the latter are fragmentariness and variance as well as the employment of symbols and the macabre which serves as a way for crossing the limits of humanity, our culture and our anthropocentric vision of the world.

A patient reader of these writings to a certain degree becomes the co-participant of spiritual exercise in which the attainment of comprehension calls for changing internalized modes of perception and categories characteristic for man; this undertaking, in turn, leads to a new type of insight and sensitivity, closer to mystic experience than to discursive cognition.

Justyna Sobolewska DIONYSUS AND IWASZKIEWICZ

The author analyses the Dionysiac myth in the works of Jarosław Iwaszkiewicz. The myth itself was approached anew by modernism which treated the pagan deity on par with Christ; both had suffered, died and rose from the dead, and Dionysiac rites were to ensure immortality for mankind. The same myth was interpreted in a totally different manner by Friedrich Nietzsche who conceived Dionysus as the opposite of Christ, and as the voice of liberated Nature against morality.

In the works by Iwaszkiewicz the Dionysiac myth creates a religious model which, in contrast to Christianity, does not contain the possibility of erring, rejection or the loss of grace. The very experience of existence can be redeeming. The Dionysiac myth sanctifies evil and sin.

The figure of Dionysus appears expressis verbis in „Dionysia”, a series of poems which comprise an attempt at recreating the Dionysiac experience with the aid of words, or rather images and sounds. The same myth, envisaged as the creator of the structure of human fate, can be discerned in many novels such as *The Mill on the Utrata*. Iwaszkiewicz patterned the Dionysiac hero on Walter Pater's *Denis from Auxerre*. In his novels Dionysiac heroes are, as a rule, young, beautiful and die abruptly. They are incapable of meeting the requirements of Christian life, select the path of sin and become intoxicated with sheer living. They also perish in absurd ways, without having realised their calling. The meaning of their lives becomes apparent only in the sphere of the myth which eliminates tragedy.

Aneta Pierzchała FAUST SEDUCED

This is an analysis of a scenario of seduction realized by Mann's hero. The author attempts to capture the way in which evil exists in the world depicted in *Doctor Faustus*. She reveals the structure of signs which Mann employed in the construction of the portrait of Satan.

Wiesław Juszczak REALISM AND LITURGY. CONTOURS OF REALITY IN THE „COCKTAIL PARTY” BY T. S. ELIOT

T. S. Eliot is a poet-thinker, a poet-philosopher – hence his doctrine must be reconstructed from his speech. His works (as in the case of Rilke's poetry) can be treated as a place for revealing the truth. The author of the article shows how in his dramas the poet embarks upon the difficult problem of the crisis of religion and philosophy; the latter is conceived as ontology and not solely as the theory of cognition. As a point of departure we may accept Eliot's statement that when a complex of religious beliefs and practice is alive, drama should strive towards realism, but when religious and moral models are unsteady, then drama should turn to liturgy. Realism as envisaged by Eliot consists of the deprivation of all appearances, and not of the imitation of that what is universally regarded as „real”. Reality brings us to our knees and divests us to the very end – it is the domain of guilt, sin and forgiveness, and even the grace of death. From this point of view, the daily world seems to be empty. The transition from such emptiness to fullness, the process of becoming aware of the existence of complete reality – these are the prime themes of Eliot's dramas, and the tragedy of his heroes. In his theatrical vision, Eliot wishes to attain universality, comprehended as collective experiencing; this is the reason why we can speak about liturgy (a collective form of a cult).

Jadwiga Wajs ALL MEASURED – ON THE ART OF DYING TODAY

Drama Fragment II by Beckett is a masterly depiction of the decline of the art of living and dying in our times. In comparison with the antique *ars moriendi*, contemporary man lives and dies in a void, painfully lonely. To all appearances, he functions normally but his senses grow dull – he is no longer able to establish contact with the world: he looks but does not see, listens but does not hear. He begins acting in the stereotype manner of a machine. Finally, he ceases experiencing pain, his inner life withers and he is no longer able to maintain deeper bonds with other people.

The symbolic of Beckett's drama contains the hope that, despite all odds, we are consumed by a longing for inner transformation, and for reviving the ability to feel our own inner life.

