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fall (10) 20**17**

Macropoetics

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it transformed into an inconceivably immense textual
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Macropoetics

Until rather recently, scholarship reckoning with the history of literary forms has been on the retreat. Few disciples have surfaced to carry on the long-dormant work of literary genealogists as well as structuralists' more recent histories of literature as a set of artistic forms. The ongoing crisis in comparative literary history and the widespread consensus on the need to abandon linear narratives in literary history have yielded implications that would be more at home in cultural studies. For in cultural studies, mere artistic forms have little relevance in their own right, and dense descriptions of non-literary fifteenth-century legal records have been just as intellectually fruitful as the study of literature.

This by no means suggests that, at the end of the day, it is possible to approach single, remarkable works through the prism of micropoetics without situating them against a vision of the whole context to which that work strives to or does in fact belong: the context that work molded, or by which the work was molded in turn. Today, it seems to be the case that the claims already introduced by formal literary histories remain quite useful, and often inspiring. Yet beyond this, the undoubtedly active process of devising new comprehensive, collective, or generalising concepts persists, though it is rarely scrutinised. Naturally, assertions of this kind tend to be flagged with the caveat that they are but hypothetical claims, entirely impervious to the lure of all totalising theoretical languages. The digital humanities have lent macropoetics a renewed impetus, making data accessible in vast volumes and leading us to diverse, often modest, but indisputable conclusions for poetic, genealogic, and related areas of research.

Contemporary macropoetics therefore hardly seems to claim that literature, finally freed from the corset of obsolete scholarship, has now become a simple set of texts arranged into arbitrary subgroups by the philologist-constructivist. To the contrary, macropoetics today recalls the state of affairs in contemporary economics, where we anxiously await the findings of new macroeconomic analyses that may well contain shocking and predictable results side by side. In the case of macropoetics, our work is rather similar: literary analysis often turns up conclusions that nobody could have foreseen. We might even make the claim that ever since literature lost the solid foundations it was once assigned by outdated historical schemas, it transformed into an inconceivably immense textual

and the Literary Mass

mass, now more enigmatic than ever before. This mass is not passive, but one that directly impacts scholarship and its findings. Nor is this mass molten and magmatic, for it surely exposes so many unexpected patterns whose explication becomes the precise task of contemporary macropoetics.

An enormous challenge for poetics is posed, for instance, by the stylometric analyses that allowed Jan Rybicki to visually represent on one page discrete textual masses that represent the entirety of historical and contemporary Polish literature. What are the new stylistic macroforms of Polish writing, and how can we interpret their mutual connections that so often do not square with earlier concepts? Similarly galvanising are the ideas of Franco Moretti, who represents textual systems as literary forms by way of "maps" and "trees" (Borys Szumański discusses his book on the subject). Moretti's article from the Stanford Literary Lab Pamphlets, whose translation appears in this issue, shows us what happens when poetic concepts are submitted to digital quantitative analysis. Visions for new comprehensive scales that might reflect such a staggering mass of literary texts — now emancipated from the rubrics of outdated literary history — can be beautifully traced within feminist studies (Arleta Galant), translation studies (Aleksandra Wieczorkiewicz) and new research on literary generations (Angelika Trzcińska). This issue includes interventional approaches to a few more modest textual groups, perceived not as movements, but as constellations (Dorota Kozicka, Katarzyna Trzeciak). Still other texts transform the way we see disparate literary periods, such as the literature of World War II – so significant for Polish literature (Sławomir Buryła) and literature of the socialist period (Jan Galant). The huge rise in the volume of texts we can grasp within our scholarship and the equally extreme rise in the critical methodologies at our disposal allow us to see fragments of textual mass and their internal structures in radically new light. Textual categories mapped out long ago now leave much to be discussed, as this issue's contributors have demonstrated in the case of theories of free verse (Joanna Orska) and the literary cycle (Patrycja Malicka).

The Greek prefix "macro" indicates both severe magnitude and spectacular length. In this spirit, contemporary macropoetics generates new assessments of the vast textual mass, turning up not only new forms of self-regulation, but new ways to expand this mass as well. There is tremendous value in bringing more and more scrutiny to the work of tracing the contemporary contributions of macropoetics.

A Second Glance at a Stylometric Map of Polish Literature

Jan Rybicki

Introduction

A first glance at how stylometric statistics of frequently used words can lay out on one plain a map of Polish letters was put forth several years ago in a text with precisely that title.[1] In 2014, 500 Polish books seemed to be a substantial selection of texts. Today, we might revisit this subject, for the research presented below uses a sample over five times this size. Its scope includes Polish texts running from 14th-century sermons, *Kazania świętokrzyskie*, to a recent bestseller, *Tajemnica domu Helclów* by "Szymiczkowa", Polish novels, epic poetry and drama, as well as Polish translations of English-language texts (including numerous translations of Shakespeare) and from French, Russian, German, Czech, Italian, Portuguese, Spanish, Hungarian and Turkish texts.

One might venture to say that until now, distant reading has not yet been tried on such a vast collection of Polish texts. In the years since 2014, we have finally managed to usher this notorious term into Polish, mainly thanks to the Polish translation of the first book by the creator of this concept.[2] Surely this is not the case – though I am not at all convinced that we are truly dealing with *distant reading* here. As Matthew Jockers has noted, Franco Moretti, his former boss at Stanford University, studies texts "from the outside" and "from afar" by means of publication data, travel maps — actual and virtual — of authors and literary figures and, like a good Marxist, charts the Darwinian evolution of genres and literary forms in order to develop and broadcast his own literary genetics, even making explicit reference to DNA research. Of course, this is all rather interesting, but Jockers does not support expanding Moretti's term to computer stylistics undertaken alongside him and before him by scholars such as John Burrows, Hugh Craig, Karina van Dalen-Oskam, David Holmes, David Hoover Richard Forsyth and Fotis Jannidis (and in Poland, Adam Pawłowski, Maciej Eder and this article's author): this work entails "reading" many works at once with the help of statistics that

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[1] J. Rybicki, *Pierwszy rzut oka na stylometryczną mapę literatury polskiej*, "Teksty drugie" 2014, issue 2, p. 106-128.

[2] F. Moretti, *Wykresy, mapy, drzewa. Abstrakcyjne modele na potrzeby literatury*, trans. T. Bilczewski and A. Kowalcze-Pawlik, Kraków 2016.

made their way into literary studies directly via authorship attribution and are oriented more towards the comparison of "linguistic" elements of the text (such as frequencies of words, of their the root forms, of parts of speech...). The discipline of knowledge most often appearing under the rubric of stylometry – a term we can attribute to Wincenty Lutosławski – Jockers has astutely called "macroanalysis"[3]... and it remains unclear if this name will stick. In any case, it is crucial to note this distinction, for different advantages– and disadvantages– emerge from these two related methods for observing literary texts.

Method

The major drawback of what we have agreed, at least provisionally, to call macroanalysis is its departure from traditional literary studies' emphasis on the meaning of the text, its "contents" and its "message". This comes about because in macroanalysis, the scholar commands an insentient machine to devour text after text, chop each one into individual words, and then count the decimated remains of sentences, paragraphs and chapters torn from all context in order to establish a list of the most frequently appearing words. These very words, however, repeat themselves *ad nauseum*, for any natural language – even that of dolphins – consists above all of the shortest words that have the least "semantic" value and are rarely assigned meaning (for this is how we might summarize Zipf's three laws of distribution). It follows that in each natural language, the set of the hundred most frequently used words hardly includes a single word of definite meaning (in the sample studied here, one is pressed to find words like "eyes" and "home", while drowning in a flood of conjunctions, prepositions and pronouns) – yet these words constitute roughly half of any given text. Long ago, John Burrows wrote that "in most discussions of English fiction, we proceed as if a third, two-fifths a half of our material were not really *there*,"[4] for we so often ignore the linguistic tissue that links them. Meanwhile, it unfortunately turns out to be precisely the statistics of these "unimportant" words – and not those winged "meaningful" ones – that best describe how one writes. This is because – to return briefly to the pulp metaphors of horror – having hacked literary masterpieces into pieces, stylometry extracts from the pieces only those words that best fit into its gloomy cells, creating a Frankenstein-like creature that is meant to replace a living being: one raw list of the same words for every massacred text.

At this point, it luckily turns out that although these lists are governed by Zipf distribution and all resemble one another, they build such a vast data set that the differences between them, though insignificant to the naked eye, become in fact rather meaningful when viewed through the lens of multidimensional analysis, whose dimensions are as numerous as the very words undergoing analysis. How many dimensions should that be? As a rule, the more the better, for elementary geometry has taught us that the distance between two points on a plane increases when we incorporate a third dimension into this distance, and although we might cease to "see" with our bare eyes even further dimensions, the distance will continue to increase with each subsequent dimension. It is a shame we cannot see this, but multidimensional analysis exists precisely to reduce many dimensions to two or three, usually from a sufficiently close perspective

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[3] M. Jockers, *Macroanalysis. Digital Methods and Literary History*, Champaign 2013.

[4] J. Burrows, *Computation into Criticism: A Study of Jane Austen's Novels and an Experiment in Method*, Oxford 1987, p. 1.

to "lend" them a distanced scale – or perhaps simply to differentiate them – by using the most frequently appearing words of individual authors, categorized by style, generation, gender, epoch, genre or literary type ... In this way, new "graphs, maps, trees" begin to emerge, this time no longer resembling Moretti's, for they only reflect raw linguistic material. This suffices, however. These data visualizations often take on forms that surprise the traditional literary scholar in their similarity to traditional interpretations. It bears mention that although the rule "the more, the better" does apply here, in practice, the statistics become saturated, i.e. the results become more stable, at some 1000-2000 words, and tend not to change at higher wordlist lengths.[5,6]

One catch remains: although the existence of an authorial or chronological "fingerprint" has been empirically confirmed many times over, the very mechanism for establishing similarities and differences between texts has not been sufficiently justified in linguistics, and only its cognitive branch deigns to glance curiously at the conceptual framework of macroanalysis.[7] Of course, the fact that each writer uses – in part unconsciously, to be sure – these commonly frequent words according to their own individual proportions should not come as a surprise. Surely writers of a given epoch accommodate language forms at a shared developmental stage. It is worse (and somehow harder to reconcile) that the author's stylometric signal can even persist through the trauma of its translation into a foreign language. Although research on texts in their original language and in translation is undertaken using two compartmentalized frequency lists on which one might search in vain for exact correlations between, say, prepositions in two languages, graphs and maps made on their basis are quick to group texts by their original authors, disregarding the translator.[8] It becomes a bit easier to identify various translators when they consistently translate the same author or even a single text.[9]

Moreover, no other classification system has proven to be as effective as these boring lists of word frequency: neither keywords, nor n-grams (sequences) of adjacent words, nor even n-grams of words' grammatical values (a.k.a. part-of-speech tags) consistently provide such a clear picture of authorship or chronology.[10] Even those that occasionally turn up similar findings involve significantly more burdensome computer processing. Mere lemmatisation (converting all phrases to their root forms) lends no significant improvement to the results (which should come as no surprise, given that the author's grammatical choice, say, to narrate a story in the present tense, is stylistically meaningful). Stylometry has not, in fact, halted the attempts to disrupt this domination of the lexicon. In part, this is in order to produce research more "digestible" for traditional literary studies on the one hand, and linguistics on the other – yet for the time being, the results

[5] J. Rybicki, M. Eder, *Deeper Delta Across Genres and Languages: Do We Really Need the Most Frequent Words?*, "Literary and Linguistic Computing" 2011, issue 26 (3), p. 315-32.

[6] M. Eder, *Does size matter? Authorship attribution, small samples, big problem*, "Literary and Linguistic Computing" 2015, issue 30 (2), p. 167-182.

[7] The Australian scholar Louisa Connors' doctoral thesis also bears mention here: *Computational stylistics, Cognitive Grammar, and the Tragedy of Mariam: Combining Formal and Contextual Approaches in a Computational Study of Early Modern Tragedy*, Newcastle 2013.

[8] J. Rybicki, *The Great Mystery of the (Almost) Invisible Translator: Stylometry in Translation,* [in:] *Quantitative Methods in Corpus-Based Translation Studies*, ed. M. Oakley, M. Ji, Amsterdam 2012, p. 231-248.

[9] J. Rybicki, M. Heydel, *The Stylistics and Stylometry of Collaborative Translation: Woolf's ‚Night and Day' in Polish*, "Literary and Linguistic Computing" 2013, issue 28 (4), p. 708-717.

[10] R. Górski, M. Eder, J. Rybicki. *Stylistic fingerprints, POS tags and inflected languages: a case study in Polish,* [in:] *Qualico 2014: Book of Abstracts*, Olomouc 2014, p. 51-53.

have been negligible. Only the gender signal seems to turn up more "meaningful" words, when one searches its results in national literatures of the 18th and 19th centuries.[11]

Since for now, we can offer nothing "better" or more "digestible", I will sketch the origins of the visualizations below. A more precise description of this procedure in full can be found in Maciej Eder's Polish text[12] and in the same author's significantly more "technical" article appearing in "Digital Scholarship in the Humanities".[13] For more information, a description from the programmer's perspective can be found in the prestigious "R Journal":[14] most computational procedures have been executed with the help of the stylometric package "stylo" described in that journal and written for R's statistical programming community.[15] This package brings together electronic versions of all texts, breaks them up into individual words, counts these words' frequencies throughout the entire corpus, and selects a number of the most frequently used words as specified by the researcher. Once the program has derived sequences of numbers in this manner for each text, it compares these sequences for each pair of texts. The comparison is based on an assigned metric of distance – or difference – between the texts. Among stylometry's various metrics, for this study, I chose one that has demonstrated the best aptitude for capturing the author's signal: the Burrows' Delta method,[16] which uses the cosine of the angle between vectors of word frequency for each pair of texts.[17] "Cosine Delta" ($\Delta\angle$) for two texts (T and T1) measures the angle α (the greater the angle, the greater the distance between the two texts):

$$\Delta\angle(T, T1) = \alpha,$$

is calculated according cosine similarity of Z-scores" between two vectors (x = z(T) i y = z(T1));

$$\cos\alpha = \frac{\sum_{i=1}^{n_s} x_i y_i}{\sqrt{\left(\sum_{i=1}^{n_s} x_y^z\right)}\sqrt{\left(\sum_{i=1}^{n_s} y_i^z\right)}} ,$$

where ns is the number of words analyzed in the study, and z(T) is the value of z-score of word frequency in text T, calculated according to the usual formula:

$$z(T) = \frac{f_s(T) - \mu_s}{\sigma_s} ,$$

[11] J. Rybicki, *Vive la différence: Tracing the (Authorial) Gender Signal by Multivariate Analysis of Word Frequencies*, "Digital Scholarship in the Humanities" 2016, issue 31 (4), p. 746-761.

[12] M. Eder, *Metody ścisłe w literaturoznawstwie i pułapki pozornego obiektywizmu – przykład stylometrii*, "Teksty drugie" 2014, issue 2, p. 90-105. This study was a deliberate theoretical-practical companion piece to my text cited above and appeared in the same journal.

[13] M. Eder, *Visualization in Stylometry: Cluster Analysis Using Networks*, "Digital Scholarship in the Humanities" 2017, issue 32 (1), p. 50-64.

[14] M. Eder, J. Rybicki, M. Kestemont, *Stylometry with R: A Package for Computational Text Analysis*, "R Journal" 2016, issue 8 (1), p. 107-121.

[15] R Core Team. *R: A language and environment for statistical computing*, http://www.R-project.org/ 2014 [July 14 2017].

[16] J. Burrows, *Delta: A Measure of Stylistic Difference and a Guide to Likely Authorship*, "Literary and Linguistic Computing" 2002, issue 17, p. 267-287.

[17] P. W. H. Smith, W. Aldridge, *Improving Authorship Attribution: Optimizing Burrows' Delta Method*, "Journal of Quantitative Linguistics" 2011, issue 18 (1), p. 63-88.

where fs(T), in turn, is the raw frequency of a given word s in text T, μs then the average frequency of word s in the set of texts to which T belongs, while σs is the standard deviation of the frequency of word s in that same set of texts.[18] By this method, we derive the value of the distance Δ∠ for each pair of texts. This produces a matrix of distances for the whole set of texts. On this basis, we can already reach some conclusions about which texts resemble one another, although two-dimensional visualizations organized according to select statistical methods can give us a much more legible picture of these relationships. All this amounts to a good attempt (and for the purposes of this study, we do not fear this term) at a polysystem of literature in Polish.

A matrix of distances can be studied by analyzing the concentrations that connect the most similar texts to one another in the context of the set as a whole, and for this study, I have done precisely this. Thus, for instance, the closest neighbor of *Ogniem i mieczem* is *Potop*, while the next closest neighbor of both texts is *Pan Wołodyjowski*. We might expect this cluster of the trilogy's three parts would then be linked in the following order with *Krzyżacy*, *Quo vadis*, and finally, *W pustyni i w puszczy*. We would be correct to expect that such a large cluster of Sienkiewicz's adventure novels might only be matched with *Bez dogmatu* and *Rodzina Połanieckich*, while the "full Sienkiewicz" is linked with the similarly constructed "full Prus" in the subsequent stage of linking texts on the basis of their stylometric resemblance. By these methods, the multidimensional space created by texts from the data set as a whole and all words included in the analysis is reduced to something we can present on a single plane.

Among the methods of data visualization, "network analysis" has made quite a name for itself. This method sorts data points according to two or three dimensions (in this case, individual texts) depending on their degree of resemblance: the greater the resemblance, the thicker and shorter the line between the two data points. Of course, for so many texts, this work requires elaborate mathematics. For the researcher, all of this labor is taken care of by the Gephi[19] program, aided by the force-directed algorithm Force Atlas 2. According to the algorithm's creators, Force Atlas 2 "simulates a physical system in order to spatialize a network. Nodes repulse each other like charged particles, while edges attract their nodes, like springs. These forces create a movement that converges to a balanced state".[20] In this study, Gephi collected the results of the "stylo" figures demonstrating how often the data of two respective texts is in close proximity; then the frequency of the "points of contact" becomes an indicator of the similarity between two texts, and the strength of their common spring, never allowing two texts to drift far apart from one another. As I mentioned above, sooner or later (depending on the size of the networks and the strength of the processor) the system reaches a state of equilibrium. A network emerges, and a "map" (in this case of Polish literature) is complete. On this map, we can isolate discrete clusters in two manners: either by drawing from traditional knowledge of literary history and ascribing individual texts to authors, epochs,

[18]S. Evert, T. Proisl, F. Jannidis, I. Reger, S. Pielström, C. Schöch, T. Vitt, *Understanding and explaining Delta measures for authorship attribution*, "Digital Scholarship Humanities" 2017 https://academic.oup.com/dsh/article-abstract/doi/10.1093/llc/fqx023/3865676/Understanding-and-explaining-Delta-measures-for [July 14 2017].

[19]M. Bastian, S. Heymann, M. Jacomy, *Gephi: an open source software for exploring and manipulating networks*. International AAAI Conference on Weblogs and Social Media, 2009.

[20]M. Jacomy, T. Venturini, S. Heymann, M. Bastian, *ForceAtlas2, a Continuous Graph Layout Algorithm for Handy Network Visualization Designed for the Gephi Software*. PLoS ONE 2014, issue 9(6), e98679, doi:10.1371/journal.pone.0098679.

genres or time periods, or by sorting the network mathematically, using the function of modularity. For "weighted" networks (the kind that appear in this study), those for which linkages between individual nodes have various "weights", the network's modularity is calculated with the formula:

$$Q = \frac{1}{2m}\sum_{i,j} \left[A_{ij} - \frac{k_i k_j}{2m}\right] \delta(c_i, c_j),$$

where *Aij* is precisely the weight ("strength") of connections (similarity) between points (texts) *i* and *j*; *ki* = ΣjAij is the sum total of all connections coinciding at nodes *i*; *ci* is the cluster to which node *i* is assigned; and finally, the function *δ(u, v)* adopts the value 1 when *u = v* and the value 0 when u ≠ v, and m = ½ΣijAij.[21] One might say that the formula above serves, for the computer, as its substitute for human knowledge of authors, epochs, and literary genres...

Material

Before I move on to the results, it is worth elaborating on the body of texts included in the study. The largest group (1319 titles) consists of original Polish novels, epic poems and – especially in the case of the older texts – sermons, psalms and hagiographies. Of course, in this case, all genres of the prose novel appear in marked disproportion. This is driven by two inter-related factors: firstly, there is simply is more novels around than anything else, and secondly, they are also the genre that is mst readily available in electronic version. A second disproportion can also be observed – this time, chronological. The fourteenth century is represented by one text, while the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries contribute ten and nine texts respectively to the pool. The next century in Polish literature has been called the "century of manuscripts" for a reason – the number of available texts drops to eight; but the eighteenth century fares even worse: it is arguably the domination of non-epic genres that led, despite the exertions of a certain Bishop of Warmia, to only five texts. A boom in the production of novels – and in their later availability in electronic format– occurs in the nineteenth century, accounting for 426 titles within the set. This growth continues into the twentieth century (631 texts). Against this backdrop, the new millennium begins with a bang, for its first several years already boast 229 titles. This comes as no surprise, for it is precisely the twenty-first century that ushered literature into the electronic medium, often without printed matter as an intermediary.

So much for Polish prose and epics. A separate category includes the Polish drama, from Kochanowski to Mrożek (a span that includes 63 texts): apart from *Odprawa posłów greckich*, there is Fredro, of course, all three bards, Norwid, and many texts by Wyspiański, Zapolska, Przybyszewski and Witkacy. Aside from a number of individual texts by specific authors, Gombrowicz and Mrożek contribute many texts. All together, the texts indigenous to Poland amount to 1382. It is worth noting that to read through every text, even at the breakneck speed of one text every two days, would take a single person over seven and a half years.

And now we can move on to translations from foreign languages. Since the interwar period, Polish translations most often come from English texts.[22] The data set includes 408 translations from the

[21]V.D. Blondel, J.-L. Guillaume, R. Lambiotte, E. Lefebvre, *Fast Unfolding of Communities in Large Networks*, "Journal of Statistical Mechanics: Theory and Experiment" 2008, issue 10, p. 1000.

[22]See also: W. Krajewska, *Recepcja literatury angielskiej w Polsce w okresie modernizmu. (1887-1918). Informacje. Sądy. Przekłady*, Wrocław-Warszawa-Kraków-Gdańsk 1972.

language of Byron, and that not counting Shakespeare, who, in his own right, claims 135 transla-
tions, bringing us to a total of 543. There are significantly less representatives from the French –
242, from Russian – 103 and that same amount from German. Czech, Spanish, Hungarian, Italian,
the Scandinavian languages, and Turkish altogether contribute 175 texts. The set therefore in-
cludes a proportion of foreign texts that is not significantly less than its Polish texts (1161). In to-
tal, the set consists of 2,548 titles. The scale of the entire data set amounts to 170,692,206 words.

How did I obtain all these texts in electronic format? Unfortunately, I did not record precise
statistics. A significant portion of the texts – those in the public domain – were found in vari-
ous free collections, from such noble and useful ventures as Free Readings (*Wolne lektury*),[23]
The Online Polish Literature Library *(Biblioteka literatury polskiej w Internecie)*[24] and Old Po-
land (*Staropolska*).[25] These three archives proved to be the most useful. The oldest Polish texts
come from the small but invaluable electronic "Library of the Treasures of Medieval Polish
Letters" ("Biblioteki zabytków polskiego piśmiennictwa średniowiecznego") at the Polish
Language Institute PAN, in Kraków.[26] The more recent texts were often simply sourced from
online bookstores in the form of e-books– this of course sped up the process of obtaining
texts, and additionally lowered costs, for electronic books are often (marginally) cheaper than
their printed counterparts, though a large portion had to be transferred to electronic format
by means of scanners or OCR.[27] The Institute of English Philology at Jagiellonian University's
recent acquisition of sheetfeed scanners somewhat facilitated the unmediated digitalization
of books, under the condition that each volume first had to be divided into individual pages.[28]

At this point, I will provide a short digression on the current accessibility of Polish-language lit-
erature – both original and translated – in electronic format. Since I managed to obtain over two
thousand texts for the purposes of this study, one might get the impression that our national
literature is already quite prevalent in digital form. From the "average" reader's perspective, this is
even somewhat accurate: reading a book online or downloaded from the internet is, in fact, quite
easy. It is harder, however, to prepare a text for quantitative analysis, for nearly every archive uses
its own format, its own user interface and – understandably– rigorously defends its resources
from being available in entirety or in large portions. It might not bother the conventional reader to
read the first Polish translation of Hamlet (Wojciech Bogusławski's from 1797, based on Friedrich
Ludwig Schröder's German adaptation) in DjVu format, which is difficult to process electronically.
In fact, quite the contrary. *Le plaisir du texte* in which the eponymous hero thankfully survives, and

[23]http://wolnelektury.pl [July 14 2017].

[24]http://literat.ug.edu.pl/ [July 14 2017].

[25]http://www.staropolska.pl/ [July 14 2017].

[26]*Biblioteka zabytków polskiego piśmiennictwa średniowiecznego*, ed. W. Twardzik, Kraków 2006.

[27]It is impossible to fail to mention the heroic efforts of my two master's advisees, Anna Hołubiczko and Marta
   Kamuda, who compiled such an impressive set of Polish translations of Shakespeare, doggedly scanning print
   versions or with monk-like precision, correcting the difficult old scans of the Polona Library (https://polona.pl/
   [July 14 2017]). The fruit of these labors – aside from the collection of Shakespeare's translations and a significant
   contribution to the subcategory of Polish drama – are two noteworthy masters theses: A. Hołubiczko, *"Porównania
   śmierdzą": porównanie równoległych tekstów polskich przekładów Szekspira* (master's thesis), Kraków 2017;
   M. Kamuda, *Stylometric Analysis of the Polish Translations of Shakespeare* (master's thesis), Kraków 2017.