Anna Wiczorkiewicz A PHILOSOPHER ON THE ROAD

This article deals with the topos of the journey (wandering, roaming, etc.) in philosophical texts. By paying attention to the discourse of authors who had travelled, described their voyages in diaries, and used the metaphor of travel in their philosophical works, it is possible to study the existential, discursive and instrumental dimension of travelling. In the last case, we are concerned with the application of the figure of the journey in order to express abstract ideas. Moreover, the metaphor of travel participates in the conceptualization of philosophical thought.

Such premises can be deduced from philosophical discourse alone. The author refers to *Travel as Metaphor from Montaigne to Rousseau* by Georges Van Den Abbeele in which diaries and travel notes have been treated as a supplement to the theoretical works by Montaigne, Descartes, Montesquieu and Rousseau. The purpose of the deconstruction of the metaphor of travel in philosophical works conducted by Georges Van Den Abbeele is to disclose the determinants of philosophical discourse. The topos of travel becomes a factor which determines cognition, since it not only creates conditions for the latter (by travelling we become familiar with the diversity of the world), but also supplies us with a language required to describe the very nature of cognition.

Michał Głowiński „POLISH CONTEMPORARY LITERATURE...” AND SYMBOLIC PARADIGMS (1945–1995)

In the presented text the author deals with various relations and strategies of reaction which occurred between Polish postwar literature and the emergent symbolic system. The fundamental elements which compelled literature to define itself vis a vis the symbolic repertoire included two significant historical caesurae: the establishment of communist ideology after 1945, and the change of the prevailing sociopolitical system in 1989.

During the first postwar decade, the role of literature was not exclusively passive, and in assorted ways it conducted the adaptation, reinterpretation and popularization of new symbolic contents. At the outset of the introduction of „people's power”, literature found itself in a dual situation. On the one hand, it was supposed to have been one of the prime factors shaping the ideology imposed by totalitarianism, a new symbolic paradigm; on the other hand, due to the impact of censorship, it remained the constant object of symbolic violence. This was a period of an adamant struggle for and with symbols, as well as for their subjugation.

After 1989 we inherited a conventionalized and highly fragmentarized symbolic paradigm of communism which had lost its system-like character and became a loosely knit collection of elements. At the moment, it functions as the object of negation and rejection. The compromised and exploited system is being replaced by a new symbolic paradigm. Indubitably, this fact exerts a considerable influence on contemporary literature, although it is much too early to formulate conclusions on this topic.

Grażyna Borkowska THE WESTERN TERRITORIES: GENIUS LOCI

The author draws our attention to the fact that the most interesting events in contemporary culture are taking place in the borderlands of Poland. The taming of the Western territories and the symbolic assumption of the post German heritage constitute a particularly interesting phenomenon; this process is testified both in publicistics and the belles lettres (i.a. in: *E.E.* by Olga Tokarczuk, *Hanemann* by Stefan Chwin, and *Traces on the Sand* by Marek Jastrzębiec-Mosakowski).

Dariusz Czaja „VENICE IS A WOMAN” ON IMAGINATION

This article is devoted to an anthropological interpretation of various literary portrayals of Venice. In a surprisingly large number of texts the character of the town is depicted as distinctly feminine. Venice is presented as a woman not only in paintings (Veronese) but also in literary works. In collected texts (from Byron and Pushkin to Brodsky and Herling-Grudziński) the author examines assorted personifications of Venice and its comparison to a woman. He shows the durability of this image and the multi-faceted nature of the feminine phantasm (Aphrodite, Venus, Penelope, etc.).

In response to the question: why is Venice a woman? the author rejects biological and psychological explanations, and turns towards a comprehension of culture by means of culture. He expands two interpretational clues: linguistic – in the majority of European languages „Venice” is of the feminine gender – and mythical: feminine visions of Venice were enrooted in conventionalized stereotypes, well-embedded in European culture; in particular cases, however, they refer to the ambiguous, paradoxical and „living” aspect of the symbol.

Ludwik Lewin, Ludwik Stomma PARIS FOR TWO LOUIS D'OR (GUIDE – BOOK)

This is a fragment of a guidebook written by two Poles living in France: a journalist and an anthropologist. In their eighth excursion, the authors propose a visit to Montparnasse and its environs. Theirs is a leisurely tour of a neighbourhood full of legends and memories; our guides focus basically on the once flourishing artistic life of this part of Paris.