[28]Here I must extend enormous thanks to the Volumin Bookbinding Workshop located at Św. Gertrudy 5 in
   Kraków that ruefully but willingly separated every volume in exchange for our vague promise to someday put
   them together again.

who is accompanied not by Horatio but by Gustav, is only enhanced when the computer screen shows the beautiful print format from 1823. The conventional reader somehow makes do even when some of the allegedly digitalized texts in Polish libraries are in fact images converted into PDFs, which only require that one be able to recognize the texts within… It's a small consolation that this issue does not only prevail in Poland, and even this level of availability exists in spite of the Text Encoding Initiative consortium's seemingly ironclad regulations regarding the digitalisation of text. Digital Humanities throughout the world, whose most acclaimed "discipline" is precisely the development of digital archives for all cultural artifacts, is in the position to create beautiful and valuable digital editions for the "non-specialized" reader; but apparently continues to fail its clients from its own environment– precisely the people engaged in the quantitative analysis of cultural data. And yet, according to Willard McCarty, one of the most esteemed authorities on the digital turn in the humanities, it is computer stylistics that have contributed most to this turn and that points the way forward.[29]

Findings

How does the representative sample of Polish-language literature look, then, through the lens of macroanalysis? Take Graph 1:
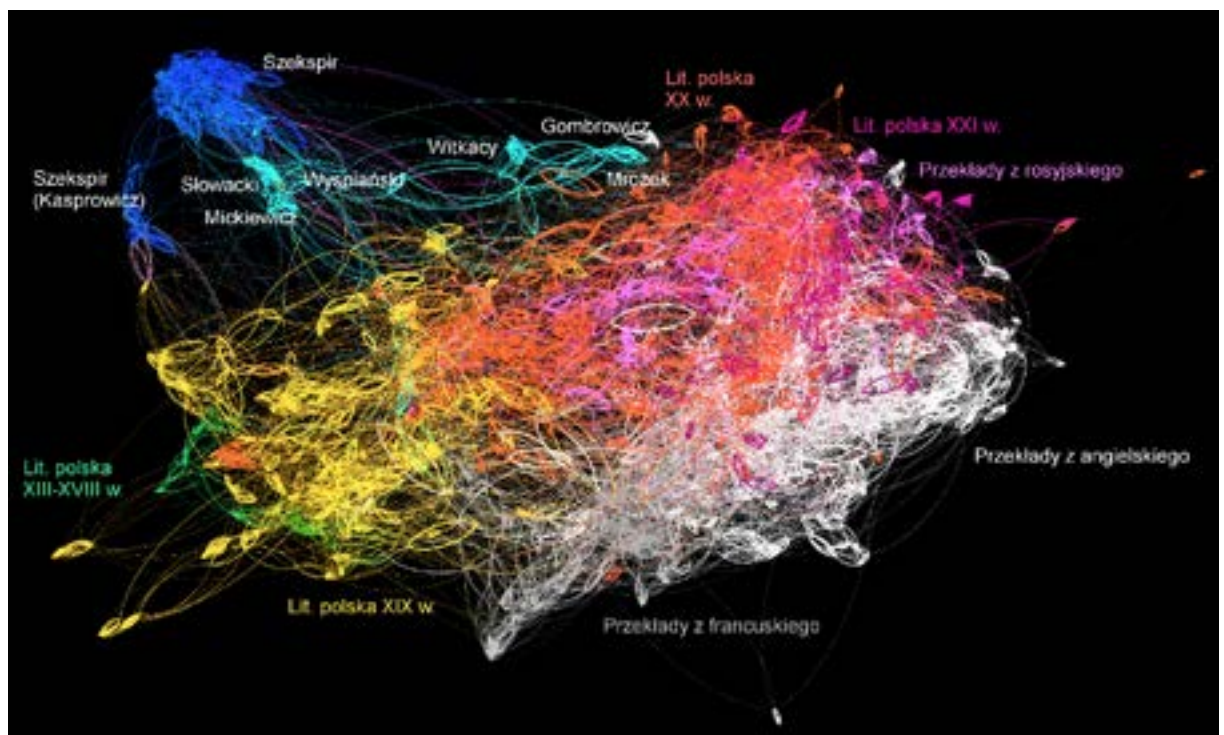

Graph 1. Network analysis of 2,548 texts on the basis of the frequency of the 2,000 most common words in the entire data set.

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[29]W. McCarty, *Getting There from Here. Remembering the Future of Digital Humanities: Roberto Busa Award Lecture 2013*, "Literary and Linguistic Computing" 2014, issue 29 (3), p. 197.

Similarly to the macroanalysis cited above of the significantly smaller body of Polish literature,[30] this network reveals a marked chronological pattern on the part of original Polish texts – even if, in more distant orbits on the graphs, less disciplined satellites appear. The earlier texts in the data set, indicated by the color green, tend to group together in the lower left corner of the graph. Nineteenth century literature (in yellow) shifts slightly up and to the right, after which twentieth century texts (in red) gradually proceed. The dark purple clusters in the upper right corner of the graph represent writing from the twenty-first century. The most important observation for this kind of visualization, moreover, is not so much the existence of chronological clusters, but their progressive evolution in one consistent direction. Literature on the subject has long since recognized the staggered evolution we might describe with the phrase "tiptoeing towards the Infinite". Some have effectively argued that this is not only the product of linguistic shifts, but reveals the effects of the evolution of literary stylometry - not stylistics.[31] Perhaps the best argument for this kind of interpretation is the occurrence of directed and evolving trends in the scope of a single author's body of work, whereas the existence of marked changes in only the Polish language become more difficult to defend. A network analysis of the work of Andrzej Sapkowski makes a good example (Graph 2.). This analysis shows that word frequency falls into three explicit time segments of a few years.
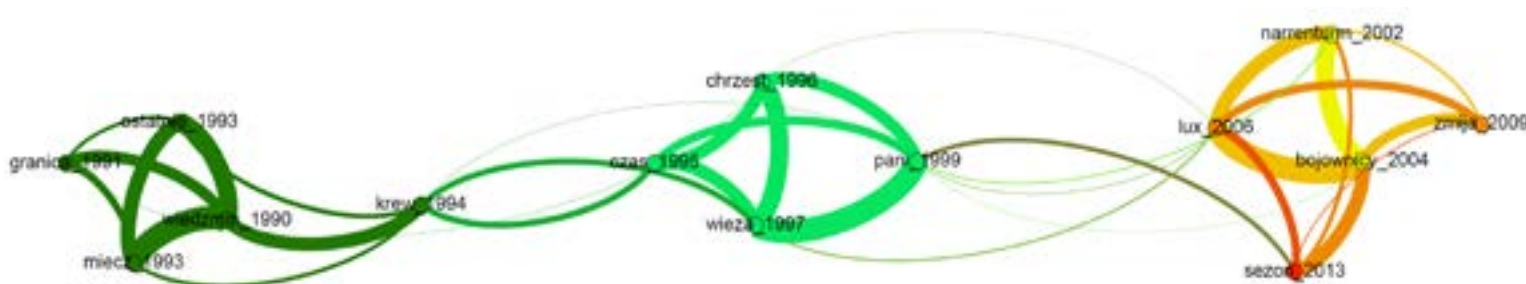
Graph 2. Periodization of Andrzej Sapkowski's body of work on the basis of the frequency of the most frequent words: 1990-95 in dark green; 1995-2000 in light green; twenty-first century in yellow.

Let us return, however, to Graph 1, which reveals other interesting phenomena. Polish literature (or rather, its *mainstream* novels and epics) runs from the left to the right; attached to it from the bottom is a large, gray-white mass. The gray lines link together Polish translations of French literature, while white lines designate translations from English. If the chronological signal is a trend common to the entire graph, it is difficult not to connect the appearance of French translations "earlier", or further to the left with French writers' earlier influence on literary output in Poland. English and American texts arrive later, appearing further to the right, and manage to infiltrate the fields of indigenous Polish literature more effectively, though not entirely. It is no accident that the translations themselves of French literature were made earlier than translations from English.

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[30] J. Rybicki, *Pierwszy rzut oka…*

[31] J. Burrows, *Tiptoeing into the Infinite: Testing for Evidence of National Differences in the Language of English Narrative,* [in:] ed. S. Hockey, N. Ide, *Research in Humanities Computing* issue 4, Oxford 1996, p. 1-33.

These, however, are not the only curious findings regarding translation produced by this visualization. Within the grey sea of Polish translations of French literature, we can discern several white islands: these are translations of Walter Scott. Moreover, on the grey-white border, we also find the early translations of Dickens. This case pertains to the two English-language novelists who were the first of their kind to be recognized on the banks of the Vistula. On this basis, one might guess that the system of translated novels is also impacted by chronological influence.

This is not, however, the only factor influencing the layout of clusters on this network graph. The first Polish translation of Charlotte Brontë's masterpiece *Jane Eyre* – translated into Polish in 1880 by Emilia Dobrzańska as *Janina* – clings closer to the grey French texts than the white English ones. This should come as no surprise, for the Polish version is not only abridged, but happens to use the French translation as an intermediary. Many French calques were observedin close readings and thus support this claim.[32] Several other older translations from English follow this trend for similar reasons, as we can reasonably suspect. In this manner "distant reading" can unearth surprising themes for the "close reader".

And finally: in this same French grey cluster, a red pattern emerges in a cluster of texts from Stendhal, Balzac and Proust, translated by Tadeusz Boy-Żeleński, also the original author of *Znaszli ten kraj* and *Marysieńka Sobieska*. With these texts, the Polish doctor found his way into a circle of translators whose stylometric fingerprint is not contingent on whether they write their own words or translate those of others. This is not the first time that quantitative research has revealed this exact feature of Boy's work[33], and it does not apply to him alone; there are several authors who translate in an entirely different style from how they write: when translating Juvenal from Latin into English, Samuel Johnson, just like Boy, "maintains his own tone", while John Dryden "finds a distinct not and holds it".[34] While these two great non-Slavic literatures have hardly come into contact with the bulk of the data set's original Polish texts, the light purple flicker of Russian translations, meanwhile, penetrates into the very center of the red zone of Polish twentieth-century literature. Russian science fiction, meanwhile, mingles with the dark purple cluster of contemporary Polish literature, within which there is no shortage of representatives of that same genre. The genre signal therefore appears in a rather characteristic manner;[35] while other behavioral patterns of translations from foreign Slavic languages suggest the presence of curious oscillations towards a certain *translationese*, which seems to grow in proportion with the differences between the original and target languages, especially given that the unfortunately sparse amount of translations from Czech (which are therefore unmarked on the graph) follow the behavioral trend of translations from Russian. However, the most curious effect associated with translation is the enormous distance between translations of Shakespeare

[32]D. Hadyna, *A controversial translation justified by the context: Janina, the first Polish version of Charlotte Brontë's Jane Eyre* (master's thesis), Kraków 2013.

[33]J. Rybicki, *Stylometric Translator Attribution: Do Translators Leave Lexical Traces?*, [in:] *The Translator and the Computer,* ed. T. Piotrowski, Ł. Grabowski, Wrocław 2013, p. 193-204.

[34]J. Burrows, *The Englishing of Juvenal: Computational Stylistics and Translated Texts*, "Style" 2002, nr 36, p. 677-699.

[35]See also: C. Schoech, *Fine-tuning our stylometric tools: Investigating authorship, genre, and form in French classical theater*, [in:] ed. K. Walter, K. Price, *Digital Humanities 2013 Conference Abstracts*, Lincoln 2013, p. 383-386.

– indicated in dark blue – and the white spot on the opposite edge of the network repre-
senting the rest of English literature in Polish translation. Of course one reason for such
a distinct boundary is the typological distinction, for "white" texts are exclusively prose.
This does not, however, fully explain the fact that Polish Shakespeare follows his own rules.
Although the data set analyzed here represents the work of nineteen different translators of
the English bard, Polish Shakespeare retains his own stylometric profile. Only Kasprowicz's
translations and a few others from the turn of the century diverge from this pattern – and
even then, only to a degree. Quite naturally, the light-blue trail of Polish dramas runs not
so far away (its chronology following the same current as the rest of Polish literature, mov-
ing from left to right) the sphere surrounding Shakespeare most markedly prolongs those
of its elements that use Shakespeare's influence as a standard and manifesto, as it were:
the romantic dramas of Mickiewicz and Słowacki, and appearing adjacent, the neoromantic
theater of the author of *The Tragicall Historie of Hamlet Prince of Denmark. According to the
Polish text of Józef Paszkowski, read and reconceived by St. Wyspiański* (*The Tragicall Historie of
Hamlet Prince of Denmark. Według tekstu polskiego Józefa Paszkowskiego, świeżo przeczytana
i przemyślana przez St. Wyspiańskiego).*[36]

All of these observations are united by one common law: as the machine is preoccupied
with calculations and pure graphics, the work of arranging the data points on the graph and
their classification still belongs to a rather "human" humanities. The human-interpreter
knows, after all, which point designates which text (even if it might be difficult to single
that point out from the thicket of dense networks), and that interpreter makes autono-
mous decisions to assign distinct colors to Shakespeare, twentieth-century Polish litera-
ture, translations from English, etc. The picture that begins to emerge must, by its very
nature, rely heavily on a traditional history of literature, which remains the first point of
departure in appraising the computer's visualizations; visualizations can reveal interesting
inconsistencies and connections that might be counterintuitive from the perspective of
traditional literary studies – and can likewise reveal a lack of connections. In light of this
interpretation, man intrudes on his research, even when he only determines the numbers
and categories by which he organizes his research: be it by author, epoch, genre, or language
of origin…

A machine, however, might relieve man of one of these actions. A machine can be ordered to
divide the analyzed texts into the desired number of groups. Man is still, in the end, choosing
the amount of groups, but the divisions might (though not necessarily) run entirely counter
to those arrived at by human knowledge of the texts in question. To achieve this end, the Ge-
phi package mentioned above has enormous value.

Let us review what happens when a computer tries to autonomously indicate – on the basis,
of course, of the smallest differences in the usage of frequently appearing words – how a set
of works diverge if we allow for two or more main groups. Graph 3 is a set of visualizations
using two, three, four and seventy groups.

[36]Kraków 1905.

Graph 3. Network analysis of the data set using a modular division into 2, 3, 4 and 70 groupings (starting from the upper-left).

With the possibility of dividing the texts into only two groups, the modular algorithm divides the data set into large clusters of prose in their original language and in translation (green) on the one hand, and Polish dramas and Shakespeare's dramas on the other (purple). A number of early Polish novels from the middle of the nineteenth century also belong to the second group (by Duchińska, Goszczyński, Niewiarowski, Michał Jezierski). The three-group graph is sorted into a group of early prose (green, dating up to the mid-twentieth century) and later prose together with the majority of translated works (purple); the Polish drama and Shakespeare (excluding Kasprowicz and his contemporaries) comprise a separate yellow cluster. After a further increase in the number of groups, author-based groupings begin to emerge. It is only when the computer can use seventy groups, however, that Polish romantic and neoromantic drama begin to diverge from Shakespeare. This is an interesting measure of the linguistic resemblance between these two categories that are literarily quite wedded.

Conclusions

The editor of this collection called Graph 1 an "unidentified Pollock"[37] – and truly, there is no point obscuring the fact that the description and commentary on visualizations of network analysis of over two-thousand texts begins to have ekphrastic connotations. One might even suggest that here, we are dealing with an interesting transformation rare in cultural studies:

[37]T. Mizerkiewicz, email from July 13 2017.

the aesthetics of the word, when passed through a linguistic-mathematical-statistical pro-
gramming filter creates, in the end, a new aesthetics – the aesthetics of the image. If we are
concerned, however, with scientific research and not with visual impressions, it is better not
to continue down this path, for the very attempts at scholarly objectivity that once led to
the foundation of quantitative analysis end here. Even in the last century, Edward Stachur-
ski wrote that "using statistical methods in linguistic and stylistic textual research allows
for a kind of confidence that the obtained results stand on objective foundations indepen-
dent from the reader's subjective judgements".[38] David Hoover echoes him: "Quantitative ap-
proaches to literature represent elements or characteristics of literary texts numerically, ap-
plying the powerful, accurate, and widely accepted methods of mathematics to measurement,
classification, and analysis."[39] Many a digital humanist has confessed to have been driven to
the world of computers by the cognitive nihilism of postmodernism, whose one true claim
should be that there is no one truth …[40]

We should not overemphasize this objectivity – as Maciej Eder cautions in the text accompa-
nying "a first glance at a map of Polish literature."[41] It is true that measurement and classifi-
cation are undertaken is such a way that the researcher's subjective choices play a moderate
role. This role is moderate, but still visible, for even the most self-aware and impartial scholar
must make a number of decisions that weigh on his conscience. How large a data set? When
does a data set become appropriately "representative"? Does "representative" imply: taking
account for the differences in the number of works contributed by various authors – so that
it is quite alright that Kraszewski contributes so many texts to the data set, for it is not his
"fault" that Schulz managed to write so few texts? Or perhaps it would be best to treat the
data "fairly", using egalitarian proportions? On the one hand, the disproportionate scales
of the various authors' material interferes with the linguistic balance of the text – frequent
words from Kraszewski's enormous body of work (as with those of Polish Shakespeare) leave
a significantly deeper imprint on the list for the entire data set than, say, Schulz's little gems.
At the same time, this does produce a complete portrait of Polish literature: Kraszewski, Jeż,
Papi and Lem wrote vast amounts; others significantly less, and this is a fact we cannot mod-
ify after the death of an author – and often it is so for their lives.

The second moment in the process of non-objective choice is the stage of setting the param-
eters for quantitative analysis. To reiterate: it is true that stylometry has not yet reached
a consensus on this point and continues to develop its methods to limit the influence of these
and other programming settings on the obtained results –in fact, this is one of the main pri-
orities of this academic community.[42] The doubts, however, linger: does averaging the results
of many individual analyses truly render the most reliable findings? Should we instead deter-
mine a single but ideal set of parameters – most often, of course, being the number of words
whose frequency we compare?

[38]E. Stachurski, *Słowa-klucze polskiej epiki romantycznej*, Kraków 1998, p. 11-12.

[39]D. Hoover, *Quantitative Analysis and Literary Studies*, [in:] ed. S. Schreibman, R. Siemens, *A Companion to Digital
    Literary Studies*. Oxford 2007, 518.

[40]W. McCarty, *Getting There…*, p. 190.

[41]M. Eder, *Metody ścisłe w literaturoznawstwie…*

[42]See also: eg. J. Rybicki, M. Eder, *Deeper Delta….*

And finally, a third moment occurs: the moment when everything is counted, the computer processing has mapped the data on one plain in all the colors of the rainbow – and the humanist arrives and observes. Does that humanist really see the objective truth in this tangle, or does he or she simply cater his own knowledge – and ignorance, for of course, he or she has not read all 2,500 texts, this much we can concede – to these colorful blobs?

I propose a slightly less ambitious scenario: given that we cannot say for sure how well the linguistic idiosyncrasies of the authors are conveyed in statistics of word frequency — those being "synsemantic" words, and since, for the time being, linguistics offers us no clear theories that might serve us as experimental humanists just as theoretical physics points the way for experimental research – let us make use of what we have. What we have is metaliterary and critical texts on the one hand, and on the other, a growing body of materials that support the claim that quantitative analysis often does reveal relationships as accurately as qualitative analysis. This being the case, every time stylometry turns up unexpected results incompatible with the "qualitative approach", perhaps it would be worthwhile to take this as a sign that new interpretations lie ahead. The simplest and least controversial usage of computer-based stylometry – authorial attribution – changes the landscape of the literary polysystem every time it uncovers or verifies who in fact wrote a given text. Perhaps it is worth extending our faith in quantitative analysis to apply to situations where quantitative analysis engages two texts or two authors whose similarities nobody thus far has considered? In the end, no doctor with any self respect would deliver an (often life-saving) diagnosis without reviewing the results of blood and urine tests. Stylometry offers the literary scholar precisely this type of laboratory method — perhaps it is worthwhile to make use of it?

KEYWORDS

MACROANALYSIS

Stylometry

DISTANT READING

ABSTRACT:

This articles presents the results of a quantitative analysis of frequently appearing words in a data set of over 2,500 Polish texts: Polish literature from the fourteenth to twenty-first century, and Polish translations from English, French, Russian and (to a lesser degree) other languages. The data set reveals a visible signal by type and by original language. The results also point to a definite stylometric specificity of Polish translations of Shakespeare, and their stylometric resemblance to Polish romantic and neoromantic dramas.

multidimensional analysis

network analysis

Polish literature

Polish translations

NOTE ON THE AUTHOR:

Jan Rybicki was born in 1963 and is a graduate of the Institute of English Philology at Jagiellonian University (1987). He has lectured at Krakow's Pedagogical University (1991-2000, 2001-2011) and at Rice University in Houston (1996-1997, 2000-2001). Since 2011 he has been an adjunct at Jagiellonian University's IEP. His research interests focus mainly on computer-based stylometry of literary language in the original and in translation. Aside from academic articles he translates English-language literature – he already has around thirty translated novels under his belt, by authors such as Kingsley Amis, John le Carré, Douglas Coupland, William Golding, Nadine Gordimer, Francis Scott Fitzgerald, Kazuo Ishiguro, Kenzaburo Oe and Kurt Vonnegut.

On Waves, Lands and Margins

Metaphors and the Possibilities for a Feminist History of Literature

Arleta Galant

The rhythm of feminism as an emancipatory social movement can be mapped using the metaphor and dynamic of the wave: first wave, second wave, and third wave[1]... Needless to say, these waves describe the state of feminism in the United States and Western Europe, but apply to the Polish context as well – and my focus lies here. In the context of literary studies, feminism's waves have more complicated meanings, which remain significant for the ways in which we speak of the tradition, history and contemporary state of women's literature. In terms of its literary scope, second wave feminism turns out to have the widest range.[2] In Poland, its nature is both extremely paradoxical and entirely understandable. Paradoxical is the attempt to use an event not yet recognized in the Polish environment as a reference point for a worldview. Understandable, however, is the fact that *women's studies* first emerged as a field within Polish feminist scholars' interest, which, thanks to second wave feminism (if we continue to draw from oceanographic language) *flowed* into the academy and became the institutional extension of the socio-political revolt of the 1960s.[3]

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[1] We recall that the first wave of feminism is characterized as the struggle for equal rights for women, taking place at the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth centuries, while the second wave began in the 1960s, and the third wave is usually associated with feminism of the 1990s.

[2] See K. Kłosińska, *Feministyczna krytyka literacka*, Katowice 2010.

[3] See B. Chołuj, *Różnica między women's studies i gender studies*, "Katedra" 2001, issue 1.

In her text *Feminism in "Waves": Useful Metaphor or Not?,* Linda Nicholson recalls the genesis and original contexts of the metaphorics of the wave.[4] The metaphor was originally intended to designate the relationship between contemporary claims on gender equality and the past. The term "wave" sought to locate feminist activities and feminist reflections within the tradition of the struggle for women's rights, and at the same time, flag them so that they are not ascribed to historical scandal, or, as Nicholson writes, defined as a historical aberration or regression, but instead belong together with the activities initiated by nineteenth-century suffragists[5]. In this way, we might add, to evoke the metaphor of the wave is to establish and depict a continuity of women's experiences, which has in turn allowed us to accent their specific variations and consistency, their newness and continuity, and their unity and internal ruptures. The wave structure carried with it an emancipatory blow and a pull towards the future in the name of sisterhood and solidarity. Each wave's breadth was measurable according to the span of its era's transhistorical thoughts on the patriarchy, and inversely: the transhistorical imagination of the patriarchy forms the basis for the breadth of feminism's waves.

Nicholson recalls the meaningful implications of "watery" connotations in order to cast doubt on their usefulness, for in the American scholar's view, they do not do justice to the complexity of feminism. This is particularly true for its contemporary iteration, which has proven to have a less collective, less agreeable, and certainly less monolithic range. In Nicholson's opinion, when we consider the kaleidoscopic nature of contemporary feminism, its departure from a movement-based format, its lack of obvious social effects and its persistent ties to changes conceived and postulated by feminists, we see that all these features point to the radio wave as a replacement metaphor for the oceanic wave. This new metaphor does a better job of grasping the heterogeneity of political realities and generational relations that interest Nicholson[6]. I will revisit the theme of the wave concept's usefulness (or lack thereof, but at the moment, what interests me – as a small contribution - is rather the fates, contexts, uses) of what turns out to be the controversial figure of the wave in projects associated with a feminist history of literature.

It sometimes happens that feminist literary criticism is embedded with the wave dynamic, but women's literature less so.[7] This does not, however, mean that the oceanic metaphor is absent from discussions of work by women: for example, we find its traces – not always explicitly alluding to the wave itself, which structures thinking on feminist activism – in the work of Elaine Showalter, the scholar perhaps most frequently cited by Polish literary historians, or to speak more cautiously, by gynocritically-oriented Polish literary historians. When drawing from the British scholar's observations, they do not necessarily adopt her

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[4] L. Nicholson, *Feminism in "Waves": Useful Metaphor or Not?*, "New Politics" 48/2010 http://newpol.org/content/feminism-waves-useful-metaphor-or-not (12 June 2017)

[5] Ibid.

[6] The author evokes another scholar's suggestion: Edna Kaeh Garrison, *Are We On a Wavelength Yet? On Feminist Oceanography, Radios and Third Wave Feminism*, in: *Different Wavelengths: Studies of the Contemporary Women's Movement*, ed. J. Reger, New York and London 2005.

[7] See S. Benstock, S. Ferriss, S. Woods, *A Handbook of Literary Feminisms*, New York 2002.

visual language.[8] Meanwhile, the author of the now-classic title *A Literature of Their Own,*[9] developing her own project for a history of English literature founded on an opposition between masculine history and women's tradition, built out a story of a creative and existential community of women, and located this community in the lands of a long-lost but rediscovered continent: a submerged but now recovered, resurfacing (via energy waves?) Atlantis.[10]

The ultimate history of this newly discovered land that was to furnish proof for the existence of real texts and experiences of women not yet deformed by patriarchal culture is well known. As it turns out, there is no "island of women", no alternate world, no secret women's language or literature. In brief, it turns out that no single *no man's land* is possible. Studying the past and the creative work of women can not, therefore, proceed according to any script that envisions a methodological encounter of the first order. Instead, scholarship has to make use of a series of displacements.[11]

The objective of Showalter's literary history has therefore become an attempt to grasp the continuity of women's writing through a reconstruction of shared themes, intergenerational reference points and aesthetic contexts. This reconstruction must, however, be accompanied by distanced perspectives that also attend to the requisite categories found within the framework of the male-centric canon. It becomes necessary to pose questions concerning the economic, legal, and experiential mechanisms of women's writing, for theorizing work by women without creating anew the conditions of its time would make academic access impossible. Metaphors of the wave and a virgin land undergo a rupture here, and cease to truly resonate as means for formulating a history of women's literature. In fact, the British scholar elsewhere identifies Atlantis as a wild realm or Dark Continent[12], but these metaphors appear in entirely new contexts – not so much in reference to the specificity of women's literature, but concerning, rather, the methodological necessity of establishing relations between women's literature and the male canon. In other words, this time around the metaphors refer to what is different, but not necessarily particular.