Wojciech J. Burszta KURT VONNEGUT: AN ANTHROPOLOGICAL PORTRAIT

Anthropological reflection on culture does not exhaust itself in an ordinary description and analysis, conducted in accordance with scientific criteria. It is also a sui generis metareflection on the human species which inhabits assorted cultural niches. Furthermore, it is a quest for the element which unites human diversity. Hence, reflection of this sort shares with literature a single feature – the concept of an intellectual journey in the world of the non-obvious.

Affiliations between anthropology and literary creativity are demonstrated upon the example of Kurt Vonnegut, famous man of letters and graduate of anthropology. The author traces anthropological motifs in the literary *Terra Vonnegutiana*, created by him.

Ryszard Ciarka THE HEAD AT THE BOTTOM OF THE BED OR PROPAEDEUTIC OF ETNOGRAPY

This jocular text is an attempt at a slightly caricaturish description of semiotic-structural reflections about the dependence between the arrangement of the quilt and the speed with which one falls asleep.

Wojciech Michera THE BOUGH OF AENEAS

Men of antiquity universally believed that this fatal bough was the Golden Bough which Aeneas, obedient to the commands of Sybil, broke off on the eve of his dangerous journey to the land of the dead – wrote James Frazer 150 years ago in his *Golden Bough*. The author of the article refers to this view, and presents the mythical theme of travellers on their way to the other-world. He deals with the existential dimension of the journey, alluding to paintings and poetic visions. He also indicates the significance of the golden bough against the backdrop of the symbolic of the holy tree, and depicts the connection between the predecessors of Aeneas (in accordance with the texts by Virgil) – Theseus, Pollux, Orpheus and Heracles – with the myth about Jason and his expedition in search for the Golden Fleece. Following suggestions contained in a sixteenth-century alchemical work, the author examines the symbolic kinship of this myth with the story of Heracles stealing apples from the garden of the Hesperides. Finally, he interprets the mediaeval legend of the Holy Grail, the Biblical story of the flood, and the Sumerian epos about Gilgamesh as well as a mythical prop – the staff of Hermes and Aesculapius, entwined by serpents.

Ewa Dżurak LITERATURE AND RITUAL. TRADITIONAL ELEMENTS IN CONTEMPORARY NOVELS WRITTEN BY NATIVE AMERICANS

The typical feature of the contemporary novel written by Native Americans is predominantly a combination of traditional and modern motifs, and a presentation of heroes balancing in a cultural void, situated between cultures, and experiencing a feeling of alienation. Their lot assumes the mythical dimension of a paradigmatic controversy between good and evil. In an analysis of two novels: *House Made of Down* by N. Scott Momaday and *Ceremony* by Leslie Marmon Silko, the author shows how myth and ritual interfere into the texts and help the heroes to overcome their complicated situation produced by the dissolution of traditional culture.

Władysław Hasior ON PLEBEIAN ART

This is an interview with W. Hasior held by Aleksander Jackowski. The outstanding artist speaks about his collection of plebeian art – several thousand slides documenting the phenomenon in question as well as the iconosphere of communist Poland.

In his own works Hasior uses elements of folk, plebeian art; in the select examples, he recognizes authentic longing for beauty. By annulling „aesthetic criteria” and rejecting the notion of kitsch, the artist draws particular attention to private worlds, separated by a picket fence, which offer their own vision of beauty.

NOTY O AUTORACH

Małgorzata Baranowska poetka, krytyk i historyk literatury. Autorka książek: *Pamiętnik mistyczny, Surrealistyczna wyobraźnia i poezja, To jest wasze życie*. Autorka wielu artykułów o wyobraźni symbolicznej i kulturze masowej m.in. *Pocztówka jako wyraz wyobraźni masowej w: Problemy wiedzy o kulturze* (Ossolineum 1986), autorka dwóch tomów poetyckich: *Miasto, Zamek w Pirenejach*. Ogłasza w „Twórczości” *Prywatną historię poezji*.