It bears mention, however, that the rupture we describe is not totalizing. When discussing the aesthetic and conscious dimensions of writing by women in *A Literature of Their Own,* Showalter does, in fact, (as the author of *Feministyczne krytyki literackiej* and others have astutely noticed) "consistently employ the categories of nineteenth-century evolutionists: development, progress, and mainly, evolution"[13]. If we scrutinize her proposal for a theory of

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[8] It is both interesting and telling that Ewa Kraskowska, when writing about the historical and literary gains yielded by Showalter's project, uses metaphors that are rather "earthly" or "grounded". She writes, for instance, of "literary tectonics" and "a strong, stable ground"... E. Kraskowska, *Polskie pisarstwo kobiet w wieku XX – projekt syntezy,* "Ruch Literacki" 2012, vol. 2, p. 142. K. Majbroda writes about a few other metaphors present in historical and literary writing by Polish feminist scholars in *Feministyczna krytyka literatury w Polsce po 1989 roku. Tekst, dyskurs, poznanie z odmiennej perspektywy*, Kraków 2012.

[9] E. Showalter, *A Literature of Their Own. British Women Novelists from Brontë to Lessing,* Princeton 1977.

[10] E. Showalter, *A Literature of Their Own,* in: *Feminist Literary Theory. A Reader*, ed. M. Eagleton, Blackwell 2011. See also: M. Świerkosz, *W przestrzeniach tradycji. Proza Izabeli Filipiak i Olgi Tokarczuk w sporach o literaturę, kanon i feminizm*, Kraków 2014, p. 37.

[11] See A. Galant, *Prywatne, publiczne, autobiograficzne. O dziennikach i esejach Jana Lechonia, Zofii Nałkowskiej, Marii Kuncewiczowej i Jerzego Stempowskiego*, Warsaw 2010, p.20-30.

[12] E. Showalter, *Feminist Criticism in the Wilderness*, "Critical Inquiry", 1981 vol. 8, no. 2, p. 201.

[13] K. Kłosińska, op. cit., p. 104.

women's literature, we notice that the history of emotion inscribed in this theory is closely linked to the metaphor of the wave. While anger may remain essential, as we see most clearly in her discussion of the sensation novel,[14] it is in good company: equally important here are boredom, joy, and other emotions.

In gender studies and literary criticism, it is precisely the confessional impulse or, more broadly construed, emotions that so often co-create the methodological project of reading literature:[15] the emotions of authors, narrators and protagonists all remain significant in the field of feminist textual critique. Showalter's book is not the only proof of this. What I personally find curious is – to return to watery language – the stream of reflections that have facilitated yet another attempt to discuss the past of women's literature. This is a task that deserves its own book, in which the premises of continuity and progress would have to concede to that which is unpredictable if not entirely eccentric and even controversial to narratives of emancipation.

Such an "emotional" project for literary history would require an exceptionally expanded perspective and would require not only a revisiting of aesthetic questions (concerning the literary articulation of feelings), but above all, a departure from the conviction dominating feminist critique that the history of gender cultural identity is a history of suppression and emotional subjugation.[16] Perhaps it is a matter of adjusting the optics to a still larger scope and interrogating the influence of what we might, in fact, call a cultural-literary history of emotion on concepts of gender and gender's role in the construction of subjectivity.[17]

There is one more perspective on the study of women's literature that is underwritten by the wave metaphor: yet another interpretive possibility confirming the metaphor's usefulness. Monika Świerkosz addresses this directly in her book *In the Spaces of Tradition / W przestrzeniach tradycji*, in her section on contemporary Polish feminist discourse, titled *Lost between the waves or between methodologies / Zagubione między falami czy między metodologiami?*[18] Świerkosz analyzes the discourse of Polish feminist scholars and attests to the complicated generational relations within this movement — complicated and frustrating due, in some part, to the lack of a second wave in Polish feminism, as well as to the fact that the second wave came to the shores of the Wisła River significantly later than it reached the countries of Western Europe (in the 1990s) and had a character that was more "academic" than popular. Świerkosz identifies the incontinuities that determine the specific nature of Polish feminism, but offers the thesis that Poland's native waves of feminism could be more effectively organized not by generation, but by worldview.[19]

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[14]See E. Showalter, *A Literature of Their Own. British Women Novelists from Brontë to Lessing*, op. Cit., p. 180.

[15]I. Iwasiów, *Gatunki i konfesje w badaniach "gender"*, "Teksty Drugie" 1999, issue 6, p.41-55.

[16]I am inspired here by many, including W. M. Reddy, *Przeciw konstruktywizmowi. Etnografia historyczna emocji*, trans. M. Rajtar, in: *Emocje w kulturze*, ed. M. Rajtar, J. Straczuk, Warsaw 2012.

[17]See. ibid, p. 130. I believe that a good example of partial research on the ideas I sketch out here is E. Kraskowska's essay – *Z dziejów honoru (w powieści XIX i XX wieku)*, in: ibid, *Czytelnik jako kobieta*, Poznań 2007, p. 129-165.

[18]M. Świerkosz, *op. cit..*, p.79-89.

[19]Ibid, p. 82.

This is an interesting conclusion, which might also apply as a means for interpreting contemporary women's literature. As a helpful category for grouping texts, attitude, or worldview, should be broadly understood. Quite simply – this is not a question of the author's political views but of their vision of the world and of literature's social uses, their aesthetic choices, as well as their attitude towards women's tradition and/or feminist writing, which I would locate within the net of relations tying literary conventions to the force of individual experience. The wave metaphor ought to cede space to a more dynamic process: unity and continuity would no longer be the orientation points for analysis, but rather all countercurrents embedded within the wave.

This view would demand a deeper re-evaluation, and in this article, I merely reference it. I realize that to overtake familial and generational metaphors deeply rooted in feminist thought as proposed above would be no small challenge.[20]

In addition to waves and lands, feminist scholars of literature have evoked and continue to evoke the metaphor of the margins. I take the margins as a metaphor precisely because even the current overview of feminist critique and its scholarship maintains that the margin amounts to something larger than a (spatial) category for describing literature, praised mainly as a solution to the now-disputed spectre of a comprehensive, linear map of literary history. The margin is something larger still, than a textual game of sense-making, a game of peripheral meanings to deconstruct the canonical interpretation of texts. Finally, the margin is still larger than a maneuver to displace power from the center. Of course, all these contexts and meanings of the margin in literary gender studies are simultaneously present and important,[21] but in literary feminist critique, the word evokes additional meanings.

In her book *Canon-woman-novel. On the Work of Józefa Kisielnicka / Kanon-kobieta-powieść. Wokół twórczości Józefy Kisielnickiej*[22] Aleksandra Krukowska discusses the margin, referencing Maria Janion, among others. Krukowska mobilizes an archeological metaphor that has much in common with the second-wave rhetoric described above. Marginalized, extra-canonical literary texts by women demand– writes Krukowska - our interpretive excavations, our pursuit of the remainders, "micronovels, snippets, fragments, everyday notes."[23] The margin describes the realm Krukowska intends to unveil as women's literary treasure trove. This simultaneously becomes problematic in the context of Krukowska's project, which is concerned with nineteenth-century popular prose:

> Polish literature always reverts to tradition, and I do not mean to undermine this basis by searching for that which is less obvious – a prototype for contemporary and twentieth-century interwar women writers, writers excluded from our "national treasure" and yet so very present in the actual experience of our great grandmothers. Has this reading revealed to me a "second" history? I will

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[20]The germ of this undertaking might be a text by Inga Iwasiów who, when writing elsewhere on Polish women's literature from the early twenty-first century, uses the "watery" metaphor of "backwater" - *Cofnięcie czy cofka*, "Pogranicza" 2005, p.56-62.

[21]See K. Kłosińska, *Czytać na marginesie, pisać na marginesie*, "Katedra" 2001, issue 3.

[22]A. Krukowska, *Kanon-kobieta-powieść. Wokół twórczości Józefy Kisielnickiej*, Szczecin 2010.

[23]Ibid, p. 62.

admit straight away` that it did not so much unveil an alternative literary history, as it revealed the very conditions of its marginality. This experience is well known to feminist literary historians and avengers. It turns out that to work on Józefa Kisielnicka's body of work requires an enumeration of the mechanisms by which literature functions, and above all, by which its reception functions. The actual interpretation of text takes up much less space in this reading and turns out, (somewhat contrary to my expectations) in spite of everything, to be marginal.[24]

The margin is therefore impossible as an alternative space. Its contingent function, its relation to the canon, to literature of the "center" and to the impact of all these things on the status, circulation, and public and private reading uses of marginalized texts become necessary conditions for historical literary analysis. A focus on the text expands into the mechanisms that co-create that text and govern its literary messaging. The specific conditions of women's writing inform the specificity of the output, and the scholar takes these in turn as the basis for claiming the need to revise literary studies' evaluation thus far of texts by women.

These proceedings allows us to locate "second-tier" women's literature on a truly broad plane: not removed to the margin, but in close proximity to the main literary current. Nineteenth-century popular prose, viewed as the "primary texts" that sparked the works of interwar and contemporary writers, bears witness to the airtight borders demarcating the canon's fringes. It bears mention that in Aleksandra Krukowska's book, the margin, understood as an archeological metaphor, loses its confrontational potential and opens a possibility for peaceful relations, so to speak. The margin becomes a hypothetical tool for reevaluating the concepts of literary history, and provokes doubts concerning the horizon of readers' expectations, institutional literary critique, and the interweaving of gender and genre, etc.

The margin/marginality as a mildly confrontational or non-confrontational metaphor and concept remains, in any case, proper to Polish feminist literary critique.[25] This might be explained by the engagement of the canon by scholars against whom and together with whom a *gender studies* native to Poland developed in the 1990s and at the beginning of this century. The Polish literary canon has a specific nature and often excellently camouflages its own internal variations. One of the many scholars who speak to this point is Błażej Warkocki. His book *Man Unknown. Polish Prose Against Otherness / Homo niewiadomo. Polska proza wobec odmienności*[26] follows after German Ritz in demonstrating that the homoerotic tradition's presence in Polish modernist prose is not marginal but central.

> What do we mean by the specificity of the Polish homosexual Mystery, which leads – as Ritz claims– to a sector of homosexuality within the Polish canon 'in the case of most comparative literatures'? Ritz identifies the poetics of 'inexpressible desire' and ties it to the discourse of modernism. Homosexual literature expressed the impossibility of expression. It availed itself of codes, signs, and subterfuges, and operated according to elements of high culture, where it quickly found its home.

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[24]Ibid, p. 50.

[25]This claim does not pertain to *close reading*. See K. Kłosińska, *Czytać na marginesie*, op. cit.

[26]B. Warkocki, *Homo niewiadomo. Polska proza wobec odmienności*, Warsaw 2007. Warkocki's book is a queer work, not a feminist one. And yet I include him in close proximity to feminist texts, since some of the claims he proposes have become more or less critical resolutions of questions posed in literary gender studies.

Love and death became tangled in an unravelable modernist knot (…). In short: homosexuality became an art and can therefore withstand any form of social reality. Oppression did not exist.[27]

Warkocki seldom mobilizes the concept of the margin. When he writes about instances of alterity within the canon, however, he reveals the paradox (or simply the misfortune) of narratives of "otherness" current in literary discourse of that time, or of the opening (as well as the closed circle of canonical texts) towards "the other", which is located precisely in marginal spaces on which it became possible to project a fantasy of excess.[28]

The questions: at the margins meaning where, exactly?; the other, meaning who?, have become important for any literary analysis that utilizes the strategy of *re-writing* interpretations domesticated in the canon as well as *writing them away* from the canonical center. This is a matter of reinterpreting literary texts and appreciating motifs located at the margins of historical interpretations, but essential for understanding and approaching a history of women or of alterity.[29] In this way, the margin has recovered a power that is revealing if not revelatory, which has enabled the restructuring of literary texts within literary history, somewhat unaligned with the canon.

We might add that in the concepts sketched here, marginality has little in common with post-structural theory's fetish for affirming the fragmentary, the parenthetical, and the peripheral, and is rather closer in character to a figure of essential alienation and deracination that recalls the words of bell hooks: "To be in the margin is to be part of the whole but outside the main body."[30] The sense behind these words has a dimension that is political, experiential existential, and not least, textual.

Yet the margin, as a metaphor not of the auxiliary, subsidiary or adjacent, but of the deep, wide edge located within the realm of the literary canon, turns out to be equally important for the analysis of poetic writing by women. The texts included in the volume *Private/Public. Genres of Women's Writing/Prywatne/publiczne. Gatunki pisarstwa kobiecego*[31] demonstrate this. The authors of this publication, working towards a gendered genealogy, mainly evoke the concepts of new historicism. I do not intend to repeat here the already well known and often discussed methodological alliance between feminist critique and the theories of new historicism.[32] I do, however, wish to draw attention to a certain detail that is immediately tied, first off, to the pursuit of a "new set of terms"[33] used to interpret and write a history of women's literature. Secondly, I wish to focus on elements of literary history narrative that allow us to grasp the genealogical choices of women writers within the context of the canon (not alongside it, not outside of it, and not at its borders).

[27]Ibid, p. 191.

[28]See A. Galant, *„Ja" czyli „ty", „inny" czyli kto*, in: idem, *Prywatne, publiczne, autobiograficzne. O dziennikach i esejach Jana Lechonia, Marii Kuncewiczowej i Jerzego Stempowskiego,* Warsaw 2010.

[29]See T. Kaliściak, *Płeć Pantofla. Odmieńcze męskości w polskiej prozie XIX i XX wieku*, Warsaw 2017.

[30]bell hooks, *Feminist Theory: From Margin to Center,* Pluto Press, London 2000, p. xvi

[31]*Prywatne/publiczne. Gatunki pisarstwa kobiecego*, ed. I. Iwasiów, Szczecin 2008. See also G. Ritz, *Gatunek literacki a gender*, in: idem, *Nić w labiryncie pożądania. Gender i płeć w literaturze polskiej od romantyzmu do postmodernizmu*, Warsaw 2002.

[32]See K. Majbroda, op. cit.

[33]S. Greenblatt, *Towards a Poetics of Culture*, "Southen Review", 1987 no. 1, p.13-14.

The place of the margin has also been described with terms such as an "alcove" (Iwasiów), "the reverse side" (Galant), and "microhistory" (Czerska). It is, of course, not incidental that these terms appear in a book devoted to literary genre that takes the relationship between private and public as a theoretical rubric. This is a means for marking women's letters with the aura of the unofficial, the hidden, the classified, and the closed. This is not, however, the end of the story. This is also about what we might call the subversive "safe deposit" value of women's letters. The role of women in the history of literary genres is situated, settled, and "assigned lodging" at the very center of the process of literary history[34].

The alcove and the alley as a substitute for the margin suggest that we are dealing with a somewhat supplementary form of thought on the literary achievements of women authors. These scholars make an attempt to reorganize women's achievements from a genealogical perspective and therefore speak more frequently of genre oscillations and modifications than negotiations. It is obvious that, in the end, what has been given simply cannot be negotiated.

[34]"Isolated womanhood" (similarly to homosexuality) is as much the counterpoint to a (masculine) discourse of culture, as it is a counterpoint undone at the very center of that discourse, covert and unnoticed, but in such a way that it co-creates that discourse. This is why it is not a " women's alternative genre: this, for me is a point of departure (and entry), and a genre alliance, in the context of which I read the essayist Kuncewiczowa as a revision of essays that are canonical, official, and by a huge margin written by men. (…) The history of women and their role in culture, however marginalized, is not, if you ask me, marginal – the history of women and their role in culture "does not occur" at the margins, but in the very framework of our reality and our tradition". A. Galant, *"Potłuczone klisze". Eseistyka Marii Kuncewiczowej*, in: *Prywatne/publiczne*, op. cit., p. 89-90.

KEYWORDS

feminist literary critique

Abstract:

This article takes up a consideration of certain metaphors present in feminist projects of literary history. The essay's author formulates questions about the meanings and critical and descriptive potential of the metaphors of the wave, the land, and the margin. In the case of describing women's literature, these questions highlight not only the fundamental dilemmas resulting from attempts to conceptualize women's literature in broader comparative perspectives, but they also allow us to identify the most important means for grasping women's writing in terms of its relation with sociopolitical transformations, academic and literary biographies, and the canon.

metaphor

THE HISTORY OF WOMEN'S LITERATURE

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Critical Constellations

Dorota Kozicka, Katarzyna Trzeciak

The concept of the "constellation", applied to literary and cultural studies[1] broadly construed, describes the relations that link ideas to things. In this context, the idiosyncrasies of things push back against universal tendencies assigned by ideas. These relations are based on the accumulation and classification, not on a hierarchical ordering.

The concept of the constellation originates in Walter Benjamin's observation from *The Origin of German Tragic Drama:*

> Ideas are to objects as constellations are to stars. This means, in the first place, that they are neither their concepts nor their laws. They do not contribute to the knowledge of phenomena, and in no way can the latter be the criteria with which to judge the existence of ideas. The significance of phenomena for ideas is confined to their conceptual elements. Whereas phenomena determine the scope and content of the concepts with encompass them, by their existence, by what they have in common, and by their differences, their relationship to ideas is the opposite of this inasmuch as the idea, the objective interpretation of phenomena-or rather their elements-determines their relationship to each other. Ideas are timeless constellations, and by virtue of the elements being seen as points in such constellations, phenomena are subdivided and at the same time redeemed.[2]

Benjamin's figure of the constellation offers an alternative model for organizing things in the field of knowledge that helps us avoid the Platonic-Kantian pitfall of rooting recognition in the division between noumena and phenomena. The constellation breaks out of this dualism by demonstrating the interdependency between things and ideas. As the author of the encyclopedic entry for *Constellation* David Carniglia writes, "Things should be organized in such a way that they gave rise to 'ideas'. But ideas are not radically separate from objects."[3] In other words, things are not derived from absolute ideas, but ideas themselves constitute the very source for the materiality of things.

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[1] Such a broadly conceived understanding of "constellation" as held by strategies of philosophy, cultural studies and literary studies is proposed by David Carniglia, who provided the entry for *Constellation* in *The Encyclopedia of Literary and Cultural Theory* – see. *The Encyclopedia of Literary and Cultural Theory*, vol. 1: *Literary Theory from 1900 to 1966*, ed. G. Castle, Wiley-Blackwell: 2011, p. 128-130.

[2] W. Benjamin, *The Origin of the German Tragic Drama,* trans. J. Osborne, London 1999, p. 34

[3] D. Carniglia, *Constellation,* ibid, p. 129.

Contrary to Plato's notion of the idea, Benjamin recognizes ideas' material entanglements that link aesthetic sensibility with the material appearance of the object as historical artifact. This very linkage justifies the astronomical metaphor of the constellation as a starting place for revising the very concept of history. In *Arcades Project,* his "constellational" history of nineteenth-century Paris, Benjamin describes the mediating function of the constellation as that which is impermanent and based on a violent act of intrusion, disrupting the cause-and-effect logic of historical recognition that underlies all Enlightenment thought favoring causality and linearity. The constellation as an approach to history has implications for the scholar's mindset as well. His opinion is no longer an antiquarian reconstruction, but the compilation and collation of heterogeneous historical elements derived simultaneously from the present status of the historical phenomenon, and the contemporary condition of its researcher.[4]

> It's not that what is past casts its light on what is present, or what is present its light on what is past; rather, image is that wherein what has been comes together in a flash with the now to form a constellation. In other words, image is dialectics at a standstill. For while the relation of the present to the past is a purely temporal, continuous one, the relation of what-has-been to the now is dialectical: is not progression but image, suddenly emergent.[5]

Located within historical thought, Benjamin's constellation owes much to Siegfried Giedion, an architectural historian who has described the opinion of any historical scholar as a matter of building a constellation from fragments "scattered broadcast, like stars across the firmament." Giedion argues that:

> The meaning of history arises in the uncovering of relationships. That is why the writing of history has less to do with facts as such than with their relations. These relations will vary with the shifting point of view, for, like constellations of stars, they are ceaselessly in change. Every true historical image is based on relationship, appearing in the historian's choice from among the fullness of events, a choice that varies with the century and often with the decade [...][6]

The relativity of the constellation emphasized by Giedion dovetails with Benjamin's findings, according to which ideas appear to the scholar and critic as meaningful within complementary and variable systems and entanglements. Benjamin's spatial metaphor discards the binary opposition and underscores the need for a simultaneous understanding that would include materialist vision.

Benjamin's concept of the constellation became a critical tool for an "innovative understanding of history",[7] while more recent applications of this metaphor point to its effectiveness in literary and cultural studies. Departing from Benjamin's notion of the historicity of things and modifying our

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[4] In Benjamin's opinion, the historical method makes it possible to "redeem" details of material fragments and to "absolve" them from the totalizing power of concepts. Benjamin's messianic rhetoric, as well as his emphasis on the possibility of distinguishing "ideas" from "concepts" has been an object of critique for Adorno, who revises the concept of the "constellation" – see N. Friesen, *Wandering Star: The Image of the Constellation in Benjamin, Giedion and McLuhan,* p. 2, available at: http://learningspaces.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2013/06/Wandering-Star-BenjaminGiedionMcLuhan21.pdf

[5] W. Benjamin, *The Arcades Project,* , trans. Howard Eiland and Kevin McLaughlin, Cambridge 1999, p. 477.

[6] S. Giedion, *Mechanization takes Command: A Contribution to Anonymous History*, Oxford 1970 [1948], p. 2

[7] D. Cerniglia, *Constellation*, ibid, p. 129.

definition of the constellation to emphasize its condition of relativity, Theodor Adorno offers an interesting application for the metaphor within literary studies. The author of *Aesthetic Theory* describes Benjamin's constellation as "metaphysical" and mired in mysticism, while he himself gropes towards a critical understanding of the function of art as the refusal of any kind of synthesis, summation, or ahistorical universality.[8] In Adorno's writing, the constellation runs counter to any philosophy of identity and in the favor of non-identity, that would not reduce that which is singular to universal categories of understanding. For a literary studies perspective, Adorno's revised notion of the constellation ultimately drove the development of a constellational model of reading, and a tendency to treat the metaphor as a definition for the very act of reading: "And as historical artifact, the work of art reminds us of the passage of time; it does not present itself to the viewer or reader in the pristine condition of its original conception, but rather with the accumulation of years, perhaps centuries, of wear and tear, transmission and reception, damage and reconstruction."[9]

Within this conception of the constellation, the act of reading becomes the only condition for the work of art, for the practice of reading reveals itself to be embedded in historical consciousness while offering itself as a tool for discovering that which remains unsaid about the work. In the constellational mode of reading proposed by Renée R. Trilling, each poem of medieval Anglo-Saxon poetry read in this way is a fragment of the past that demands recognition in its own material form through a simultaneous assessment of its aesthetic value. Both these mandates can be enacted precisely through the constellational practice of reading, historicity, and the autonomy of the thing. As a constellation, the act of reading allows one to unveil the politics of time and to reactivate that which, due to differently politicized moments, necessarily became cut out and forgotten. Trilling writes that the gain of constellational reading is the discovery of the truth "not in the work itself, but in the constellation […] Truth resides in the tension between the similarities and differences, extremes and averages, which comprise the constellation-as such."[10] Thus, the fruits of reading amount to the discovery of complex discursive practices that have determined and continue to determine, in the reader's own moment, the interpretive status of the original literary text.

By departing from Benjamin's "mysticism" of the constellation, passing through Adorno's materiality and heterogeneity of history, and arriving at a constellational model of reading, we can shed light on this concept's movement through the humanities. To use Mieke Bal's formulation, this "travelling concept,"[11] which made its way into the methodologies of literary studies from a critique of the Enlightenment's vision of history as a linear process of recognition, ultimately defines the reading process as a "continuous oscillation between the individual's realm of human

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[8] Adorno's doubts were provoked in particular by two aspects of Benjamin's understanding of the constellation – his assertion of the discrete character of ideas and concepts, by which concepts mask their own status as concepts, and the supposed "timelessness" of the constellation. Adorno highlights this second aspect, explaining that if the relations between stars constitute an entity of the constellation, then their "timelessness" is inevitably embedded in historical permeability – see. S. Jarvis, *Constellations: Thinking the Non-identical* [in:] ibid, *Adorno: A Critical Introduction,* Routledge: New York 1998, p. 176.

[9] R. R. Trilling, *Ruins in the Realm of Thoughts*: *Reading as Constellation in Anglo-Saxon Poetry,* "The Journal of English and Germanic Philology" 2/2009, vol. 108, p. 143, available at: http://www.jstor.org/stable/20722719

[10] Ibid, p. 148.

[11] Mieke Bal describes "travelling concepts" as flexible, for they "travel – between disciplines, between individual scholars, between historical periods, and between geographically dispersed academic communities. Between disciplines, their meaning, reach, and operational value differ." See M. Bal, *Travelling Concepts in the Humanities: A Rough Guide,* Toronto 2002, p. 24.

history and the artifact's place in the history of objects."[12] An invaluable benefit of adapting the constellation metaphor to literary studies is the capacity to locate the act of interpretation within the scope of this oscillation, which is simultaneously the battlefield of heterogeneous forces. The constellational act of reading, meanwhile, leads to their unveiling and to the exposure of the imprint they leave on the work of art. Encountering the literary text within a constellation of other texts and their anachronistic interpretation not only allows us to recognize its inconsistencies and antagonisms as the effects of the historical transformations of reading, but to recognize Benjamin's sense of the "intransient" not as a universal, timeless and therefore indisputable category, but as the effect of discursive forces rooted in the totalizing exertions of concepts.

This short genealogy of the "travelling" constellation metaphor does not exhaust its potential as a research method for the human sciences. The concept of the "critical constellation" proposed here includes the concept's applications identified here, while revising the points of its trajectory and locating discourses of literary critique within the field of the "material artifact". This displacement not only allows us to step beyond the "silence of things", as Trilling has proposed, but also allows us to develop new forms for the visibility of critical discourses. Among these forms, the act of laying bare the conditions of critique deserves special emphasis. This does not entail the historical reconstruction of the reception of literary texts, but the unveiling of the historically materialized status of critical languages.

The concept of the constellation has already been discussed in Polish scholarship within the context of critique. In his writing on literary critique as the object of historical and literary studies, Janusz Sławiński has described a collection of texts "constituted through mutual references to the work itself using the term 'constellation'. Sławiński has recognized the constellation as "one of the most natural ways of grouping critical claims" and for the more pronounced whole from one critic's set of claims on various subjects, because the whole collects the "elements of diverse literary facts."[13] Michał Głowiński has also invoked these claims, introducing a constellation of "emancipations", and emphasizing even in his introduction that "the constellation has much to say of the critical texts that affirm its own concept, and comparing critical works on one artifact might allow us to demonstrate distinctions and points of contact, drawing to the surface the critical styles that crystallize out of the writing amassed around one object, but also the various forms of understanding for a critical entity, its functions and responsibilities."[14] In keeping with this claim, he demonstrates the idiosyncrasy of critique tied to the work of art and argues that the most important properties of an epoch's literary critique are reflected in a constellation of "emancipations". According to Głowiński, it is quite clear moreover that the biggest impetus for these "revelations" was Wyspiański's work. Głowiński argues that Wyspiański's originality stimulates interpretive ingenuity to confront a broad and diversified set of themes and the demonstration of one's critical craft. By linking analytical precision with comparative studies and an expanded conceptual context, the Warsaw scholar's excellent observations hone in on the study of a given epoch's literary critique.

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[12]R. R. Trilling, *Ruins in the Realm of Thoughts*, p. 147.

[13]J. Sławiński, *Krytyka literacka jako przedmiot badań historycznoliterackich*, [in:] *Prace wybrane*, vol. IV, Kraków 2000, p. 149-150.

[14]M. Głowiński, *Konstelacja "Wyzwolenia",* "Pamiętnik Literacki" 1990 issue 2, p.35.

In his text on literary critique, Janusz Sławiński's remarks on the constellation come up within a discussion of five critical perspectives instrumental to the history of critique – perspectives including "the substantiation of the reception of literature in a certain time and place."[15] And, as with all evaluations of a diversity of critical literary statements, their mode of operation and capacity for analysis, this becomes subordinate to the main objective of the theoretical-methodological model for studying critique, which is to say, the recreation of specific entities and of the entire process of literary history:

> A certain statement might simultaneously be subject to various interfering categorizations: this is an element of the "constellation" co-creating the literary fact, and a component in the development of a given critic. It belongs to a set of texts representative of a certain critical school, and falls in with a group of statements in consensus on the formulated poetics of a given movement, and so on, and so forth. Each time, the statement is situated differently in the classification of the historical literary process.[16]

According to Sławiński, critical statements taken within a constellation become crucial components of literary fact, or of the whole, which consists of the work together with its reception under defined social and literary conditions. The Warsaw theorist thus places special emphasis on the fact that only the whole (and not simply the work of art) inclusive of diverse and many-sided relations is a proper entity for the historical literary process. Scholarship on literary critique pursued by these tenets must "effectively engage an integrated history of literature"[17]. It thus becomes embedded in the main foundation for reconstituting the former relations for a historical and objectivized reconstruction.

In the model of critical constellations proposed here, Sławiński's nuanced observations assign a critical role to the many-sided relations between the literary work and the texts that reference it, between the very texts of the constellation and between these texts and the "voiceless judgment of the audience". This fundamental understanding of both the critical constellation itself as well as the objectives of its research is radically distinct.

These differences arise, in the first place, from Walter Benjamin's assertions that the scholar/historian does not reconstruct the "naturally existing" so much as he constructs a constellation. He does this work by compiling heterogeneous elements emerging both from the moment associated with the historical phenomenon, and from the contemporary moment of the scholar, thereby taking into consideration himself as subject and his own perspective as elements of the constellation. In critical constellations constructed around specific literary texts, one ramification of this way of thinking is the coexistence of critical texts emerging at diverse moments in time (from the first texts to the "contemporary moment of the scholar"). We are therefore dealing with a constellation that is simultaneously synchronic and diachronic. To grasp the thing succinctly: within the constellational system, the diachronic (historically conditioned texts) becomes synchronic. Within this conception of the "historical present" of various texts, the most significant elements are recreated through their relations (built within emerging environments and changing contexts of the text's reader). On the oth-

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[15]J. Sławiński, *Krytyka literacka...,* p. 147.
[16]Ibid, p.150.
[17]Ibid, p. 150.

er hand, as Adorno has written, "becoming aware of the constellation in which a thing stands is tantamount to deciphering the constellation which, having come to be, it bears within it."[18]

What's more, the stakes of building a constellation thus construed are not so much the demonstration of how our form of understanding a concrete literary work changes over the course of our interaction with it, or by what means and how intensely a work of art becomes known. Nor is our objective, as Sławiński might wish, the co-creation of a history of literature through historical critique. The stakes are in fact critique itself and the status of critical languages as revealed through contextualizing diverse conditions and contingencies beyond the constellation. This constellational model of a history of literary critique does not reduce literary critique to a discourse secondary to literature (as it is situated within the reception history of a given work of art), nor does it reduce critique to a means for expressing/formulating concrete philosophical, political, social and cultural ideas (as might happen when we trace literary critique by defining movements or literary programs), nor does it reduce critique to the level of meeting concrete objectives (be they political, programmatic or personal). This model allows us, rather, to mobilize the relations between individual texts and the academic perspectives that these texts mobilize in order to locate their mutual and ever-changing systems and linkages. This model enables us to simultaneously grasp literary critique in its individual moments of exposure, which is to say, within specific texts of literary critique — as an inscribed testament of reading that aggregates within a historical moment the means for interpreting a literary text, the reader's expectations, the criteria of its evaluation, the positioning of literary critique on the field of literature, and the choices made by the critic herself. Additionally, within constellational systems, as a "shimmering", transient whole in which texts of literary critique reveal their interrelational meanings, entanglements, limitations and ambitions, while "reflecting" meaningful thought trajectories and determinations in the literary field (eg. which foundational categories for reading literature appear in such constellations and by what conditions? Who is writing, where are they writing, and how is this act positioned against the literary spirit of their time? What is the range and context of the reception of a concrete literary text, and how does this coincide with political and attitudinal categories? How do the perspectives of the scholar's present moment modify the weight and meaning of individual critical texts?).

Critical constellations give us the means for laying bare critique in its full "materiality", complexity, transience and state of emergence, without confining its attempts to the hierarchical ordering of its elements according to a "classifying procedure" that, according to Adorno, would efface the idiosyncrasies of the analyzed object.[19] A model of literary critique built on this notion of a constellation is therefore not so much a scholarly method strictly imposed, but operates according to the mechanism of "constellational analysis" that, as Ryszard Nycz has written, "entwines the object in an open net riddled with gaps and cracks containing diverse (and contradictory) concepts that "interrogate" as it were, and activate its repressed and effaced layers and weavings, drawing them to the surface and making them available for the comprehension of its unique and complex texture."[20]

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[18]T.W. Adorno, *Negative Dialectics*, trans. E.B. Ashton 2004, p. 163.

[19]The constellation illuminates the specific side of the object, the side which to a classifying procedure is either a matter of indifference or a burden." – T.W. Adorno, ibid, p. 162.

[20]R. Nycz, *Lekcja Adorna*, p. 44. Nycz demonstrates that there is no way to translate constellational analysis into method, for the constellation is too dynamic, flexible and idiosyncratic.

KEYWORDS

Constellation

critical discourse

Abstract:

This article's objective is to apply the astronomical metaphor of the constellation to the study of literary critique. Departing from Walter Benjamin's concepts that have been instrumental to the status of the "constellation" as a concept, and using this metaphor to reflect upon the study of history through Adorno's revisions that usher the constellation into aesthetic studies, as well as the constellational model of reading proposed by Renée R. Trilling, and historical methods for applying this metaphor to Polish critical studies, this essay attempts to introduce the constellation as a means for grasping literary critique without deferring to totalizing and monolithic classification systems. The article demonstrates that the "critical constellation" allows us to yield a certain autonomy for critical discourses by simultaneously revealing their relativity and their multidimensional entanglements with the conditions of the literary field (including the present moment of the scholar). The article proposes the constellation model for studying literary critique.

dialectic

the history of critique

CRITICAL CONSTELLATION

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Wartime Literature –
Attempts at a Synthesis

Sławomir Buryła

Introduction

In this text, I take up a comparative study of wartime thematics within modern and contemporary literature. Until now, no work of scholarship has matched the momentum of Jerzy Święch's monumental monograph in order to comprehensively analyse prose, poetry and drama pertaining to those "terrible times"[1][2] Before I move on to more detailed statements, I will note a few basic observations indispensable for a comparative study.

Over the last two decades, scholarship on World War II has been dominated by the dynamically evolving notion of the Shoah. From the moment of *Neighbors*' publication, Polish-Jewish themes have been the subject of constant debate on the radio, in the press, and online.[3] Roughly this same moment also marks the emergence of Holocaust literature as its own distinct phenomenon. During socialism, this never occurred, given the prescribed narrative of the Polish nation as martyr. More recently, reflections on the Holocaust and its themes have become an autonomous field of scholarship. Its distinctness and significance are affirmed in the comparative study *Polish Literature of the Holocaust (1939–1968).*[4] On this note, two other holistic studies must be mentioned, both of which have interdisciplinary ambitions. *Consequences of the Jewish Genocide. Poland 1944–2010* combines perspectives from literary criticism, historiogra-

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[1] The "terrible times" refers to "*czasy pogardy,*" a phrase used in Polish to refer to the years of World War II (translating roughly to "times of contempt") (translator's note).

[2] J. Święch, *Literatura polska w latach II wojny światowej,* Warsaw 1997. His own supplement to this monograph is *Nowy styl, nowe pióra. Antologia krytyki i eseistyki 1939–1945,* (ed. J. Święch, A. Wójtowicz, Lublin 2015). In the introduction titled *Wojna z bliska i z daleka,* we read: "In our anthology we wish to use select examples to convey a comprehensive portrait of this writing." (p. 10).

[3] See P. Forecki, *Od "Sąsiadów" do "Strachu". Spory o polsko-żydowską przeszłość i pamięć w debatach publicznych,* Poznan 2010

[4] *Literatura polska wobec Zagłady (1939–1968),* ed. S. Buryła, J. Leociak, D. Krawczyńska, Warsaw 2012. Efforts to follow up on this publication are still ongoing. The grant project *Reprezentacje Zagłady w kulturze polskiej (1939–2015)* has been underway since 2016. Several researchers from various fields will contribute work under this banner. Professor Sławomir Buryła directs the team. There are also plans to begin work on a subsequent project in the near future, which will be a comparative discussion of themes of the Holocaust in Polish Literary Arts, from 1968 to the present day.

phy, cultural studies, political science and sociology.[5] *Traces of the Holocaust in the Polish Cultural Imaginary*, published in 2017, ventures into perspectives from literary as well as visual arts.[6]

The fact remains that, with the exception of *Polish Literature of the Holocaust (1939–1968)*, the academic works mentioned above fail to satisfy the requirements of traditional comparative studies by exhaustively surveying the full spectrum of relevant issues. Moreover, they have no counterparts in scholarship on postwar writing that addresses these "terrible times." From this field, the only examples we have at our disposal are books that cover the literary output of individual writers or, more frequently, books that describe specific aesthetic tropes within somewhat broader stretches of time (for instance, Anna Sobolewska's study of psychologism),[7] or isolate one aspect of the problems and motifs associated with the events of 1939–1945 (among them, portraits of September 1939 and the battle of Westerplatte).[8]

To this group of comparative texts we might also add at least three anthologies. The substantive anthology *Literature of the War and Occupation*[9] was published in the 1970s. In *Modernity,* Święch devoted ample attention to the prose and poetry of World War II.[10] In 2011 *War and Postmemory* appeared.[11] A significant portion of the essays included in this volume discuss the "terrible times" through the prism of European literature. Certain authors contributing to the collection did not limit their focus to literary sources, but drew examples from film and literature as well.

The expansion of scholarship on prose and poetry of the Holocaust noted earlier can also be observed in aspects of wartime experience that have come into their own as fields. In this case, we find many phenomena that cannot be strictly segregated into Polish or Jewish fields. Arkadiusz Morawiec's monumental monograph on literature of the camps speaks to this development.[12] If, during socialism, the fate of Polish Jews in the Nazi camps made up only a fragment of the literature of the camps (and of the war and occupation overall), then today, prose of the camps has become a subgenre that falls under prose of the Holocaust.

Polish-Jewish relations in the social imaginary have many conflicting and compatible aspects. Among these lies one aspect of the camp experience – the "death trains" that transported Jews and non-Jews together to the camps. Due to contributions by Raul Hilberg, Zygmunt Bauman and Enzo Traverso, to name a few, the train has become a synecdoche for the "dark

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[5] *Następstwa zagłady Żydów. Polska 1944–2010*, ed. F. Tych, M. Adamczyk-Garbowska, Lublin 2011.

[6] *Ślady Holokaustu w imaginarium kultury polskiej,* ed. J. Kowalska-Leder, P. Dobrosielski, I. Kurz, M. Szpakowska, Warsaw 2017.

[7] For one example, see A. Sobolewska's *Polska proza psychologiczna (1945–1950)*, Wroclaw 1979.

[8] S. Rogala, *Echa września 1939 w polskiej prozie literackiej w latach 1945–1969*, Krakow 1981; K. Zajączkowski, *Literatura w procesie kształtowania się* miejsca pamięci *po 1945 roku* in *Westerplatte jako miejsce pamięci 1945– 1989*, Warsaw 2015. We might add that, for obvious reasons, Rogala's book does not include in its scope literary texts from the last four decades. Their number has grown significantly since 1989. "September" now demands a new, up-to-date academic monograph. In my book *Rozrachunki z wojną* (Warsaw 2017) I discuss five texts with narrower scopes (treating themes of the camps and wartime motifs in the '56 generation).

[9] *Literatura wobec wojny i okupacji,* ed. M. Głowiński, J. Sławiński, Wroclaw 1976. From this volume, notable essays include Maria Janion's *Wojna i forma*. See also: Janion's articles devoted to wartime themes collected in the book *Płacz generała. Eseje o wojnie,* Warsaw 1998.

[10] J. Święch, *Nowoczesność. Szkice o literaturze polskiej XX wieku*, Warsaw 2006.

[11] *Wojna i postpamięć,* ed. Z. Majchrowski, W. Owczarski, Gdansk 2011.

[12] A. Morawiec, *Literatura w lagrze, lager w literaturze. Fakt – temat – metafora,* Lodz 2009, p. 21.

side" of modernity.[13] Wojciech Tomasik has written: "If the monument to the nineteenth century– the epoch of steam and electricity – has become the locomotive, then the following century, having gone into history as the age of totalitarianism, might be imagined [...] in the form of a cargo train whose terminal station is the Nazi Death Camp."[14]

The deportations of the people of Eastern Europe, inconceivable in their scale, were likewise a product of Soviet social engineering. The "industrialisation" of death in the Nazi camps should not veil from us its widespread counterparts in a period characterised by the extermination of entire nations and social classes. The "death trains" managed to relocate vast swathes of people within the Soviet Union.[15] Literature of the Soviet gulags is a testament to this history.[16]

A Crisis of Synthesis

One major feature of contemporary humanist thought is the tendency to limit one's focus to a single text and to treat that text as a self-standing, autonomous object. Such is the legacy of poststructuralist and postmodernist thought. This legacy also drives the tendency to extract a work from its historical, social and political context, thereby impoverishing our image of work, now removed from the reality in which the writer, and by proxy the work itself, are anchored. Wartime literature, however – especially that which is rooted in personal experience – loses meaningful resources for interpretation when read with no regard for the author's biography.

Why this crisis of synthesis? So many factors contribute. Let us identify just a few of them.

There remains no doubt that, unlike scholarship oriented towards micropoetics (the analysis of a single writer's output, usually structured as a classical academic biography[17]) any work attempting a comparative overview requires an entirely new set of skills. A scholar at the dawn of her career or in its early stages cannot take on such a project. The time one must devote to reading necessarily exceeds the span of a few or even a dozen years. One must pursue these projects over the course of several-year studies.

An ever-growing volume of research attending to specific wartime motifs in our national prose, poetry and drama has always existed alongside this substantial bibliography. One might wonder why such an enormous body of material worthy of attention (including source literature and bibliographies) couldn't be assigned to a team of seasoned scholars, each of whom would

[13]See R. Hilberg, *The Destruction of the European Jews,* New Haven 1961; Z. Bauman, *Modernity and the Holocaust,* Ithaca 1989, E. Traverso, *La violenza nazista. Una genealogia,* Bologna 2010

[14]W. Tomasik, *Maszyna na wystawie. Szlakiem Tuwimowskiej "Lokomotywy"* in: *Ikona nowoczesności. Kolej w literaturze polskiej,* Wroclaw 2007, p. 235.

[15]T. Snyder, *Bloodlands. Europe Between Hitler and Stalin*, New York 2010. To consider the trope of the "death train" as a sign of the similarity between Stalinism and Nazism requires but one crucial claim: two criminal systems exploited the spoils of modern technologies to realize their genocidal agendas.

[16]The most significant comparative study to date of these themes is Izabella Sariusz-Skąpska's monograph *Polscy świadkowie Gułagu. Literatura łagrowa 1939–1989,* 2nd edition, Kraków 2002.

[17]For some prototypes, see: A. Całek, *Biografia naukowa: od koncepcji do narracji. Interdyscyplinarność, teoria, metody badawcze*, Kraków 2013.

focus on one piece of the whole. This is a strategy we should take seriously in the face of such a giant and dispersed set of sources awaiting analysis. Collaboration between many scholars fluent in the source materials (including scholarship on World War II from both history and literary studies) would be a necessary prerequisite for any successful overview.

The dearth of comprehensive studies broken down into parts is also a consequence of the beloved mode of the case study. This is evident not only in literary and cultural studies, but in historiographic research as well. Our moment is characterized by an emphasis on microhistories, not macrohistories. What's more, the methodologies of historiography, literary studies and cultural studies alike have all witnessed a recent turn towards animals, things and oral history[18]. Literary history recedes to the background against these new focal points.

The crisis of synthesis must also be linked with several aspects of contemporary society. The last few decades have witnessed a distinct turn away from the "*longue duree*" perspective and the subsequent dominance of the contemporary moment and an ahistorical approach. We can observe a tendency to think beyond historical and cultural contexts. This can only be the newest development in the aftermath of the postmodernist thesis on the twilight of great narratives. Discussing transformations among younger scholars of the human and social sciences, Terry Eagleton has written the following, not without his signature irony:

> What is sexy instead is sex. On the wilder shores of academia, an interest in French philosophy has given way to a fascination with French kissing. In some cultural circles, the politics of masturbation exert far more fascination than the politics of the Middle East.[19]

If we agree, in spite of all this, that synthesis is still feasible, compelling for readers, and in fact sorely needed, we must then tackle the question of its composition. Perhaps we ought to develop comparative overviews on different grounds – for instance, using a classification system that is not based in genre, movement or literary group, but is instead thematic. A number of distinct thematic rubrics seem appropriate. At this point, I would like to name one of them: an analysis of the concept of masculinity in the prose and poetry of World War II. Although few things coincide in culture more obviously than masculinity and war, it was only recently that a monograph addressing these concepts together appeared.[20] Its author, Tomasz Tomasik, built out this monograph only using texts from the "Art and Nation" generation. Polish prose and poetry from the socialist period have not yet received their due attention.

[18]See also: *Teoria wiedzy o przeszłości na te współczesnej humanistyki*, ed. E. Domańska, Poznań 2010.

[19]T. Eagleton, *The Politics of Amnesia* [in:] *After Theory,* New York 2003, p. 2.

[20]T. Tomasik, *Wojna – męskość – literatura,* Słupsk 2013. Tomasz Tomasik's groundbreaking book reveals meaningful cognitive contexts for scholarship on the experiences of the occupation and the front: namely, the Home Army generation and the conditions that led to its formation. The myth of the Home Army youth culture must finally be reconciled with the myth of "Jewish wartime kids". On a symbolic level, the "Jewish wartime kids" invoke those days of the chosen nation's military glory, while the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising is narrativised as a test of manhood and the transcendence of the stereotype of innate cowardliness, and not as a testament of military success. On the other hand, their biographies often use those of the Home Army youth as their template. I have written about this more substantially in my essay *Żydowscy Kolumbowie* in the book *Tematy (nie)opisane* (Kraków 2013). On the subject of comparative views of the category of masculinity in a wartime context, I must also mention Wojciech Śmieja's recent book *Hegemonia i trauma*. See: W. Śmieja, *Hegemonia i trauma. Literatura wobec dominującej fikcji męskości*, Warsaw 2016.

Any author undertaking a synthesis of the relationship between masculinity and war must include the years 1918–1939 in the scope of his study. Adolf Rudnicki pitches militaristic and pacifist worldviews against one another in his book *Soldiers (Żołnierze)*. In *The Measure of Suffering* (*Miara cierpienia)* Józef Wróbel describes this novel as follows:

> War is necessarily a trial for both soldiers and for the society that cultivates those small myths so harmless for everyone but society itself, unconsciously glorifying its own weakness and fascinated by that which lies on the surface, deceivingly – the careful, impartial reader might reach such conclusions. We will have to pay for this anachronistic daydream, for the retardation of civilisation, the lack of coherent vision of the nation as a whole, and the lack of a protocol for raising and educating the modern individual and collective.[21]

Yet deeper analysis must go even further, reaching back to Sarmatian and romantic traditions. The soldier and conspirator of "those terrible times" is the heir of the historical knight, the Sarmatian warrior, the ulan of Napoleon's legions. In the mid-thirties, however, he was promoted to the highest rank: propaganda broadcasted him as the very figure of masculine identity formation.[22]

A thematic overview therefore seems appropriate. We must, however, remain cognizant of all its inherent risks. The main risks are as follows – in discarding chronological order, we lose a record of the most diverse political factors that informed the way we spoke of the war during socialism. Of course, we can always put together a thematic monograph that still takes chronology into account.

The Social Imaginary

In putting together an overview of wartime literature, it becomes necessary to emphasise the relationship between text and the social imaginary. Henryk Markiewicz has named some possible points of reference. He refers to:

> [on one level] the interpretation of literary works [...], literature's effect on its own further development as a tradition. On another level – and this intersects with the history of literary culture – certain problems arise, such as: 1) the social spectrum and stratification of possible readers; 2) the scenarios surrounding literary communication and the institutions associated with them; 3) the readers' motives and preferences; 4) various forms of identifying, interpreting and evaluating literature; 5) variations in the reception of literature as contextualised in the whole scope of the reader's life; 6) literature's influence on other symbolic fields; 7) transformations literature brings about in the readers' ideology, mentality and lifestyles.[23]

[21] J. Wróbel, *Miara cierpienia. O pisarstwie Adolfa Rudnickiego,* Kraków 2004, p. 226. The myth of the Home Army youth must finally be reconciled with the myth of the "Jewish wartime kids".

[22] In the protocols for rearing children formulated in the 1930s – those promoted in schools and those emerging from literary tradition – a militaristic tendency stands out. Everything associated with the soldier's legacy was singled out as valuable for bringing up children. An emphasis on masculinity was also symptomatic of the ongoing militarisation of culture (T. Tomasik, *Wojna – męskość – literatura,* p. 165–166). Tomasik's study, titled *Mitologia męskości w "Kamieniach na szaniec" Aleksandra Kamińskiego*, does a good job of documenting the formation of a system of authorities and values taking place in the 1930s. Tomasik aptly recalls that "it was to serve the purpose of a textbook for young conspirators and infiltrators, but after the break-up of the Grey Ranks in November of 1942, it became required reading throughout Military Schools for little scouts aged 15-17, engaging in small sabotages". (T. Tomasik, *Wojna – męskość – literatura,* p. 214).

[23] H. Markiewicz, *Dylematy historyka literatury*, "Pamiętnik Literacki" 1986, issue 4, p. 19–20.

From the perspective of wartime themes and their carved out place within social consciousness, points four, five, six and seven must be taken seriously for any future monograph.

No one will dispute the critical impact that the "terrible times" had on the consciousness of Poles. Two significant monographs that came out in the last decade – Marcin Zaremba's *The Great Anxiety (Wielka trwoga)* and Andrzej Leder's *Dreamt Revolution (Prześniona rewolucja)* – explore a wide range of wartime experiences crucial to the formation of self identity and stereotypes. The first publication analyses the impact of the Nazi occupation on morality and mentality, while the second explores the occupation's relationship with issues of economic and social development, without trivialising these issues.[24]

In the mid-1970s, Janusz Sławiński claimed that "War has shaken our whole system of literature; it was a watershed moment that, through its whole multitude of consequences, still wields its influence on literary consciousness."[25] Only a more detailed inquiry might allow us to refine the answer and outline more precisely the range of necessary analyses. What question do I have in mind here? This is the question of what we must call the "traces of the war in the Polish cultural imaginary".[26] *The Traces of the Holocaust in the Polish Cultural Imaginary* provides a template for future work. Its authors define the scope of their research as follows:

> The trajectory of the Holocaust's traces on the Polish imaginary does not only run towards themes and phenomena tied to the Holocaust as a historical event. Also of interest is their circulation among various forms and exchanges of culture, including literary and scholarly texts, press releases, films and television shows, plays, sound recordings and images shared on the Internet, messages on online platforms and street graffiti. These diverse forms and cultural mediums interact with communities of memory – one's family, peers, and ethnic, religious and class categories.[27]

The research scope defined here is remarkably difficult to act upon. If we take "*The Traces of the Holocaust in the Polish Cultural Imaginary*" as a template for a publication that would identify all "traces of the war", then we would have to reckon with a much larger body of source materials than a book with similar ambitions focused on the Holocaust. To be more precise, this undertaking would entail tracing all manifestations of the war in theater, the press, literature, film, and the wider sphere of popular culture. This task would not only be enormously time consuming; it would be downright unfeasible. Our objective should therefore be to mention (reference) not all images that come directly or indirectly from those "terrible times", but those that are the most meaningful (and these do not always coincide with the most artistically compelling) and the most symptomatic, in an effort to assemble a map and guidebook for literature, theater, film, and popular culture associated with World War II.[28]

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[24]M. Zaremba, *Wielka trwoga. Polska 1944–1947. Ludowa reakcja na kryzys*, Kraków 2012: A. Leder, *Prześniona rewolucja. Ćwiczenia z logiki historycznej*, Warsaw 2014.

[25]J. Sławiński, *Zaproszenie do tematu* [in:] *Literatura wobec wojny i okupacji,* ed. M. Głowiński, J. Sławiński, Wrocław 1976, p. 15.