Janusz Barański etnograf, filozof, absolwent UJ, doktorant w Instytucie Etnologii UJ w Krakowie. Zajmuje się problemami antropologii polityki i metodologią polityki.

Zbigniew Benedyktowicz antropolog kultury, redaktor „Kontekstów”. Kierownik Pracowni Antropologii Kultury, Filmu i Sztuki Audiowizualnej. Autor prac o wyobraźni symbolicznej i antropologii współczesnej, m.in. książki (z Danutą Benedyktowicz) *Dom w tradycji ludowej*.

Grażyna Borkowska – krytyk i historyk literatury, pracuje w IBL PAN, wydała *Dialog powieściowy i jego konteksty*; złożyła do druku

Krzysztof Kubiak THE SPEECH OF WRITTEN WORDS

This is a venture at tackling recollections and their written form. The author of the article arrived at the conclusion that the specificity of a manuscript and the colourful personality of its author would be best captured by a filmed record. He thus presents a project for a film about Otylia Zachura, resident of a solitary mountain homestead, and her childhood wartime reminiscences. The brief and strikingly authentic diary is cited in its entirety in the article, which is the basis for a screenplay. It is supplemented by notes with the dates of the birthdays of assorted members of the Zachura family, and the most important events in the lives of their children. This element endows the text with a characteristic „biblical” rhythm. It also shows Great History as seen by ordinary people, and ordinary people as a fragment of History.

On the „So-called Naive Art by Aleksander Jackowski

An album *So-called Naive Art* by Aleksander Jackowski was published in 1995. The book, which contains 91 biogrammes of naive artists, met with a lively response. The reviews indicated the necessity of a new approach to such problems as professional and non-professional art, and the relation between high and low culture. We include a review by Hanna Kirchner, *THE NINETY SECOND SILHOUETTE* fragments of reviews, which were presented in the press, and an interview held by Zbigniew Benedyktowicz with the author of *So-called naive art* and the autobiography *Short cuts*.

Danuta Wawilow THE KLAN EXPERIMENT

The history of KLAN – Club of Artistically Inexhaustible People – is brief. It was founded in 1992 by young people aged from thirteen to over twenty. The basic KLAN formula was, and is, the right to creativity – writing poems, drawing, making music, sculpting little clay birds and soon. For some participants of the experiment it constitutes a significant stage in their life, a lesson in imagination and creative love. The founder and author of this article discovered KLAN to be a source of knowledge about life, people, poetry and art.

KLAN, which exists not only in Warsaw but also in other towns, comprises a group of people sharing a philosophy of life and art.

Ewa Korulska CHILDREN KNOCK ON DOORS OF STONE

The first contact with a poetic text is often decisive for a child's approach to poetry, and can stir or stifle his imagination. Polish language school lessons offer an opportunity for awakening and stimulating the child's sensitivity towards the word. One of the available methods is to create possibilities for individual creativity, and to demonstrate the circumstances in which everyone's ability of articulating impressions and emotions is activated. A child who has experienced the joy of creation, starts treating the poetic text as a natural mode of expressing his thoughts and feelings.

popularny zarys literatury pozytywistycznej *Pozytywiści i inni* (PWN) oraz książkę poświęconą powieści kobiecej (od Żmichowskiej do Nałkowskiej) (IBL).

Jacek Borowski – absolwent IFiS UW. Zajmuje się estetyką i pograniczem filozofii i antropologii. Pracuje w Wydawnictwie Naukowym PWN.

Wojciech J. Burszta dr hab., profesor w Katedrze Etnologii UAM. Autor m.in. Książek: *Wymiary antropologicznego poznania kultury 1992; Czytanie kultury*. Pięć szkiców, 1995.

Roger Caillois etnolog, socjolog i filozof francuski, znany ze swoich szerokich zainteresowań, również literaturą. W Polsce wyszły dwa zbiory jego tekstów *Zywiol i tad* oraz *Odpowiedzialność i styl*.

Ryszard Ciarka etnolog, pracownik Instytutu Sztuki PAN, Pracownia Antropologii Kultury, Filmu i Sztuki Audiowizualnej. Zajmuje się antropologią współczesności, autor wielu artykułów.

James Clifford profesor antropologii, wykładał między innymi historię świadomości na University of California, Santa Cruz. Autor