[26]"The imaginary is not so much the content portrayed by the media or of one of many collective memories, but the social framing defined by recognisable signs and practices that carry certain axiological connotations for identity". The authors of *Traces of the Holocaust in Polish Culture* define the imaginary thus. (p. 14).

[27]Ibid, p. 14.

[28]Of course, the subject of the war remains to this day a great challenge for us, as does the subject of the Holocaust.

The Question of Periodisation

One uncertainty that the authors of this future overview must navigate is the matter of periodisation. When does the postwar history of Polish literature begin? Literary history tends to take the year 1945 as the beginning of the postwar period. However, the position that summer (July) of 1944 marks the beginning of modern literature has become more and more prominent.[29] In his study *Watershed? 1944–1948 in Polish Literature,* Dariusz Kulesza argues that 1944 "marks not only the beginning of Polish postwar literature, but the end of the literature of World War II".[30] In attempting to articulate the quintessential character of wartime writing as it appears here and now, Kulesza assigns a meaningful role to the so-called "Generation of Columbuses [generacja kolumbów], youths coming to age during the occupation, emphasising how distinct their artistic legacy appears against the backdrop of the generation that preceded them (we might also add that the biographies of the Home Army youth and from the "Art and Nation" circle are specifically and intentionally named here). The advent and tragic departure of its representatives form the bookends of wartime prose, poetry and drama.

We can mention one more argument for focusing on the year 1944. Texts created and published beyond the Eastern front in territories liberated from Nazi occupation came about within a new, altered reality. It would be worthwhile to identify its many features, but most important is the existential scenario of the writer at work in a world that has already witnessed catastrophe. Thus the solidified message *post factum* in lieu of *hic et nunc,* as seen in the poetry of Baczyński or Gajcy. This did not fail to impact the form of the medium.

When did the war come to an end? To put it simply, this is not a matter of political qualification or of finally resolving the old argument over the eighth or ninth of May. Nor is this a matter of some established truth that armed activities in fact halted worldwide on September 2 of 1945, when Japan formally signed its surrender. On Polish soil, on the level of psychological truth and its surrounding landscape, in particular between the years 1944/5 and 1948, the war persisted. The intensities of the Nazi occupation kept surfacing into rough reality. Poland's people did not feel at all safe.[31] In small towns and villages, bands of thieves, marauders and criminals prowled. After the communists took power, a domestic war prevailed. Until the end of the 1940s, the independent underground remained active. Everyone waited expectantly for the outbreak of the third world war (these hopes were rekindled with the Korean conflict)[32].

In tracing the events in Europe in the months following liberation, Keith Lowe gives his text the characteristic title of *Savage Continent.* As Lowe claims, "the story of Europe in the immediate postwar period is therefore not primarily one of reconstruction and rehabilitation – it is firstly a story of the descent into anarchy."[33] Unfortunately, "there is no book in any language that describes the whole continent – east and west – in detail during this crucial and turbulent time."[34]

[29]See T. Drewnowski, *Próba scalenia. Obiegi – wzorce – style. Literatura polska 1944–1989*, Warsaw 1997; S. Stabro, *Literatura polska 1944–2002*, Kraków 2002.

[30]D. Kulesza, *Przełom? Lata 1944–1948 w literaturze polskiej,* [in:] ibid, *Dwie prawdy. Zofia Kossak i Tadeusz Borowski wobec obrazu wojny w polskiej lat 1944–1948*, Białystok 2006, p. 349.

[31]For an example, see M. Grzebałkowska's collected reportage, *1945. Wojna i pokój*, Warsaw 2015.

[32]For one example, see Z. Woźniczka, *Trzecia wojna światowa w oczekiwaniach emigracji i podziemia w kraju w latach 1944–1953*, Katowice 1999.

[33]K. Lowe, *Savage Continent: Europe in the Aftermath of World War II,* New York 2012, p. xvii.

[34]Ibid.

We can state the question directly: does the postwar period in Europe (the period beginning in May of 1945) belong to the history of wartime literature?

In order to determine the canon of works to include in the scope of our overview, it is imperative to first reach a consensus on when the war in fact ended. Does Jerzy Andrzejewski's *Ashes and Diamonds (Popiół i diament)* belong in this canon? Or should we focus instead on texts relating the achievements of brave soldiers and the fate of the resistance and its conspiracies? How about those texts whose action begins during the occupation but continues a number of years beyond Hitler's yoke? Introducing chronological borders here (May 8 1945) seems somewhat absurd. It intrudes on the internal coherence of the text. Take Włodzimierz Kłaczyński's *Ash Wednesday (Popielec),* for instance, or perhaps Roman Bratny's better known *Columbuses. Born in 1920 (Kolumbowie. Rocznik 20).* In these cases and several others, proceeding by these rules would mean displacing excellent novels to the margins, as an afterthought. This list includes Aleksander Ścibor-Rylski's *Ring from a Horse's Hair (Pierścionek z końskiego włosia).*[35]

Should we instead include as an *appendix* to this future synthesis– or perhaps as a subsection of the work's main narrative thread – the history of the concentration camps in operation after 1945, in which the communists persecuted political enemies from within their own ranks and from Germany? Should we then include texts from the press, such as Marek Łuszczyna's piece of investigative journalism titled *Small Crime (Mała zbrodnia*?).[36]

As a final note, the authors of this future monograph must define their criterion of selection (beyond the chronological framework). What kinds of work should they consider? Perhaps only those that take the "terrible times" as their primary cognitive horizon and fundamental theme? Or should they also include works for which war is but one of many central motifs? Should they not draw from texts whose references to the occupation are concealed behind a facade of metaphor and parable?

War – Censorship – Communism

Research on literature of the war and occupation has much to benefit from the in-depth research undertaken at Warsaw's New Records Archive (in Polish, AAN). Their laborious and time-consuming projects deserve special attention, for they give us a chance to observe the artistic and conceptual articulations of the "age of the gas chambers" in a fuller light, encompassing a fuller spectrum of material. Attentive exploration of the censors' archives has certainly enriched our knowledge of the war, allowing us to draw out themes historically prohibited by the communist repressive apparatus.[37] The database of the Central Bureau for Managing Press, Publishing and Entertainment (in Polish, GUKPPiW) now stored at the AAN, poses a daunting challenge to the scholar.[38] We still lack precise knowledge of its contents. In

[35]A. Ścibor-Rylski, *Pierścionek z końskiego włosia,* Warsaw 1991.

[36]M. Łuszczyna, *Mała zbrodnia. Polskie obozy koncentracyjne,* Kraków 2017.

[37]For one example, see K. Budrowska, *Przeszłość ocenzurowana. GUKPPiW a obraz historii Polski w literaturze lat 1945–1958* [in:] ibid, *Studia i szkice o cenzurze w Polsce Ludowej w latach 40. i 50. XX wieku*, Warsaw 2014, p. 35–40.

[38]See P. Krasoń, *Akta Głównego Urzędu Kontroli Prasy, Publikacji i Widowisk w zasobie Archiwum Akt Nowych* [in:] *Literatura w granicach prawa (XIX–XX w.),* ed. K. Budrowska, E. Dąbrowicz, M. Lula, Warsaw 2013.

fact, we know very little about what kinds of prose and poetry on World War II were censored and to what degree – not to mention those that were fully "reworked" by the employees of the GUKPPiW.

Kamila Budrowska's *Held by the Censor (Zatrzymane przez cenzurę)* is a guidebook to the world of authors and works condemned to nonexistence.[39] Not only does Budrowska recount the obligatory "Mysia Street" approach to wartime issues (materials deemed sensitive or inappropriate by the censors for any number of reasons); she also expands and revises our map of postwar Polish literature of the late 1940s and early 1950s. Her monograph includes vast examples withheld from publication, such as Rajmund Hempel's play *Days of Terror (Dni grozy),* and Nadzieja Drucka's *Junk room (Lamus).* Of course, the issue of censorship is not confined to these short years. Subsequent decades also witnessed the confiscation of texts depicting wartime experience. To this day, we lack precise data on the subject. We must also bear in mind that the volume of texts withheld from publication is considerably outnumbered by those texts that were "reworked" by the censor, which is to say, edited and modified in various ways to obey the prescriptions and notes issued from Mysia Street.

As Budrowska argues, scholars of modern literature have much more to accomplish than extensive labor at the archives. The "nonexistent" history of Polish literature (that which never had a chance to come into existence) remains an untold story. Even if we do not expect to recover masterpieces from among the texts seized by the censor, it goes without saying that the confiscation of so much material had a critical impact on the development of Polish prose, poetry and drama addressing wartime themes. Budrowska writes: "The significant suppression of literature devoted to World War II and the Holocaust [...] amounts to a squandered opportunity."[40] Somewhat earlier in her text, she aptly points out that these texts had no opportunity to "catalyse new styles, shed light on new themes, propose innovative strategies, or inspire their readers". Of course, it is no easy matter to assess these things in hindsight: "we can not make good [...] on these losses – they can never be correlated with their time."[41] And do all the texts that were censored, modified or redacted not amount to another such loss – though on a different scale? How would the public discourse have developed if they had gone to print in the form originally conceived by their authors? What would a literary history that accounts for such things look like? Without doubt, the engineers behind such a history would have other questions to reckon with and other concerns to articulate than those visible to the scholar who only has "reworked" texts at her disposal.[42]

Today, no comparative overview of wartime themes would be possible without thoroughly investigating the archives of the GUKPPiW along with public awareness of the mechanisms of censorship. For political reasons, so many aspects of wartime experience were off-limits to artistic reflection. Hanna Gosk, describing the "spheres of silence" in socialist-era writing, has stated that: "Finally, the great postwar narrative framework of occupation-era heroism and

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[39] K. Budrowska, *Zatrzymane przez cenzurę. Inedita z połowy wieku XX*, Warsaw 2013.
[40] Ibid, p. 115.
[41] Ibid.
[42] See. M. Fik, *Cenzor jako współautor*, [in:] *Literatura i władza*, ed. E. Sarnowska-Temeriusz, Warsaw 1996.

Polish martyrdom is not the context for the everyday, existential, not-so-heroic experiences of those 'terrible times' – the age of the gas chambers, the banality of evil that relativised the roles of victim and executioner, as Tadeusz Borowski conveyed in the stories collected in *This Way for the Gas, Ladies and Gentlemen* (*Pożegnanie z Marią*)."[43].

A separate issue is self-censorship driven by suggestions and prescriptions articulated directly or indirectly – often simply integrated into common knowledge – that dictated how one ought to discuss Polish-German, Polish-Jewish, Polish-Russian or Polish-Ukrainian relations.[44] It becomes rather difficult (if not downright impossible) to determine the extent to which artists' judgements expressed their own authentic beliefs or conveyed the unconscious, internalised effects of what was and what wasn't permitted.

The issue of communist censorship indirectly alludes to the matter of writers' archives. These archives are studied and made use of to different degrees. In the case of popular and celebrated authors, there are rarely texts leftover that have not yet gone to print. There nevertheless remains a substantial set of lesser-known writers whose legacies do not garner interest from scholars or publishers. We do not really know what awaits us within the manuscripts they left behind. In preparing a comparative overview of literary history, we would therefore have to compile all available information on the archival resources of individual authors and the unpublished texts accessible in their estates.

Revisiting the War

The recent public debate on the occupation and the postwar period that affected so much of society has not yielded a great volume of academic texts. To the contrary, its results have been rather uneven. Recent achievements in Polish historiography addressing World War II have significantly outnumbered their counterparts in cultural and literary studies.

We can revisit thematics of the war and occupation in a number of ways. We can – by way of laborious research – scrutinise and analyse lesser-known texts, or turn our focus to themes and problems not yet discussed. We can seek out new methodologies (perhaps following paradigms from the field of *Holocaust studies*, where scholars have been applying new intellectual approaches to their subject for years).[45] We can revisit emblematic works and authors alongside forgotten ones in order to refresh our interpretations with new questions. New methodologies always offer new ways of perceiving texts that often seem to be "closed cases".

We must revisit the war, however, with an awareness of the shifts both in our own view of the past, and in the nature of contemporary war. Święch has drawn attention to a fact that impacts the form of any future monographic project. This is the matter of the new kind of war. Today,

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[43]H. Gosk, *Co wiedziała proza lat 40. XX wieku?,* [in:] *PRL – świat (nie)przedstawiony*, ed. A. Czyżak, J. Galant, M. Jaworski, Poznań 2010, p. 234.

[44]For more on self-censorship, see K. Budrowska, *Literatura i pisarze wobec cenzury PRL 1948–1958*, Białystok 2009.

[45]Perhaps the newest trend in Polish reflections on the Holocaust is *animal studies*. See: P. Krupiński, *"Dlaczego gęsi krzyczały?" Zwierzęta i Zagłada w literaturze polskiej XX i XXI wieku*, Warsaw 2016.

> unlike in earlier periods, war has lost the former sense that had always been ascribed to it, and which some thought ordered it and lent it sense, because now, war appears as a phenomenon that is fundamentally impossible to represent and comprehend. In the first case, we can simply acknowledge the fact that among contemporary images of war, we are hard pressed to find any that allow us to reconstruct a full picture. We have no single example that is adequately representative of war. Our images will always be fragmentary and incomplete.[46]

This argument does not run counter to the legitimacy of a comparative overview, nor does it insist that the experience of the occupation and the camps cannot be represented at all. Instead, it points to the need to reflect upon the factors informing any holistic overview. Currently, the media portrays those "terrible times" as chaotic, disjointed and hostile to rational discourse (in prose, Leopold Buczkowski's *Black Stream* (*Czarny potok*) conveys this perfectly). Any monograph should introduce some small dose of order into this disorder.

Several other cognitive consequences for a comparative overview come from the trajectory of the contemporary humanities:

> Today, more and more advocates have been won over to the position that we have no direct access to the past (in this case: the past of literary and cultural history), and that the processes of reception do not so much obscure the past as they become its reference points and the means of its conveyance; within these processes, texts continue to operate, generate and develop new meanings.[47]

Of course, as this scholar argues further on, the vantage point from which we view the past is neither the best one nor the only one. This campaign does not dwell on this point: it instead questions whether or not a narrative of the past – one that integrates and imparts order   is possible.

Let us finally highlight, among the many ongoing changes that shape our current vision of war, a few that are linked to the great interval of time that now separates the scholar and his individual contributions from the "age of the gas chambers".

As in the case of authors dealing with wartime themes, for scholars, the historical vantage point from which you view the events of 1939–1945 is always meaningful. To use a rather clear example – in the year 1989, we look back on the war through changed eyes. Alongside the ever-growing volume of publications and the discovery of new historical facts (or the revelation of already-known facts from new perspectives), our approach to the past changes in response to debates circulating in our time, as well as the emergence of new methodologies within the humanities. It is clear that generational differences play a significant role in shaping our image of war, as well as the matter of whether or not this historical moment formed a chapter in our own biography, or whether we were born much later and relate to these issues – as horrifying as they may be – as mere sources. Of course, this does not mean that the scholar born later has less to say on the subject. It suggests, rather, that his older colleague's perceptions of the war are real but unverifiable.

[46] J. Święch, *Nowoczesność,* p. 192–193.
[47] R. Nycz, *Możliwa historia literatury*, "Teksty Drugie" 2010, issue 5, p. 170.

Finally, I will comment on methodology and composition. I argue in favor of the traditional model of the monograph, despite its many drawbacks. This is preferable to the dictionary or encyclopedic model.[48] Two requisites for any comparative overview of motifs associated with World War II are, firstly, a narrative history embedded in socio-political contexts, and secondly, a genealogical perspective that lends the text a sense of cause and effect. This monograph would have to represent one text against the backdrop of many other (earlier) texts, and simultaneously refer to traditional or emergent devices for discussing the experience of the war.

<p style="text-align:center">***</p>

One issue addressed in this essay cannot be disputed. Without negating the need for more narrowly-focused research, we must make a strong case for publications attempting a holistic overview of wartime themes in Polish literature. Organizing works along the axis of time allows us to take into account their reception, as well as the evolution of the way in which we discuss the time period of 1939–1945. Examining one text in the company of many others allows us to observe – more cohesively – the full spectrum of artistic tools, the trajectory of their evolution, and the course of changes shaping the way we relate to war. Reading through the prism of other texts also allows us to identify the advent of new aesthetic and cognitive concepts. For these reasons, reading Jerzy Krzysztoń's *Stone Sky (Kamienne niebo)* and Miron Białoszewski's *Memoir of the Warsaw Uprising* from the perspective of the processes of literary history illuminates Krzysztoń's impact on Białoszewski's "civic" portrait of the Warsaw Uprising.

The holistic perspective also offers us a chance to re-evaluate the canon and to choose new points of emphasis: to appreciate works that were passed by or entirely ignored by their readership, and to revisit lionised books through critical eyes. It just so happens that we are only now in a position to do justice to works that were historically silenced for political reasons or due to errors in critical reception or popular readership. All of these aspects make a strong case for scholarship that steps beyond the territory of a single text and its horizon.

[48]Ibid, p. 170.

KEYWORDS

Polish 20th-Century Literatura

SYNTHESIS

Abstract:

This article presents the current state of studies on literature of World War II. The author sets this against the backdrop of the substantial scholarship on literature of the Holocaust. The author analyses the possibilities and conditions for putting together a comparative monograph on Polish poetry and prose addressing World War II.

comprehensive overview

World War II

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Culturally, Locally.

A Few Remarks on the Study of Postwar Polish Literature

Jan Galant

To write about the literature of the Polish People's Republic[1] (in Polish, PRL) requires one to overcome hurdles that are (at least) three-fold. The first are of a methodological nature and are linked to the ongoing discussion of the current state of the humanities. In the last few decades, the humanities has lost a certain confidence in its language, whose neutrality is impossible to prove, and in its object of study — literature itself – whose borders have been dramatically displaced to include and prioritize popular mass culture. These hurdles have emerged within the discipline itself.

The idiosyncrasies of scholarship on PRL-era literature are thus obstacles of an ideological and epistemic nature. The ideological entanglement of the PRL's attendant narratives results – and on this point, critics agree – from the fact that the question of the PRL will always be a question of the regime's contemporary ramifications. Przemysław Czapliński writes: "we discuss the PRL and discuss ourselves within the PRL in order to identify our own positions withinthe debate over its place in post-socialist Poland. We do not dispute the images of this bygone world, but the consequences that emerge from them today".[2] These discussions have produced a harshly stereotyped portrait of a vanished epoch that adapts its form to the changing needs of the system of oppression on one side of the spectrum, and the "merry barracks" on the other.

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[1] For convenience I will refer to this period as the PRL, bracketing the question of its nomenclature, though I am fully aware of the current alternative proposals and their reasonable justifications.

[2] P. Czapliński, *Polska do wymiany. Późna nowoczesność i nasze wielkie narracje*, Warsaw 2009, p. 120.

The epistemic limitations thus emerge from the fact that any description of postwar culture is so often justified by memory, contributing to a portrait of these bygone times that is often hard to verify, inconsistent, and extremely intimate. The domination of individual experience as a defining tendency of PRL-era literature has been pointed out by scholars such as Dariusz Nowacki in his well-known article *Images of a Former World (Widokówki z tamtego świata)*. In this text, he writes: "In Polish prose of the 1990s the theme of the PRL hardly ever appears if not as the problem of "being in the PRL" (the problem of an entity's entanglement in that reality)." [3]

The collection of essays devoted to postwar literature is in fact substantial. Many publications have a broad and comparative reach and strive to comprehensively describe the epoch. To name a few: Zbigniew Jarosiński's *Nadwiślański socrealizm*, which summarizes the Stalinist years through the thaw; this same author's textbook for the series "A Small History of Polish Literature" (Mała Historia Literatury Polskiej) – *Literatura lat 1945–1975*; Anna Nasiłowska's *Literatura okresu przejściowego 1975-1996* appearing in this same series; Edward Balcerzan's two-part book on the activities of postwar poetry into the eighties *Poezja polska w latach 1939-1965*, which follows up on Anna Legeżyńska and Piotr Śliwiński's book *Poezja polska po 1968 roku*; and Przemysław Czapliński and Piotr Śliwiński's well-known text *Literatura polska 1976–1998. Przewodnik po prozie i poezji*. The lectures of Tadeusz Drewnowski collected in the volume *Próba scalenia - obiegi, wzorce, style. Literatura polska 1944–1989* also belong to this list. There are additional texts that appeared before 1989, such as *Literatura polska 1918–1975*, edited by Alina Brodzka. This is excluding dictionaries and lexicons! I have cut this list short, and I am fully aware that it is not comprehensive, for there is no way to name even a fraction of the texts devoted to individual writers, works, movements or literary groups, these texts wielding contemporary critical languages (postcolonialism, feminism) in order to renew the interpretation of postwar Polish literature.

For these reasons, I wish to linger over two conceptions of writing on the history of literature that I suspect have much to contribute to the interpretation of PRL-era literature, though fortunately, their applications do not end here. I will, however, bypass a number of propositions that invoke currently prevalent languages and theories. These amount to a substantial list of contemporary academic movements. In some incidents we witness– to evoke Ryszard Nycz's formulation – "a total distillation of abstract formulas from the contamination of historical experience".[4]

I am seeking the kind of resolutions in the cultural history of literature that purport – if I understand their premises – to be a means for renewing the historical-literary narrative in the changing conditions by which literary studies and literature itself operate. It is my belief that the obstacles and limitations that await the scholar of PRL-era literature are therefore identical with those that history of literature seeks to overcome today.

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[3] "Znak" 2000, issue 7.

[4] R. Nycz, *PRL: pamięć podzielona, społeczeństwo przesiedlone*, "Teksty Drugie" 2013, issue 3, p. 8.

A single year study

As Włodzimierz Bolecki has argued that the notion of a cultural history of literature has little to do with a standard of accuracy. It does not offer a clearly defined methodology or a repository of concrete terms and procedures. It is, rather, the collective name referring to research practices already in circulation, which have evolved out of the experiences and turning points of contemporary humanities. Bolecki has highlighted this non-programmatic but descriptive or integrative dimension of a cultural history of literature when he notes that it is "a proposition for naming a vast set of activities and studies that will quell all future doubts that what we are doing can still be called a "history of literature", and is not in fact something entirely different."[5] Applying the adjective "cultural" here indicates a shift in how we relate to established models in the practice of literary history today.

Much has already been written on the factors driving these changes, their trajectory and their character. I will therefore limit myself to their influences: these include the claim that the languages used in the humanities lack neutrality, the shift in literary studies' object of research to expand what counts as literature (which now includes all forms of textual production), and finally, a blurring of disciplinary borders within the humanities, which is most visible in the widespread borrowing of terms.

To state it simply, a cultural history of literature would thus be a new strain of historical-literary scholarship that attends to the circumstances stated above: it would gaze reflexively at the contingency of our images of the past on the descriptive and classificatory categories we use. We would divert our focus towards all forms of meaningful creative production, and adapt terms and methods from other fields in the humanities in order to describe this output. To be succinct, and to evoke Bolecki once more: "A cultural history of literature is simply a collection of questions that link the history of literature (as it is understood today) with the history of cultures/culture (as they are understood today), which is to say, questions that enable us to describe literary histories as cultural phenomena."[6]

In this light, one of the most fascinating motifs in scholarship on PRL-era culture is the analysis of the mechanisms by which we construct epistemic concepts and categories of the past, ranging from the general (eg. the avant garde) to the particular (belonging to critical programs or artistic manifestos). This is linked to the artist's scope of self-knowledge (immanent to her works of art or made explicit in her programmatic and critical statements), and to the terminology of Polish criticism circulating in the described period or among the specific critics involved (the essays devoted to Kazimierz Wyka as critic and literary scholar might be a good example). This level of reflexivity has great value in its capacity to illuminate the linkages between conceptions of historical and contemporary Polish literature that have reigned for years and the concepts wielded by literary scholars, traditional scholars, and various theoretical schools.

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[5] W. Bolecki, *Literackie historie kultury*, in: *Kulturowa historia literatury*, ed. A. Łebkowska, W. Bolecki, Warsaw 2015, p. 10.
[6] Ibid, p. 13.

The cultural approach to literature of the PRL is most visible, however, in publications that draw from diverse material representing different mediums of art, whose analysis does not bypass the customs, everyday practices, and aesthetic standards of the era (fashion, ephemera, architecture, applied design, etc.). A fantastic example is Iwona Kurz's well-known book *Twarze w tłumie. Wizerunki bohaterów wyobraźni zbiorowej w kulturze polskiej lat 1955-1969* (Warsaw 2005), which analyzes the mechanisms of the PRL's production of icons (the sections' protagonists are Marek Hłasko, Zbigniew Cybulski, Elżbieta Czyżewska, Kalina Jędrusik, and Jerzy Skolimowski). The book draws from films, film journals and literary press, but also avails itself of popular press and anecdotes of the time. This record allows us to trace the shifting borders of social scandal, the attempts to adapt the lifestyles of Hollywood stars to accommodate socialist reality, the force of partisan puritanism, and the collision of artistic life with the prescriptions of propaganda.

An interesting but rarely used convention of literary studies in which a set of texts, events and processes tied to the PRL but lacking clear borders might find its proper place is known in English-language scholarship as a "single year study". As Krzysztof Kłosiński has written, in the single year study, "the narrative element gives way to a synchronic gaze"[7] allowing one to overcome contemporary borders of discipline, language, and the object of study. The envisioned yet unattainable "everythingism" simultaneously lends a sense (an illusion?) of a certain fundamental whole, untouched by arbitrary choice and theoretical narrativization.

The fact that as a rule, the single year study has what we might call a collective hero and uses simultaneity as the basis for its story means that it can provide the groundwork for a contemporary take on historical-literary synthesis that is nonetheless deprived of what was once the very spine of similar notions – the vision for a historical-literary process, a hypothesis on the direction of literary shifts, and the resultant ability to attempt a prognosis for the future of literature. Anna Łebkowska identifies three overviews of literary history (*A New History of French Literature*, 1989; *A New History of German Literature*, 2004; *A New Literary History of America,* 2009) that manage to meet these criteria: "The past is not grasped into any kind of ideological system or political explanation or rubric that claims to be objectively organized."[8]. Of course, this does not mean that no organizational mechanisms are at work here – the selection of sample material and the choice of the year itself establish a hierarchy of events and identify some points in the past as more meaningful than others, or perhaps more significant because they mark the particularly intense intersections of dispersed literary and cultural phenomena (such as moments of political crisis or social watersheds). Łebkowska has noted that the volume offering a history of American literature (or a literary history of America, for its title hints at this double entendre) is distinct from the other two for its significant expansion of what qualifies as literature.

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[7] K. Kłosiński, *"O roku ów". Rokowania historii literatury*, in: *Kulturowa historia literatury*, p. 255.

[8] A. Łebkowska, *Przyszłość literatury wpisana w jej historię (wiek XX i czasy współczesne)*, in: *Kulturowa historia literatury*, p. 50. Each of the volumes mentioned here is a collection of articles arranged as a kind of calendar whose constituent parts are organized by dates their authors deemed important for the collective.

Another instance of a single year study is Hans Ulrich Gumbrecht's book *1926: living on the edge of time*, from 1998,[9] whose sections (though the reader is encouraged to read the book in any order) refer to the most diverse phenomena and aspects of the life of this (un)remarkable year: boxing matches, airplanes, movie theaters, the League of Nations, as well as more general themes (authenticity and convention, individuality and collectivity, action and passivity, the center and the periphery) and purport to add up to a portrait of this specific historical moment. The publisher promoted the book with the following statement:

> Travel back to the year 1926 and into the rush of experiences that made people feel they were living on the edge of time. Touch a world where speed seemed the very essence of life. It is a year for which we have no expectations. It was not 1066 or 1588 or 1945, yet it was the year A.A. Milne published *Winnie-the-Pooh* and Alfred Hitchcock released his first successful film, *The Lodger*. A set of modern masters was at work–Jorge Luis Borges, Babe Ruth, Leni Riefenstahl, Ernest Hemingway, Josephine Baker, Greta Garbo, Franz Kafka, Gertrude Stein, Martin Heidegger–while factory workers, secretaries, engineers, architects, and Argentine cattle-ranchers were performing their daily tasks.[10]

It is also worth citing Gumbrecht's remark from his introduction to *In 1926*. He writes that:

> The book's main intention is best captured in the phrase that was its original subtitle: "an essay on historical simultaneity." The book asks to what extent and at what cost it is possible to make present again, in a text, worlds that existed before its author was born-and the author is fully aware that such an undertaking is impossible.[11]

I cite this fragment to note its articulation of the fundamental motivation and objective for any publication structuring itself as a single year study. This motive is the desire for the past to become present for one moment so that we might experience today what happened long ago. This explains its inclusion of a stream of events in which the individual of the era was immersed, the individual for whom these events constituted the unorganized, multifaceted present. This present must be narrated in such a way as to position the contemporary reader in an identical situation. Gumbrecht's proposal "to make worlds present again" seems particularly apt. The many meanings of the word "present" allow us to suggest that through his work, the author "presents" and narrates the past, but more importantly ushers it into "the present", allowing it to be "present" today (here lies the greatest benefit of that "everythingness" of *single year studies*), and "gifts" the reader the capacity to immerse herself in that which has passed as if it were still "present".

I find this same intention – to approach and scrutinize the past – in Jacek Łukasiewicz's well-known article *One Day in Socialist Realism (Jeden dzień w socrealizmie)* ("Teksty Drugie"

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[9] Kłosiński's article discusses this book in the context of many others. K. Kłosiński, *"O roku ów". Rokowania historii literatury.*

[10] http://www.hup.harvard.edu/catalog.php?isbn=9780674000551 [July 14 2017]

[11] H. U. Gumbrecht, *In 1926: living at the edge of time*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge London 1997, p. XIV,

2000/1-2) as well as in Maciej Drygas's documentary film from 2006 *One Day in the PRL (Jeden dzień w PRL)*. This leads me to believe that this very intention constitutes the main epistemic merits of this form of writing about the past, and that the desire to experience the past (rather than understand it) is a high priority of the reader.

Łukasiewicz's article attempts to recreate one day – November 14, 1951– using materials from the press that were available on that day. It therefore resembles the press in form, and refers to the contents of Wrocław newspapers just as an average citizen might have seen and read them.

> One day in socialist realism is a day spent in an echo chamber. It is the day of the reader (or lis-tener, or audience member). From the various texts thrust upon him, he weaves a text of his own. I reconstruct – of course, not comprehensively – one such personal text, coming together on the 14th of November 1951 in the city of Wrocław. Above all, I reconstruct this text after reading a sample of popular press that a resident of Wrocław might have read on this day, or might at least have skimmed.[12]

It goes without saying that the objective of this reconstruction is to lay bare propaganda's role in manipulating our picture of reality. As we can see, Łukasiewicz offers us the ability to zoom in on the everyday, prioritizing this over historical generalization and descriptive profiles of the bygone epoch (although by virtue of the subject referencing and appraising the contents of old newspapers, such things are impossible to eliminate entirely). In so doing, he gives us the opportunity to experience life in socialism.[13]

Maciej Drygas' documentary film *One Day in the PRL* (*Jeden dzień w PRL)*[14] yields a similar effect. Assembling a collage of archival materials (films, amateur recordings, documents read out loud, reports, denunciations, notes) he reconstructs one day, from dawn to dusk: September 27, 1962. As is the case with Łukasiewicz's text, this is a day on which nothing special happened. This day did not witness any grand events that would enter the chronicles of the twentieth century. The archival sources of Drygas' materials were to attest to the authenticity of the emerging image of this era of Poland and to the neutrality of the narrative. The choice of day, however, enabled the director to avoid inevitable references to already familiar historical moments, economic conditions, and so forth. The aspect of this point of view that interests me most is the potential for identification. Małgorzata Kozubek has written of this film that its source is its quotidian perspective:

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[12] J. Łukasiewicz, *Jeden dzień w socrealizmie*, "Teksty Drugie" 2000, issue 1/2, p. 7.

[13] Thus has Michał Głowiński summed up Łukasiewicz's intention in his review of the book: "Jacek Łukasiewicz reflects upon what might have caught the eye of a resident of Wrocław on November 14th, 1951 as he perused the local and national press available to him in this place and on this day. Łukasiewicz reflects upon what might have been said to him, what he might have been led to believe, and what cautionary anecdotes might have come his way." ("Pamiętnik Literacki" 2009, vol. 1, p. 216).

[14] Reż. M. Drygas, Polska 2006.

Preoccupied with the "ordinary" man who no one remembers, Maciej Drygas expands the field of identification. He studies the consciousness of "ordinary people". He recalls something that is unknown to the younger viewer, while evoking the very form of memory that people living in those times experienced.[15]

To reiterate more clearly the need to experience the PRL as a means for understanding the period, and to offer an example of the extreme nature of this need, I would like to reference a book that documents an experiment led by journalists Izabela Meyza and Witold Szabłowski. For half a year, they decided to live "as if they were in the PRL". Their book *Our Little PRL. Half a year in an M-3 with a perm, a moustache, and a Fiat 126 (Nasz mały PRL. Pół roku w M-3 z trwałą, wąsami i maluchem)* (Kraków 2012) is a record of this undertaking. The pitfalls of the idea seem quite obvious to me — there is no way to reconstruct the period simply within the confines of a modest apartment (something similar is attempted in Wolfgang Becker's famous film *Goodbye, Lenin* from 2003). We can only reconstruct the accoutrement of everyday life: furniture, diapers, a car, and clothing. The findings emerging from this experiment come as no surprise: technological advancements have made everyday existence more convenient, today's cars are larger, disposable diapers make parents' life easier, and clothing is now made from materials of higher quality. The biggest takeaway from *Our Little PRL* is the book's testament to the belief that the past can only be truly accessed through the attempt to relive its experiences.

In the methods suggested here for discussing the literary past, I am struck not only by the ease with which literature dissolves among the most diverse cultural texts, becoming one of many reference points for a bygone experience. Another aspect embedded in these methods is the reluctance to issue hypotheses on the latent mechanisms of the epoch: those social and literary processes that lurk below the surface. By concealing its own hierarchy and selectivity, these "portraits of the past" put forth an impression of completeness. Yet this completeness, taking the place of generalizations and conceptualizations, does not make it any easier to write the represented events into a broader historical or historical-literary process. Indeed, it curtails in advance the temptation to construct such integrated "wholes". For in the end, we are dealing with statements whose definitions are confined to the chosen moment in time. This inevitably renders history null and void – as isolated points, individual days can not contribute to building up the march of events on a broader scale. In its place, in the place of history, the microscopic scale of the everyday steps in: the perspective of one average individual, the so-called "gray" man, the material of memory.

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[15]M. Kozubek, *Jeden film z PRL-u. Maciej Drygas jako historyk kultury?*, "Dyskurs. Pismo Naukowo-Artystyczne ASP we Wrocławiu" 2013, vol. 16, p. 50. To confirm this potential for identification and for approaching an experience of the past, I will quote a few words on the film found online: "Thanks to the materials collected in Maciej Drygas' portrait, it is possible to learn more about this totalitarian system than from hundreds of books or films devoted to the period. (…) Some moments are touching, some funny, some sad - and all this contributes to a portrait of the '60s that is mesmerizing in its authenticity…" (http://culture.pl/pl/dzielo/jeden-dzien-w-prl [14 July 2017]).

Literature of the PRL from a Regional Perspective

Another proposal for a history of literature equal to the challenges of a changing world (the blurred borders of literature) that could replace the traditional model for writing literary history (its neutrality of language, its dubious scientism) and finally satisfy the need for a form of knowledge rooted in experience is the notion of historical-literary research through a regional or broader approach: geopoetics. At the service of a history of literature, I advocate for mobilizing the terms, objectives and theoretical premises of scholarship on local culture, regionalism, border culture (and border-crossing culture), and centroperipheral relations, as found, for instance, in several articles by Ryszard Nycz.

Departing from the conditions for literary history described in *A Possible History of Literature (Możliwa historia literatury)* to the conditions already articulated in this article, I should add the demise of the national model of literary history (based on the singularity of nation, language and territory) and the crisis of historical knowledge. Nycz identifies three sources for a new history of literature: the notion of global systems, postcolonial theories, and the conceptualized processes of globalization, all of which compel us to attend to local phenomena and to the relations between the center and the periphery. The concept of the borderland extends and contributes to this last mode of thought. In another text, Nycz elaborates on this issue by referring to themes of displacement and migration, which he identifies as critical social processes of the postwar period. Building on Nycz's points, we can recover a record in the culture and literature of the PRL of a social experience that has been robbed of its place: "postwar Polish society is a displaced, deterritorialized and dislocated society. This is a society in which no one (or hardly anyone) is at home, in their rightful place, and within their community".[16]

Taking these remarks as a point of departure, and expanding the scope of their focuses to include other spatial categories associated with the borderland, one might attempt to formulate a proposal for research on the culture of the PRL whose core tenets would be regionalism broadly construed, and the theme of the local. This method would be situated in the scholarship of new regionalism that is rapidly evolving today, whose axis – in broad strokes – is the relation between identity and territory. The border, the borderland, the cross-border, centroperipheral relations, and historicity (or rooting/uprooting) are some of the themes most often engaged in this field. Investigating the culture of the PRL in this framework might take on a form that is at least three-fold.

The first point pertains to the representation of local culture and the literature of particular regions. Documenting the literary life in specific regions of postwar Poland (Szczecin, Wrocław, Poznań, Warmia and Masuria, Podlasie, and Silesia) might allow us to reconstruct local traditions, mores of local literary life, and local artistic hierarchies that prioritize certain themes or style conventions. Several targeted studies have already been written on this subject (such as the book *The Career of a Writer in the PRL* [*Kariera pisarza w PRL-u*])[,17] Małgorzata Mikołajczak's fascinating articles on postwar literary affairs in Lubusz,[18] Inga

[16]R. Nycz, *PRL: pamięć podzielona, społeczeństwo przesiedlone*, p. 9.

[17]Ed. E. Dąbrowicz, K. Budrowska, K. Kościewicz, M. Budnik, Warsaw 2014.

[18]M. Mikołajczak, *Nie-miejsca pod arkadyjskim szyldem*, "Teksty Drugie" 2013, issue 3, p. 245-256.

Iwasiów's overview of neo-post-resettlement prose). Themes of this kind are quite prominent within the scope of regional studies.

I find that tracing the transmission of principles (hierarchies, conventions, themes) from the center to local regions (on the periphery) is particularly valuable for describing regional literary life. I am also interested in the forms of adaptation, accommodation and resistance that local authors adopt against these pressures and, on a broader plain, the analysis of relations between the templates imposed by the culturally dominating center of the epoch and the emancipatory needs of local literary communities. In this second scenario, literature plays a similar role to other means for constructing local, regional identity. A sociology of literature might also include reflections on the writer's position in his local environment, personal entanglements, as well as the mechanisms of social mobility and of transgressing the borders of the local and approaching supra-local forms of literary life.

Another field of historical-literary reflections on the PRL addresses the foundations of literary life that stem from regional categories. This deserves deeper attention. I have in mind the laws, mechanisms and dependencies of literary life beyond Warsaw. Regional literary life gained new impetus in the years following 1956, with the help of the popularizing efforts of the "'56 Generation". Having been institutionally galvanized in countless poetic competitions, local projects (tournaments, competitions, poetry nights, meetings with students, publishing houses and periodicals) regional artists joined mass culture on an accelerated timeline. On the very border between amateur and "professional" art, they cultivated (and continue to cultivate, for this persists today) their own hierarchies and literary icons partially independent from the Warsaw model whose names rarely make their way into scholarship. For years, Stanisław Barańczak penned much criticism on this topic, but it has its defenders as well (A. K. Waśkiewicz, J. Leszin-Koperski).

 In the article cited above, Ryszard Nycz introduces a third way to apply regional categories (concepts of the border) to the study of postwar Polish culture. He reads PRL-era literature in search of a record of displacements resulting from forced resettlements that tore asunder the traditional social fabric.

This same scholar's notion of a "possible history of literature" has a similar theoretical anchoring (border studies and cross-border studies). Alluding to the suggestion of Bohdan Jałowiecki, who has said that our image of the history of all of Poland since the nineteenth century has been dominated by the events of Russian annexation, along with the canon of patriotic virtues, heroes and historical events (at the expense, naturally, of the remaining regions), Nycz introduces new theoretical approaches that might offer an alternative to "historical studies based on this "congressional" image of nineteenth-century Poland, through contemporary symbolic struggles over the politics of history and of memory."[19] Regionalising our narratives of the PRL might benefit the representation of those fields of literature and literary life that push back against the dominant narrative of Polish past, driven by the intelligentsia's experience of Russian annexation. I would argue that the postwar culture of the so-

[19]R. Nycz, *Możliwa historia literatury*, in: *Na pograniczach literatury*, ed. J. Fazan, K. Zajas, Kraków 2012, p. 31.

called "Recovered Territories" also has a place in this project. One critical component of this culture was the effacement of historical memory and the imposition of ideologically proper narratives of the past through the coercive practices of the propaganda apparatus.[20]

Studying PRL-era literature and culture through a regionalist prism (geopoetics) offers substantial potential for reparations – it opens up an opportunity to focus on the phenomena of postwar culture so often cast to the margins of literary criticism and literary history. These phenomena include: local culture, regional forms, and mechanisms of literary and amateur life. This approach allows us to witness the experience of forced relocations and the reality of the dominating "congressional" perspective in general culture.

Both proposals articulated here for studying the culture of the PRL are open resolutions: their potential applications for the interpretation of other cultural moments are clear. In both cases, the concepts in question have evolved out of shifts in the humanities. They are situated within the scope of a cultural history of literature. The single year study and the regionalist approach both relate to the literary work as a cultural text (just one of many), and adopt the point of view of an individual observer. Both push back against official languages, prevailing theories, and all ideas that favor cultural homogenization. To this end, they invoke the category of experience (memory) as an epistemic tool. While the convergence between these two approaches is fundamentally coincidental, we should take it as an indication of and testament to the continuity and the inevitability of change endemic to literary studies.

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[20]An excellent introduction to post-war regionalist ideas is Małgorzata Mikołajczak's article *Wstęp: Regionalizm w polskiej refleksji o literaturze (zarys problematyki i historia idei)*, which opens the anthology *Regionalizm literacki w Polsce. Zarys historyczny i wybór źródeł* (ed. Z. Chojnowski, M. Mikołajczak, Kraków 2016), as well as several source texts included in this anthology.

Keywords | Abstract | Note on the Author ● ● ●

KEYWORDS

regionalism

L I T E R A T U R E   O F   T H E   P R L

local culture

Abstract:

The aim of this article is to put forth two exemplary methods for writing about literature from the PRL period and, in a broader context, two forms of constructing a history of literature by this model. Enumerating the basic premises for a contemporary history of literature (the loss of neutrality for critical languages, the blurring of borders that define the object of literary studies, and the the altered state of the human sciences), this article's author proposes the form of the single year study as well as studies inspired by the conceptual apparatus of new regionalism. These approaches offer a chance to investigate thematics that have thus far been ignored in scholarship on PRL-era culture (local culture, the relationship between official and local culture, and the persistence of the internal borders of partitioned Poland in postwar culture) as well as an intimate approach to postwar experience through the multifaceted re-presentation of an isolated moment in time (the single year study).

history of literature

single year study

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Jan Galant – PhD, Professor at the Institute of Polish Philology at the Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznan. Galant's interests include the history of literature and of twentieth--century Polish culture, with special emphasis on the socialist period and themes related to new regionalism. He has published the following books: *Marek Hłasko* (Poznań 1996), *Polska proza lingwistyczna. Debiuty lat siedemdziesiątych* (Poznań 1999), *Zszywacze, spinacze, pinezki. Krótkie szkice o literaturze* (Ostrów Wielkopolski 2007), and *Odmiany wolności. Publicystyka, krytyka i literatura polskiego Października* (Poznań 2010). He has edited the following anthologies: *Powroty Iwaszkiewicza* (Poznań 1999), *PRL - świat (nie)przedstawiony* (Poznań 2010) and *Pokolenie "Współczesności". Twórcy. Dzieła. Znaczenie* (Poznań 2016). From 2014 to 2016 he participated in a conference series organized as part of the grant project "New Regionalism in literary studies".

The Golden Age:

Overviews and Intersections. Eighty Years of Anglophone Children's Classics and 150 Years of their Polish Translations in Three Macro Perspectives

Aleksandra Wieczorkiewicz

In Place of an Introduction

> *The expression 'Golden Age' is often applied to the period of English children's books from Carroll to Milne, and it is appropriate in more ways than one. Quite apart from the sheer quality of the books, one observes that many of them seem to be set in a distant era when things were better than they are now. And childhood itself seemed a Golden Age to many of these writers, as they set out to recapture its sensations; Kenneth Grahame even called his first book about childhood* The Golden Age.[1]

Thus writes Humphrey Carpenter of that remarkable eighty-year period during which English and American pens spawned such things as Wonderlands, Secret Gardens, Neverlands and Emerald Cities, a period when many writers chose "the children's novel as their vehicle for the portrayal of society, and for the expression of their personal dreams."[2]

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[1] H. Carpenter, Secret Gardens. A Study of the Golden Age of Children's Literature, London–Sydney 1987, p. X. Kenneth Grahame's collected stories – The Golden Age (1895) – which has been written about and printed twice in Poland under different titles: *Wspomnienia z krainy szczęścia: wybór opowiadań*, translated to Polish by Andrzej Nowicki (Warsaw 1958) and *Złoty wiek; Wyśnione dni*, translation and afterword by Ewa Horodyska (Wrocław 1991).

[2] H. Carpenter, loc. cit.

English-language works have always comprised a mainstay of children's literature, which – before coming into its own as a distinct and autonomous genre – included the great works of the Enlightenment and Romantic periods adapted for young readers. The first reworkings of adult novels began to appear towards the end of the eighteenth century: Daniel Defoe's *The Life and Strange Surprising Adventures of Robinson Crusoe of York, Mariner* made its way into children's bedrooms throughout all of Europe – in Germany, as Joachim Campe's *Robinson the Younger* (1779),[3] in Poland as *Przypadki Robinsona Krusoe z angielskiego ięzyka na francuski przełożone y skrócone od Pana Feutry, teraz oyczystym ięzykiem wydane (The Adventures of Robinson Krusoe translated and abridged from the English version into French by Pan Feutry, Now Published in its Original Language),* translated by John Baptist Albertrandi in 1769. Jonathan Swift's *Gulliver's Travels,* originally written for adults, had a similar fate. Eventually, Swift was joined on bookshelves by other books for children and young adults, among them, the works of Walter Scott, James Fenimore Cooper and Charles Dickens, whose *Oliver Twist* and *A Christmas Carol* now belong to the permanent repertoire of the children's canon.

From Carroll To Tolkien: Establishing A Canon

The true turning point and birth of children's literature – understood not as the anthologizing of texts borrowed and adapted from the world of adults alongside didactic texts on the moral education of children, but as an autonomous field of artistic and literary creation in which the child is inscribed in the text as a full-fledged addressee[4] – was the nineteenth century, or its second half, to be more precise. This period marks the beginning of the so-called "Golden Age" of anglophone children's literature, in step with a worldwide blossoming of publications for the youngest tier of readers. This Golden Age was inaugurated with Lewis Carroll's works *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* (1865) and *Through the Looking-Glass* (1871), swiftly followed by Louisa May Alcott's *Little Women* (1868), Mark Twain's *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* (1876), *The Prince and the Pauper* (1881) and *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* (1876), Robert Louis Stevenson's *The Treasure Island* (1883), Rudyard Kipling's *The Jungle Book* (1894) and *Just So Stories* (1902), L. Frank Baum's *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* (1900), Beatrix Potter's *The Tale of Peter Rabbit* (1902), Edith Nesbit's *Five Children and It* (1902) and *The Railway Children* (1906), Kenneth Grahame's *The Wind in The Willows* (1908), L. M. Montgomery's *Anne of Green Gables* (1908), J. M. Barrie's *Peter Pan in Kensington Gardens* (1906) and *Peter Pan and Wendy* (1911), Frances Hodgson Burnett's *Little Lord Fauntleroy* (1886), *The Little Princess* (1905) and *The Secret Garden* (1911), Hugh Lofting's *The Story of Doctor Dolittle* (1920), A. A. Milne's *Winnie-the-Pooh* (1926) and *The House at the Pooh Corner* (1928), P. L. Travers' *Mary Poppins* series, whose first part came out in 1935, and finally, J. R. R. Tolkien's novel *The Hobbit, or There and Back Again*, published in 1937 (*Appendix* – **Table 1**).

The "Golden Age" of English literature for children therefore runs from the 1860s to the 1930s, amounting to about eighty years of intense and excellent literary production for children.

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[3] W. Krzemińska, *Literatura dla dorosłych a tworząca się literatura dla młodego czytelnika,* [in:] idem, *Literatura dla dzieci i młodzieży. Zarys dziejów,* Warsaw 1963, p. 30.

[4] A fully fledged consumer, but not the only one – it is worth noting the specific phenomenon of the double addressee (or perhaps multiple addressees) of "the masterpieces of children's literature, which can be read in various spaces, at various times, and on multiple levels of interpretation." Z. Adamczykowa, *Literatura "czwarta" – w kręgu zagadnień teoretycznych,* [in:] *Literatura dla dzieci i młodzieży (po roku 1980),* vol. 2, ed. K. Heska-Kwaśniewicz, Katowice 2009, p. 18.

One might take issue with the bookends on either side of this "small epoch," thus rearranging both its beginning[5] and end points, but for the purposes of this essay, I take as my endpoint the outbreak of World War II, which marked a transition into a new form of thought, ushering children's literature into the contemporary era.[6]

Why English?

Although the historical moment that marks the early phase of children's classics is quite meaningful, it did not itself determine the stature, popularity, and timelessness of the works that earned their timeless status on the strength of their own immanent literary worth. Monika Adamczyk-Grabowska writes:

English-language children's literature has garnered such great notoriety in the world that we often attribute its special characteristics to the genre, and not to a national sensibility. When we speak of "English children's literature" we often think of books that children and adults alike read with pleasure, books full of fantasy, humor, and a taste of the absurd, an unusual interweaving of realism with fairy tale, books free of irritating didacticism, often eschewing all impulses to moralize. These are works for both children and adults, in which children often behave rather maturely, and adults rather childishly. These are books in which everything is possible, although magic is often seeded in the most banal of places [...].[7]

This Polish translator and scholar of children's literature characterizes children's classics as works that have survived the test of time, whose merits still delight viewers throughout the world. These are universal books, catered to children as much as to adults. They steer clear of ponderous didacticism and petty moralism and link the "childlike" to the "mature", joining these two worlds and offering proof that the realm of imagination can be populated by youngsters and grown-ups alike. These are texts that encourage sensitivity, honoring the measure of fantasy cached within the experience of reality and locating all that is folkloric, oneiric and

[5] Following Humphrey Carpenter, I take as the beginning of the "Golden Age" the first edition of Lewis Carroll's *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* (1865) because of its rank among the international masterpieces of children's classics. However, *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* would never have come about without the precedent of English "pure nonsense," which grew out of traditional nursery rhymes and counting-out games. As origins, or perhaps forerunners of the Golden Age, we might also mention the works of Edward Lear, whose nonsense poems began to appear in the 1840s (*A Book of Nonsense, by Derry Down Derry* – 1846; *Nonsense Songs, Stories, Botany and Alphabets* – 1871). Charles Kingsley's *The Water-Babies: A Fairy Tale for a Land Baby* (1863) also predates Carroll's masterpiece by two years, and is likewise acclaimed as a classic of children's literature. In Poland, however, Kingsley's writing enjoys little popularity: the sole translation of *The Water-Babies* by Ewa Horodyska did not appear until 1996, titled *Wodne dzieci: baśń dla dziecka lądu*; however, his tales about Greek heroes, (*The Heroes, Greek Fairy Tales* – 1856) enjoyed greater success, translated by Wacław Berent in 1926 and titled *Heroje czyli Klechdy greckie o bohaterach*. Another masterpiece of children's literature predating Carroll is the fantasy novel by the author of *Vanity Fair*, William Thackeray's *The Rose and the Ring* (1854), translated to Polish by Zofia Rogoszówna in 1913 and by Michał Ronikier in 1990.

[6] "Many thousands of books were destroyed in air-raids, while [...] the 1944 Education Act, which abolished fees in state secondary education, gave at least a theoretical impetus to reading. By the end of the war, children's literature, now established as a respectable full member of the publishing world, was ready to enter an era of unprecedented richness and prosperity." P. Hunt, Retreatism and Advance, [in:] *Children's Literature. An Illustrated History,* ed. Peter Hunt, Oxford – New York 1995, p. 224. World War II certainly left its mark on English children's literature, but the transition between the interwar and postwar periods took place quite smoothly: Hugh Lofting began publishing his series in the 1920s, but a number of his Doctor Dolittle books did not appear until the war had ended (eg. *Doctor Dolittle and the Secret Lake* – 1948). P. L. Travers' Mary Poppins series, first introduced in 1935, was continued until the '80s, while Tolkien, who published *The Hobbit* in 1937, did not publish The Lord of the Rings until 1954, even though he began working on it before World War II.

[7] M. Adamczyk-Grabowska, *O książkach dla dzieci*. "Akcent" 1984, issue 4, p. 17.

imaginative within the limits of human experience. These texts treat the child reader with respect, though never without a sense of humor. Their humor occasionally spills into the realm of merry nonsense, sometimes linked with lyricism and nostalgia, and sometimes surfacing in rapid wordplay, puns and language games, reminding us that linguistic invention belongs, in the end, to children. After all, only children remain unburdened by the rigors of grammar that constrain the freewheeling force that is human speech.

All this suggests that the works classified as children's classics are incomparably difficult to translate and require monumental efforts on the part of any translator seeking to bring to readers of her native tongue a masterpiece of the children's canon and preserve the original mastery of language without distorting its sense in the process. The translation of children's literature has its own quirks and rules. Significant among these are the imperative to preserve the text's readiness to be read out loud, and the correlation between the translated text and original illustrations.[8] In spite of all this, the demands that the masterpieces of the canon impose upon translators rarely discourage the latter: all of the anglophone works mentioned above boast a considerable repertoire of translations in many foreign languages,[9] to which new titles are added each year, if not each moment.

A Macro(Micro)-Cosm Of Translation

Because of its idiosyncrasies and special character, literary translation always strains towards close proximity with the original text in a tireless pursuit of equivalences (in language, culture, and function) and a constant "negotiation" between its own form and its prototype. The translator strives toward completion through close readings of the text, rendering a product founded on cross-idiom identification with the original. In this sense, the poetics and criticism of translation (or, broadly speaking, all scholarship on the subject of translation) necessarily involve scrutinizing the original and translated texts up close and in detail. In the process, criticism often takes the form of comparative, acute readings of select excerpts of a text, whose implications reveal the various strategies adopted by the translator. By its very nature, translation theory always relies on its own form of micropoetics: a research method for analyzing the word, sentence and paragraph. For those adopting this approach, any attempt at a broad or intersectional view requiring perspectives that are distanced from the text (be they chronological, quantitative or qualitative), seems unthinkable, leaving aside its practicability.

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[8] These two features, constituting a major distinction between the translation of literature for adults and children, are elaborated by Michał Borodo (following the Finnish scholar Riitta Oittinen) in his article *Children's Literature Translation Studies? – zarys badań nad literaturą dziecięcą w przekładzie.* "Przekładaniec" 2006, issue 1, p. 16.

[9] Among often-translated international children's classics, leading the way is Antoine de Saint Exupéry's *The Little Prince* (translated into 300 languages). In April of 2017 this title was proclaimed "the world's most frequently translated book (with the exception of religious works)"; the runner-up is Carlo Collodi's *Pinocchio* (translated into over 260 languages), while third place goes to the founding book of the Golden Age of English-language children's literature – Lewis Carroll's *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, which, after Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress* is the most frequently translated English-language work, having been translated into over 170 languages both living and dead, including Basque, Tongan, Yiddish, Old English, Cockney English, Zulu, Gothic, Latin, Esperanto and Egyptian hieroglyphs. *Alice in a World of Wonderlands: The Translations of Lewis Carroll's Masterpiece*, vol. I, eds. John A. Lindseth, A. Tannenbaum, New Castle 2015, p. 739–740; E. Rajewska, *Dwie wiktoriańskie chwile w Troi, trzy strategie translatorskie*, Poznań 2004, p. 33; Joel Birenbaum, "For the anniversary of 'Alice in Wonderland,' translations into Pashto, Esperanto, emoji and Blissymbols" – http://www.alice150.com/wall-street-journal-article-of-june-12-for-the-anniversary-of-alice-in-wonderland-translations-into-pashto-esperanto-emoji-and-blissymbols/ [10 Jul. 2017].

In tension with the tradition and basic tenets of translation theory, I would like to contribute some less traditional tools to translation studies that instead of taking a close view of the original and translated texts stand at a certain remove. Over the micropoetics of translation criticism, I propose the macro- perspective model of "distant reading," whose first proponent, Franco Moretti, maintains that literature is something that can be measured, insofar as it belongs to the material world.[10] His claim goes even further: it is possible to portray literature by means of charts, maps, word trees and graphs.[11] It follows that translations should also be quantifiable, measurable, and possible to convey in numbers. In this case, I would like to submit to distanced analysis the Polish translations of English children's literature of the Golden Age, covering sixteen classics of the anglophone canon as translated into Polish from chronological, quantitative and qualitative perspectives, representing eighty years of original creative output (1870–2017).[12]

Translations Of English Children's Classics In Numbers

In her monograph *Polish Translations of English Children's Literature: Problems in Translation Criticism,* author Monika Adamczyk-Grabowska brings attention to the rarity of the "text that discusses translations according to distinct thematic categories or genres."[13] In fact, discounting some scattered articles in the field of translation criticism that focus on specific works, Adamczyk-Grabowska's book remains to this day the only[14] academic study from Poland concerning translations of English classics for younger audiences. Her book's representation of authors and texts is selective and non-comprehensive[15] due to the author's own research objective, which was to develop a new model of translation criticism (one built on detailed comparative analysis of literary works on a number of levels), using English children's literature as material. The perspective adopted by the Polish scholar and translator is therefore clearly associated with the comparativist and close reading approach to translations, while her selection of texts and authors is compatible with her own stated goal. Monika Adamczyk-Grabowska's work should also be updated and completed, not only due to the significant gaps in its selective bibliography. Since its publication date, the translation history of anglophone

[10]F. Moretti, Literature, measured (Pamphlet 12), Stanford Literary Lab, April 2016 –https://litlab.stanford.edu/ LiteraryLabPamphlet12.pdf [10 Jul. 2017]; F. Moretti, *Distant Reading*, London – New York 2013.

[11]Idem, *Wykresy, mapy, drzewa. Abstrakcyjne modele na potrzeby historii literatury*, trans. T. Bilczewski and A. Kowalcze-Pawlik, Kraków 2016.

[12]The first Polish translation of works belonging to the English children's canon was published in 1875. However, allotting some time for the translation and publication processes at the end of the nineteenth century, it seems that we can take the early 1870s as the beginning point of Polish translations of the Golden Age titles.

[13]M. Adamczyk-Grabowska, *Polskie tłumaczenia angielskiej literatury dziecięcej. Problemy krytyki przekładu*, Wrocław 1988, p. 5. This text's partial American addendum is Bogumił Staniów's library studies book, titled *Książka amerykańska dla dzieci i młodzieży w Polsce w latach 1944 – 1989. Produkcja i recepcja* published in Wrocław in 2000.

[14]In 2010, Anna Danuta Fornalczyk's study *Translating anthroponyms as exemplified by selected works of English children's literature in their Polish versions* was published in the series "Warsaw Studies in English Language and Literature." In this text, the author undertakes a linguistic analysis of Polish translations of character names in the works of Lewis Carroll, J.M. Barrie, Frances Hodgson Burnett, Rudyard Kipling, Hugh Lofting and A.A. Milne.

[15]The textual basis of Adamczyk-Grabowska's research is "9 utworów angielskiej literatury dziecięcej uznawanych powszechnie za klasykę w tej dziedzinie piśmiennictwa z ich 17 przekładami". The author chooses six authors and analyzes their most famous works: William Thackeray's *The Rose and the Ring*, Lewis Carroll's *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* and *Through the Looking-Glass*, Rudyard Kipling's *Just so stories,* Kenneth Grahame's *The Wind in The Willows*, J.M. Barrie's *Peter Pan in Kensington Gardens* and *Peter Pan and Wendy* as well as A.A. Milne's *Winnie-the-Pooh* and *The House at the Pooh Corner*. M. Adamczyk-Grabowska, op. cit., p.44.

children's classics has undergone substantial change: a number of new translations of titles already known in Poland have appeared, as well as some newly-translated classics making their debut in the Polish publishing market.

Establishing canons, composing authors' lists, and periodizing literary output are by their very nature arbitrary actions derived from the specific perspective of the group or individual making these choices. I have tried to create the "Golden Age" canon proposed earlier (comprised of sixteen authors ranging from Carroll to Tolkien) using as many English and Polish-language sources as possible in order to correct, or perhaps complete, the subjective research on today's readers' familiarity with English titles and authors. This body of work includes the obvious names and titles – Lewis Carroll, A. A. Milne, Rudyard Kipling, L. M. Montgomery and Frances H. Burnett – in the company of somewhat less popular authors (such as Louisa May Alcott, Beatrix Potter, Kenneth Grahame, Edith Nesbit, and P. L. Travers). A number of authors whose stature within English literature ought to earn them a place in this canon (Charles Kingsley, George McDonald, William Thackeray) have been excluded simply due to the chronology of their major works (falling before the bracket of 1865), or because they are less widely read in Poland. The sixteen writers of the Golden Age are paired with their sixteen most popular literary works for children, although the most popular does not always align with the most frequently translated, for there are many cases in which an author's least known title has undergone more Polish translation attempts than that same author's world-renowned masterpiece (such is the case with Frances H. Burnett, whose best-known novel *The Secret Garden* has one less Polish translation than her earlier and somewhat less popular *Little Lord Fauntleroy*). Since the selection of individual works for each of the sixteen writers was dictated by pragmatic criteria, the canon presented here, by its very nature, provides a reliable representation of the true English-language classics. For a somewhat more comprehensive picture of the situation, the appendix at this essay's end includes a table enumerating a broader list of writers together with more of their significant titles (**Table 1)**. The canon of sixteen in chronological order is as follows:

1. Lewis Carroll – *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* (1865)
2. Louisa May Alcott – *Little women* (1868)
3. Mark Twain – *Adventures of Tom Sawyer* (1876)
4. Robert Louis Stevenson – *Treasure Island* (1883)
5. Rudyard Kipling – *The Jungle Book* (1898)
6. L.F. Baum – *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* (1900)
7. Edith Nesbit – *Five Children and It* (1902)
8. Beatrix Potter – *The Tale of Peter Rabbit* (1902)
9. Kenneth Grahame – *The Wind in the Willows* (1908)
10. L. M. Montgomery – *Anne of Green Gables* (1908)
11. Frances Hodgson Burnett – *The Secret Garden* (1911)
12. J. M. Barrie – *Peter Pan and Wendy* (1911)
13. Hugh Lofting – *The Story of Doctor Dolittle* (1920)
14. A. A. Milne – *Winnie-the-Pooh* (1926)
15. P. L. Travers – *Mary Poppins* (1934)
16. J. R. R. Tolkien - *Hobbit or There and Back Again* (1937)

In my project of tracking the history of Polish translations of anglophone children's classics, I would like to begin with a **quantitative perspective**, which strikes me as the most fundamental and intuitive method for thinking about translations, and might even seem to provide a portrait of the popularity of these authors and their work. For certain representatives of the canon, however, a quantitative overview of this kind reveals a number of surprises: popularity is not always borne out in numbers. In fact, *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland,* as popular opinion would have it, is in the lead with twelve translations, but shares first place with two other titles: Twain's *Adventures of Tom Sawyer* and Montgomery's *Anne of Green Gables.* Meanwhile, *Winnie-the-Pooh,* whose universality and popularity among readers ought to place it right next to Carroll, in fact falls among the least-translated titles, boasting only four Polish translations, while the "translation average" tallies at six.[16] As it turns out, the acclaimed *Kubuś Puchatek* (Polish Winnie-the-Pooh) is translated even less than Louisa May Alcott's *Little Women*, for instance, which today has dropped in popularity, Lofting's *The Story of Doctor Dolittle* and Baum's *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*, all of which boast five Polish translations (**fig. 1**).
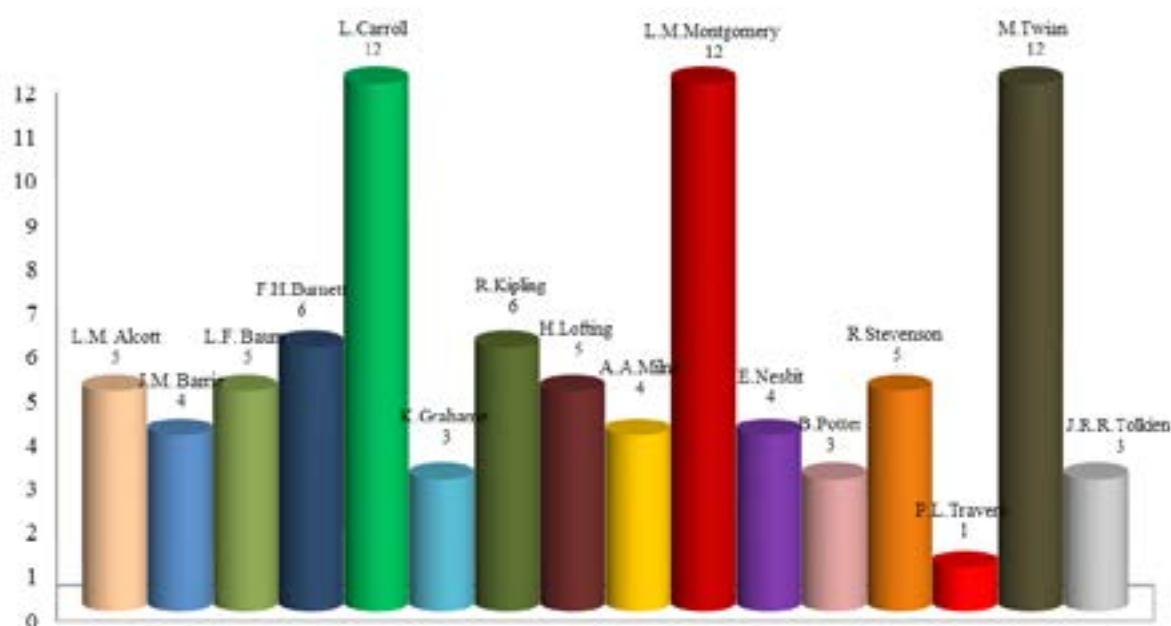

Figure 1. The allotments of Polish translations for specific authors of the Golden Age

[16]Here, by "translation average" I mean the value resulting from a simple division of the total existing Polish translations of the canon (ninety) by the number of translated works.

The translations themselves can be organized similarly: they too are subject to canonization. The first Polish translation of *Winnie-the-Pooh*, by Irena Tuwim in 1938, is treated as the canonical translation, and is praised by most critics and beloved among readers. It is difficult to find any point of contention with the text. Works whose first translation failed to achieve such high stature had a tendency to undergo a greater number of subsequent attempts, especially – as in the case of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* – if they posed compelling and significant tasks to the translator, becoming a measure of the translator's merit. In my statistical overview of children's literature in translation, the question of adaptation also becomes important[17] – in this article, I do not consider the numerous abridged and adapted versions using the classics as a departure point. Instead, I have sought to enumerate a list of "true translations." This becomes particularly important since adaptations and reworkings have consistently and integrally accompanied translations of children's books, and the two formats appear on the publishing market parallel to one another, and often without notes clarifying the distinction between abridged versions and full-fledged translations. If I were to include adaptations in the above data set, the results of the analysis would look very different: *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* has at least twelve Polish-language adaptations, while *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* has only one.

The quantitative perspective remains closely bound to a chronological one, since serial translation sets– both robust and sparse – always unfold in time, and the form they take is often determined precisely by the historical moment in which new texts appear. The graphs below document translation sets of individual English children's classics of the Golden Years, starting in the 1870s, when the first titles of our canon appeared, and continuing to the present day. (**fig. 2**).

L. Carroll – Alice's Adventures in Wonderland (1865). Fig. 2.1
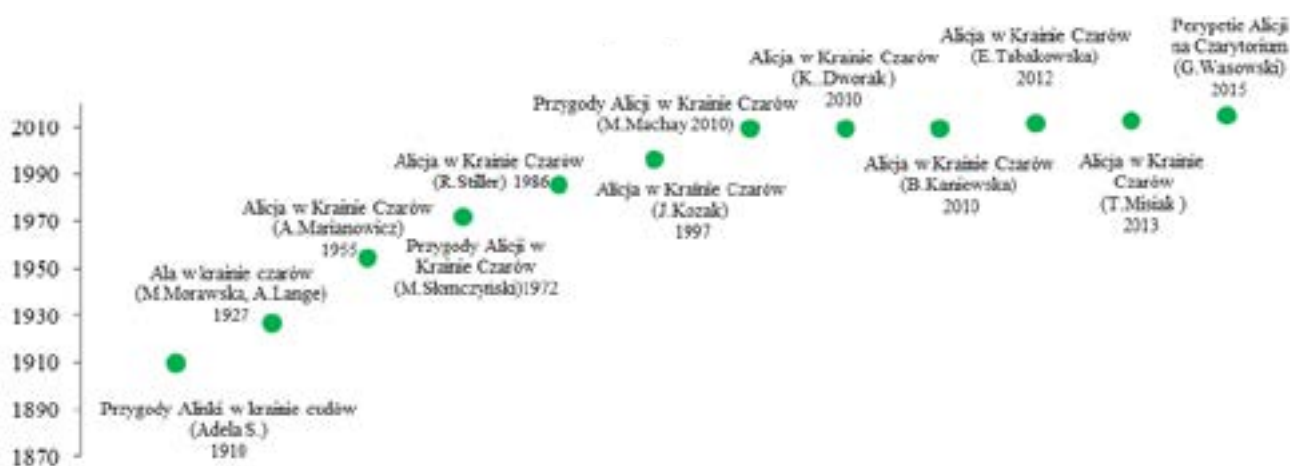
[17]There are several conversations ongoing in Polish translation theory circles on the subject of adaptation (as well as the adaptive character of translating children's literature). Many have written on adaptability, including Irena Tuwim (*Sprawa adaptacji. O przekładach książek dla dzieci i młodzieży*. "Nowa Kultura" 1952, issue 26, p. 10) and Stanisław Barańczak (*Rice pudding czy kaszka manna*. "Teksty" 1975 issue 5, p. 72-86), while Monika Adamczyk-Grabowska has polemicized with the concept of adaptation, although in her already-mentioned book *Polskie przekłady angielskiej literatury dziecięcej* she locates the study of adaptations within the field of translation studies.

L.M. Alcott – Little Women (1868). Fig. 2.2
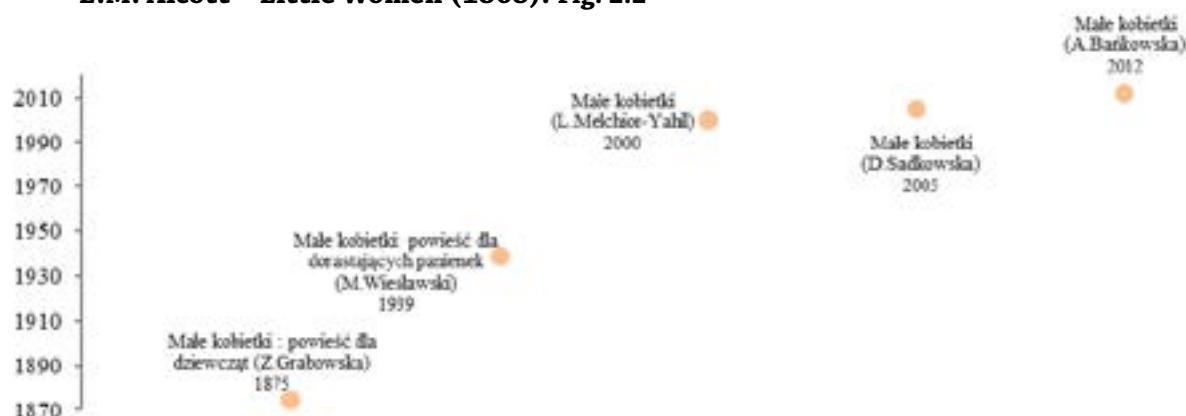
M. Twain – Adventures of Tom Sawyer (1876). Fig. 2.3
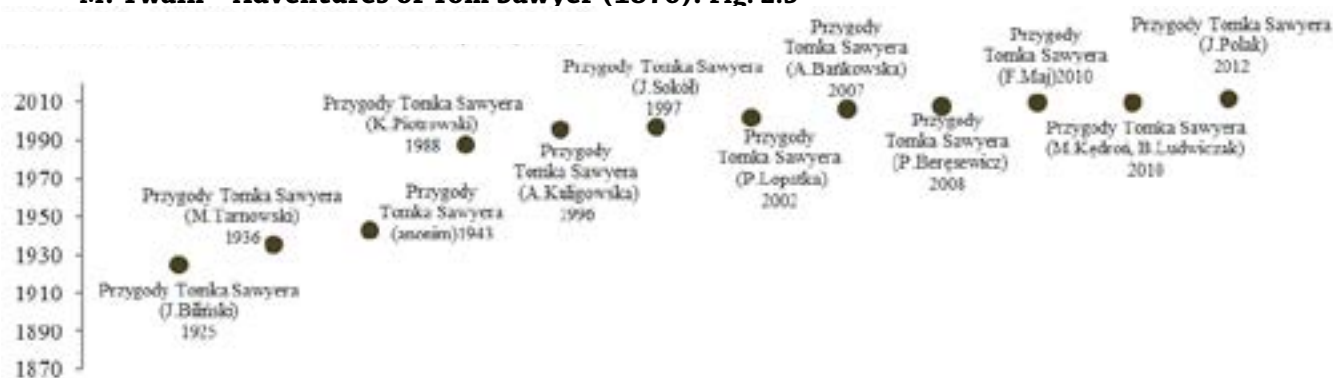
R.L. Stevenson – Terasure Island (1883). Fig. 2.4
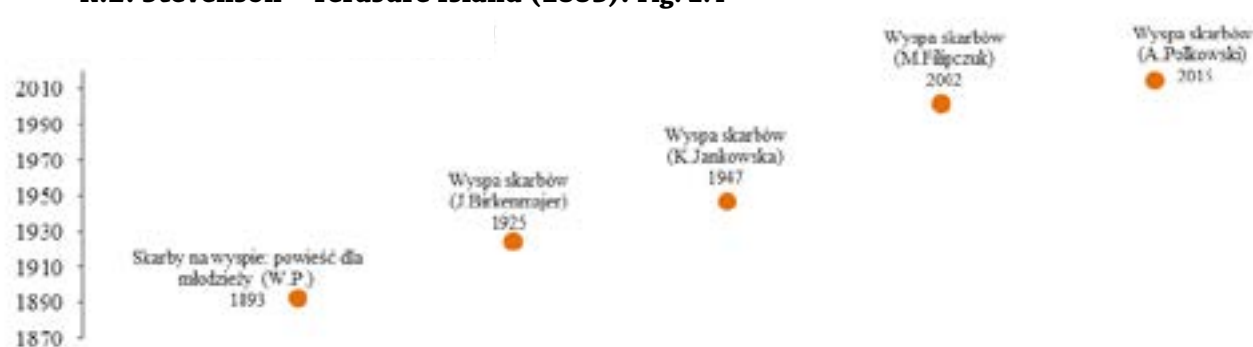
R. Kipling – Jungle Book (1898). Fig. 2.5
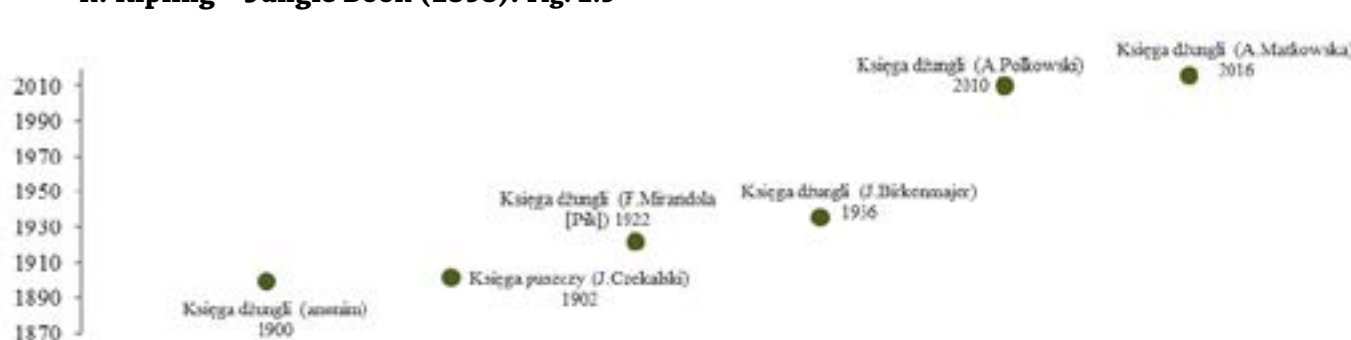
L.F. Baum – The Wonderfull Wizard of Oz (1900). Fig. 2.6

E. Nesbit – Five Children and It (1902). Fig. 2.7

B. Potter – The Tale of the Peter Rabbit (1902). Fig. 2.8

K. Grahame – The Wind in the Willows (1908). Fig. 2.9
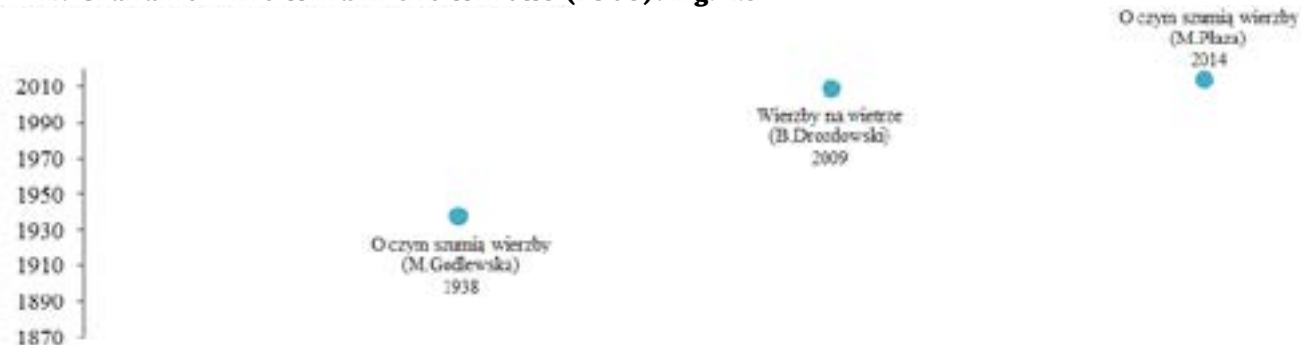
L.M. Montgomery – Anne of Green Gables (1908). Fig. 2.10

F.H. Burnett – The Secret Garden (1911). Fig. 2.11
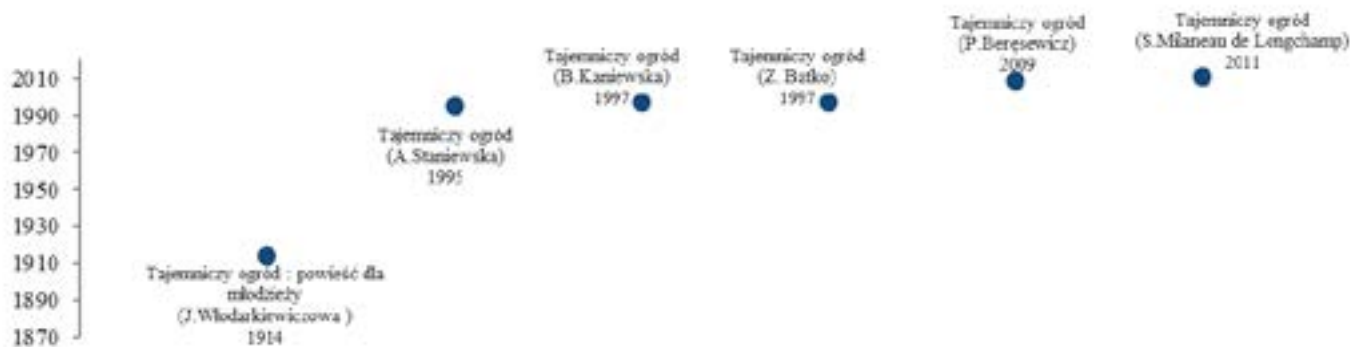
J.M. Barrie – Peter Pan and Wendy (1911). Fig. 2.12

H. Lofting - The Story of Doctor Dolittle (1920). Fig. 2.13
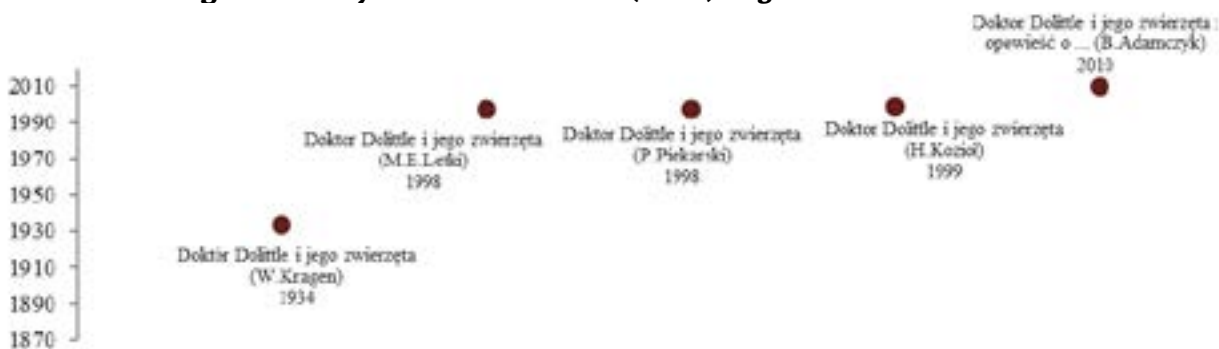
A.A. Milne – Winnie the Pooh (1926). Fig. 2.14

Kubuś Puchatek
(B.Drozdowski)
1994

O Kubusiu Puchatku
(A.Traut)
1993

Fredzia Phi-Phi
(M.Adamczyk-Grbowska)
1986

Kubuś Puchatek
(I.Tuwim)
1938

2010
1990
1970
1950
1930
1910
1890
1870

P.L. Travers – Mary Poppins (1934). Fig. 2.15

2010
1990
1970
1950
1930
1910
1890
1870

Agnieszka
(I.Tuwim)
1938

J.R.R. Tolkien – Hobbit (1937). Fig. 2.16

Hobbit czyli Tam i z powrotem
(A.Polkowski)
2002

Hobbit albo Tam i z powrotem
(P.Braiter)
1997

Hobbit czyli Tam i z powrotem
(M.Skibniewska, W.Lewik)
1960

2010
1990
1970
1950
1930
1910
1890
1870

Figure 2. Polish translations of the most famous works of *The Golden Age*

Reviewing the graphs above might bring about some interesting observations on the form and character of translation sets. It is explicitly clear that authors' and books' fates in translation vary vastly when viewed chronologically. Carroll – an author of indisputable status, having existed in Polish letters since 1910 – has seen Polish translations of his work increase consistently since the publication of the first one (by Adela S.), and then substantially accelerate between 2010 and 2015, when a total of six translations appeared, amounting to half of the total set (**fig. 2.1**). With Twain's Tom Sawyer novel, the situation unfolds similarly: between the earliest three translations (all dating before 1945) and the fourth translation (published in 1988) lies a pronounced gap of forty years. On the other hand, we observe a pronounced spike beginning in the second half of the 1990s: between 1996 and 2012 eight translations of *Adventures of Tom Sawyer* were published, amounting to two-thirds of the entire set (**fig. 2.3**). Two titles intended mainly for an audience of young girls – Montgomery's *Anne of Green Gables* and Burnett's *The Secret Garden* – follow a somewhat different timeline. The translation sets for both titles are characterized by an authoritative first translation: in the case of *Anne of Green Gables,* Rozalia Bernsztajnowa's translation from 1911, and in the case of *The Secret Garden,* Jadwiga Włodarkiewiczowa's translation from 1908. Both translations attained canonical status and were published in several subsequent editions, which surely accounts for the significant gap between their publication dates and subsequent translation attempts, amounting in both cases to over eighty years, while the bulk of contributions to both translation sets falls between 1995 and 2013 (**fig. 2.10 and 2.11**). The significantly less extensive translation set of Kenneth Grahame's *The Wind in the Willows* also begins at the relatively early moment of 1938, while the subsequent translation in that set does not appear until the beginning of the twenty-first century, over seventy years after Maria Godlewska's first translation was published (**fig. 2.9**). Somewhat similar – though less extreme – is the timeline of the five Polish translations of Hugh Lofting's Doctor Dolittle book: the novel's first translation, by Wanda Kragen in 1934, is separated from the subsequent attempt by over sixty years, while the penultimate and last translations are separated by a full decade (**fig. 2.13**) – this last one being the only translation to retain the novel's long title in Polish in its entirety:[18] *The Story of Doctor Dolittle, Being the History of His Peculiar Life at Home and Astonishing Adventures in Foreign Parts,* translated by Beata Adamczyk in 2010 as *Doktor Dolittle i jego zwierzęta: opowieść o życiu doktora w domowym zaciszu oraz niezwykłych przygo-*

[18]The question of titling translated works is an interesting one, since it becomes a distinct indicator of the impact of the first translation, which so often becomes canonical and authoritative. The Polish title of Burnett's *The Secret Garden* has never been modified throughout the hundred-so years its translation set has been expanding: not one of its translators took issue with Włodarkiewiczowa's *Tajemniczy ogród* – a choice that is not, in fact, a perfect equivalent of the original. Similarly canonical and unalterable is Bernsztajnowa's translated title of Montgomery's *Anne of Green Gables – Ania z Zielonego Wzgórza* – which has studiously kept hidden the original name of the house where Anne Shirley lived: green gables more literally translates to "zielonego dachu" than "zielonego wzgórza", since "gable is an architectural term for the wall connecting two parts of a pitched roof". (M. Nowak, *Strategie tłumaczeniowe w przekładzie antroponimów i toponimów w powieści "Ania z Zielonego Wzgórza Lucy Maud Montgomery"*, unpublished text). The titles given to Milne's works make an interesting case that I've already mentioned – the title of Tuwim's influential translation, whose status is indisputable, has been countered only once by Monika Adamczyk-Grabowska, who called her translation *Fredzia Phi-Phi*, in defiance of the timelessness of Tuwim's translation. The new translation, however, (together with its title) was rejected by the majority of its critics and readers, and subsequent translations by Drozdowski and Traut revert back to Tuwim's canonical title (**fig. 2.14**). Grahame's book has a similar story: Godlewska's first translation – *O czym szumią wierzby* (1938) – was countered by Bohdan Drozdowski's *Wiatr wśród wierzb* (2009). The new translation, however, never managed to oust the prewar title from its prominence, and Maciej Płaza's newest translation from 2014 returned to *O czym szumią wierzby*. In many cases, the titles of the most acclaimed works differ only marginally between translations: such is the case with Carroll, Barrie, Potter and Baum.

dach w dalekich krainach. We might refer to Stevenson and Kipling's Polish translations as the "older" sets, since the greater part of their translations appeared before 1945 (in the case of *Treasure Island,* three out of five translations, and in the case of *The Jungle Book,* four out of six existing translations) (**fig. 2.4 and 2.5**). These sets' "younger" counterparts, beginning at the end of the 1950s or even into the '60s, correspond to J.M. Barrie's *Peter Pan and Wendy* (the earliest being Maciej Słomczyński's 1958 translation, titled *Przygody Piotrusia Pana: opowiadanie o Piotrusiu i Wendy* – **fig. 2.12**),[19] J.R.R. Tolkien's *The Hobbit, or There and Back Again* (the earliest being Maria Skibniewska's 1960 translation, titled *Hobbit czyli tam i z powrotem* – **fig. 2.16**), L.Frank Baum's *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* (the earliest being Stefania Wortman's 1962 translation, titled *Czarnoksiężnik ze Szmaragdowego Grodu* – **fig. 2.6**) and finally, Beatrix Potter's *The Tale of Peter Rabbit* (the earliest being Mirosława Czarnocka-Wojs' 1991 translation, titled *Opowieść o Króliku Piotrusiu* – **fig. 2.8**). The sparser translation sets (consisting of up to five titles) all developed somewhat consistently, as represented by Louisa May Alcott and Edith Nesbit's titles, although it is worthwhile to note that *Little Women,* a novel traditionally for girls, has a great number of older translations (two predating the war, one of which, Zofia Godlewska's 1875 translation, is the oldest translation from the entire Golden Age canon, with the three remaining translations appearing only after 2000 – **fig. 2.2**), while most translations of Edith Nesbit's fantastic tale of the adventures of five children all appeared after 1945 with the exception of one little known and hardly accessible anonymous translation from 1910, titled *Dary: powieść fantastyczna* (**fig. 2.7**). Exceptional cases we must reckon with are the earlier contributions to P. L. Travers' Mary Poppins' translation set, which is hardly a "set" at all, since it consists exclusively of Irena Tuwim's 1938 translation, titled *Agnieszka* (**fig. 2.14**). This translation was published in several subsequent editions, and in the 1990s its title was modernized, replacing the Polish-rendered *Agnieszka* with the original first and last names of the series' protagonist. Travers' book's translation history[20] – or rather, the book's noteworthy and puzzling lack of such a history – becomes a curious phenomenon when compared with the translations of the rest of the canon. This is especially surprising since *Mary Poppins* is extremely popular and widely read in Poland, surely in great part due to the Disney musical adaptation from 1964,[21] which could just as well have spurred a natural spike in translations for the funny tales of the Banks family nanny.

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[19]The translation careers of Barrie's books unfolded somewhat uniquely: Słomczyński's full-fledged translation is predated by two Polish translations of works from Peter Pan's world: *Przygody Piotrusia duszka*, an anonymous translation published in Warsaw in 1913 by M. Arcta, and *Przygody Piotrusia Pana* in May Byron's text for children and Alicja Strasmanowa's translation, distributed in Warsaw by Księgarnia Literacka in 1938. Both adaptations are liberal and succinct with Barrie's masterpiece, and for a number of years, these were the only available versions of Peter Pan's stories. Aside from these, one other work was translated: Zofia Rogoszówna's *Przygody Piotrusia Pana* from 1913, which is a translation of *Peter Pan in Kensington Gardens* (1906), a text five years older than *Peter Pan and Wendy*. The two are often mistaken for one another.

[20]Most volumes of Travers' popular series were not translated repeatedly – Irena Tuwim remains the sole translator for four of the novels (*Agnieszka* – 1938, *Agnieszka wraca* – 1960, *Agnieszka otwiera drzwi* – 1962, *Agnieszka w parku* – 1963), while the fifth and sixth parts of the series were translated only in 2014, by Stanisław Kroszczyński (*Mary Poppins w kuchni*; *Mary Popppins od A do Z*). The two remaining books of the series were both translated twice: *Mary Poppins na ulicy Czereśniowej* and *Mary Poppins i Numer Osiemnasty* – translated by Krystyna Tarnowska and Andrzej Konarek in 1995, and *Mary Poppins na ulicy Czereśniowej* and *Mary Poppins i sąsiedzi* – translated by Stanisław Kroszczyński in 2009 and 2010.

[21]The impact of film adaptations – especially in the case of Disney animations – on the popularization, rise in interest, and impetus to translate a number of these children's classics is an extensive subject worthy of further discussion, but if falls beyond the scope of this essay.

The data sets above merit further scrutiny in one, collated graph (**fig. 3**) that renders visible the translation careers of the Golden Age children's classics. After a somewhat leisurely beginning (towards the end of the nineteenth century and at the turn of the century, the first translations from English were still hardly known in the Polish-speaking world)[22] we notice a gradual rise in interest in English literature for children that gains steadily. This trend begins with Zofia Grabowska's above-mentioned translation of *Little Women,* followed by translations of a few adventure novels: *Treasure Island* and *The Jungle Book*. Translations from this period are often published anonymously or attributed only with initials. It seems to be the case that in these years, the translator was treated as one who merely renders a service to the text, and that including her name in the published work was of little importance to the publisher (and perhaps to the translator herself). In the 1910s and '20s, the translations of classics become increasingly numerous — in both decades increasing by four titles — including those of Carroll, Nesbit, Montgomery and Burnett, although the true translation boom did not occur until the '30s. This is when Irena Tuwim pens her first translations (*Kubuś Puchatek / Winnie-the-Pooh*; *Agnieszka / Mary Poppins*). It is also when the first translations appear of Lofting's novels (Wanda Kragen's *Doktór Dolittle*) and of Grahame's *The Wind in the Willows* (Maria Godlewska's *O czym szumią wierzby*).

For obvious reasons, World War II and the immediate postwar period mark a lull in translation: no new authors are translated into Polish, although two new translations of Twain and Stevenson's titles appear (significantly, both are adventure novels). A resurgence in translation begins only around 1955, when Antonia Marianowicz publishes her translation of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*. Three years later, Słomczyński becomes the first to translate Barrie into Polish, and in the early '60s, Tolkien and Baum appear in Polish as well. In the immediate wake of this burst of activity comes a period of significant stagnation in translating the canon: between 1963 and 1986, perhaps due to the sociopolitical situation in Poland, the only new translation is Maciej Słomczyński's *Alicja w Krainie Czarów*. The late '80s mark a renewed period of prosperity for translating the classics that persists today, although of authors not yet translated for Polish readers, we encounter only Beatrix Potter.[23]

There remains, however, a definite majority of new translations of English-language writers already familiar to Polish audiences **(fig. 4)**. It is interesting that before 1991, there are only a few cases where two new translations of the same title appear within a twenty-year cycle. Translation sets tend to grow by one title at a time (some exceptions are Twain, Carroll and Kipling, whose translation sets increase by two) and in many cases there are intervals between two new translations of a classic by the same author. Meanwhile, between 1991 and 2010, all

[22]"English children's literature arrived quite late to Poland. In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries this was due to the English language's lack of popularity. French and German were widely known, and it was often through these languages that English classics, for children and adults alike, made their way to Polish readers." M. Adamczyk-Grabowska, *op. cit.*, p. 41.

[23]Beatrix Potter might have been known among Polish readers earlier, but not for her acclaimed book on Peter Rabbit. In 1969 Stefania Wortman, the translator of Baum's books, among many others, translated the tale *The Tailor of Gloucester* (1903), which was published with illustrations by Antoni Boratyński, a representative of the so-called Polish illustration school.Yet the famous book belonging in this essay's canon, *The Tale of Peter Rabbit* (1902), was translated for the first time in the late year of 1991, at once by two translators: Mirosława Czarnocka-Wojs (in the collection *Bajki dla najmłodszych*, ill. Jadwiga Abramowicz) and Małgorzata Musierowicz. Musierowicz's translation is accompanied by her own idiosyncratic illustrations.

Figure 3. Polish Translations of the Most Famous English-Language Classics of the Golden Age: A Collective Data Set
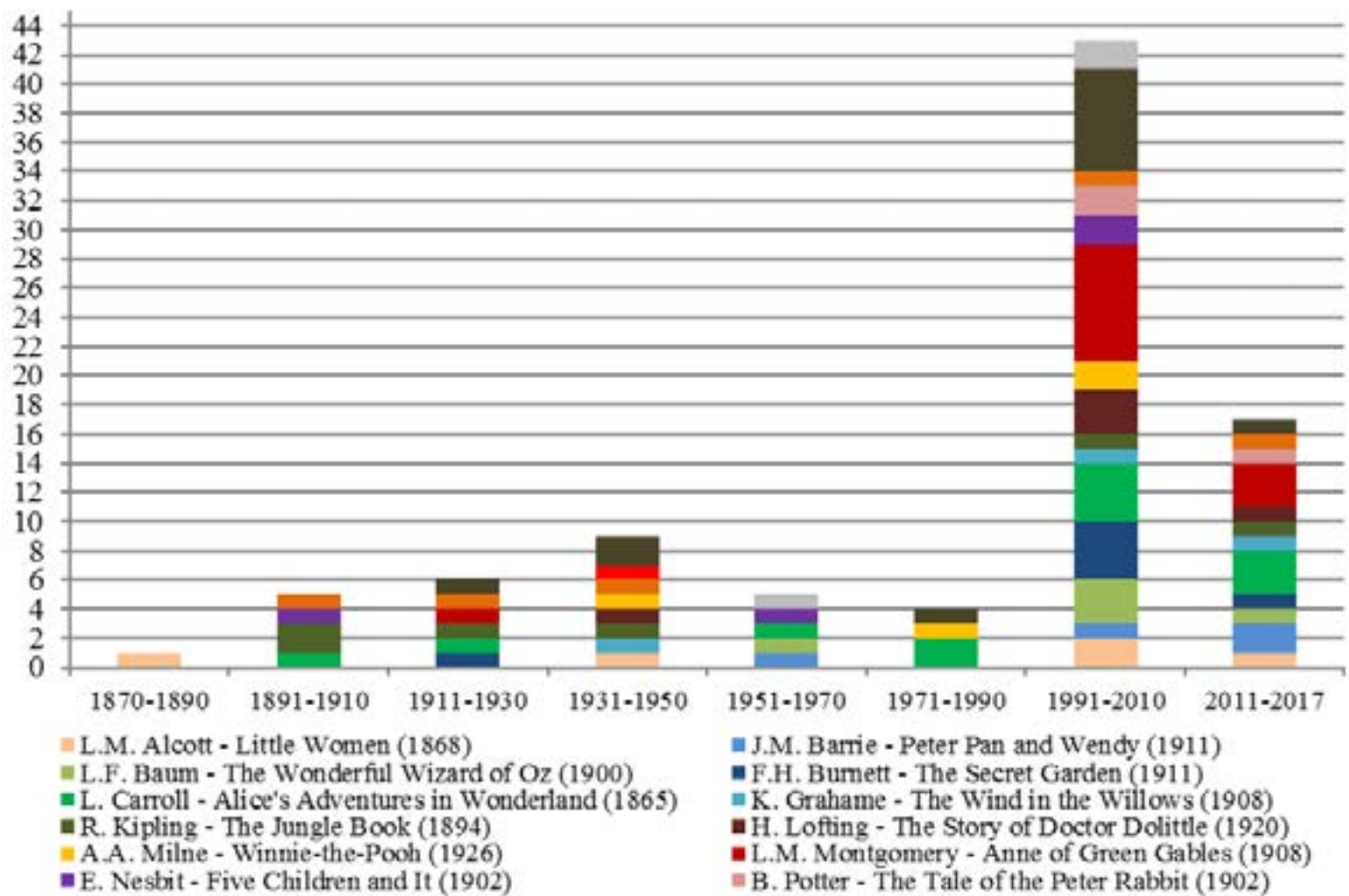
Figure 4. The Growth in Translating Classics Viewed in Twenty-Year Cycles (1870-2017)

authors aside from Stevenson, Barrie, Kipling and Grahame are translated at least twice, with record numbers of translations tallying eight (Montgomery's *Anne of Green Gables*) and seven (Twain's *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*), while Carroll and Burnett are newly translated four times. Such an extreme and stable growth in the volume of translated English children's classics can be explained, on the one hand, by the rising demand for publications of this kind after a twenty-year lull (1963–1986, **fig. 3**). On the other hand, perhaps the gradual expiration of the authors' licensing rights to these titles made them suddenly more attractive to publishers.

One more perspective remains, this one exclusively chronological, which requires a subsequent graph that will outline the intervals separating the publication date of the original from its first Polish translations (**fig. 5** — titles arranged in chronological order by their original publication date, beginning with Carroll's *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*). It is easy enough to highlight the outliers of this data set: Beatrix Potter's *The Tale of the Peter Rabbit* waits the
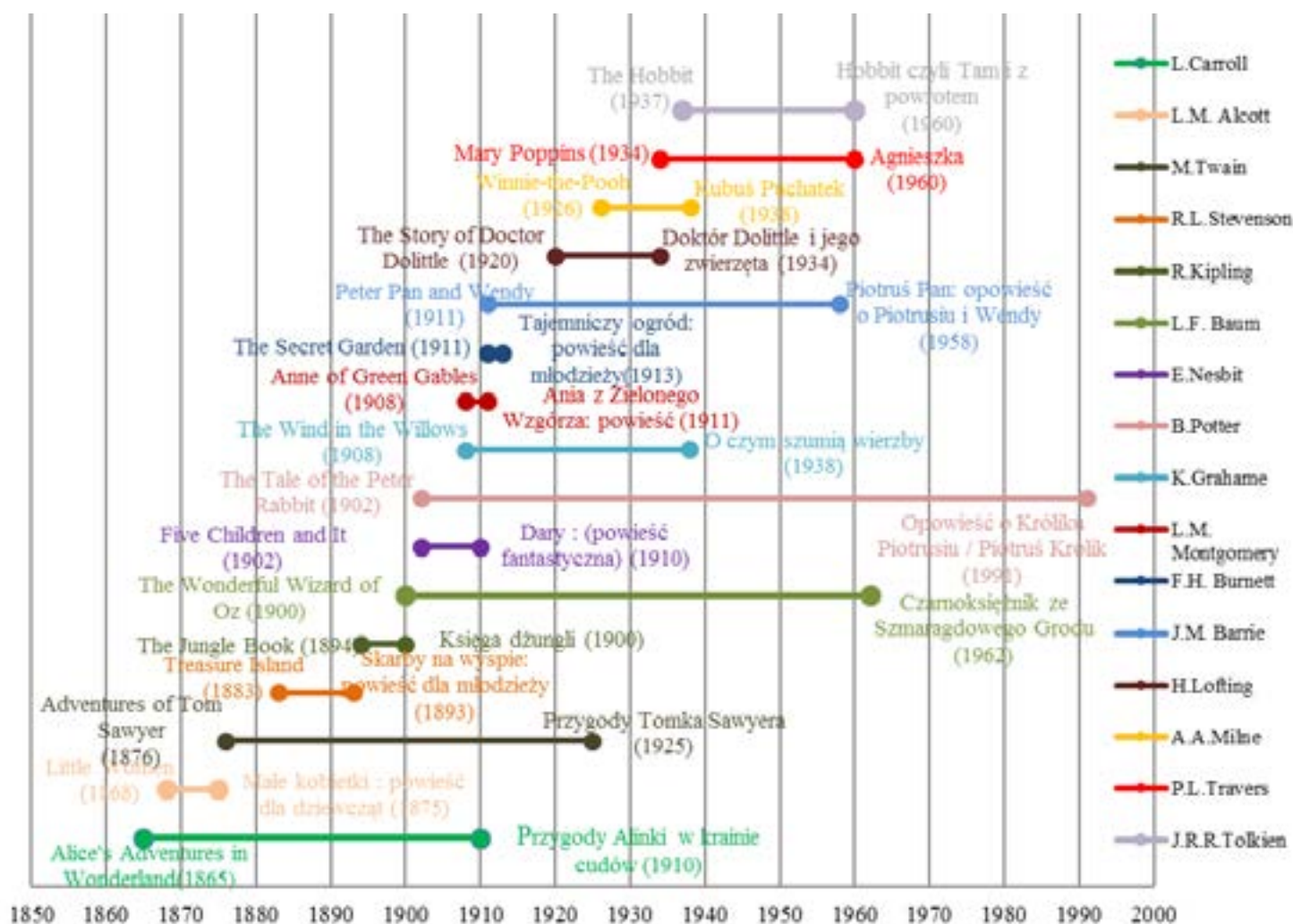
Figure 5. The Intervals between the Original English Publication Date and the First Polish Translation

longest for its Polish translation (about ninety years) and Frances H. Burnett's *The Secret Garden* has the fastest turnover, its Polish translation appearing on the market only two years after the original. The intervals between the English and Polish publication dates from the first decade of the twentieth century might come as a surprise, as well as those from the end of the nineteenth century. As it turns out, in these periods, publishers and translators had exceptionally quick reaction times to new English-language publications: Alcott's *Little Women* had only seven years to wait (1868—1875), *Treasure Island* ten (1883–1893), Kipling's *Jungle Book* six (1894–1900)Edith Nesbit's book eight years (1902—1910), Montgomery's *Anne of Green Gables* only three, Lofting's *Doctor Dolittle* fourteen (1920—1934) and Milne's *Winnie-the-Pooh* twelve (1926—1938).

This is surely due to the sudden boom in the translation of English children's classics that occurred at the turn of the twentieth century, when books for younger audiences written in the

language of Shakespeare and Milton inspired not only a flurry of translations, but a boom in original Polish children's literature as well.[24]

The last tool I would like to propose as an aspect of "distant reading" is the **qualitative perspective.** This is not, however, related to traditional methods of reading and analyzing translations in comparison with their original texts or with other translations in an effort to evaluate their competence. This tool consists of investigating the reception of titles within the fields of translation criticism, literary studies, linguistics, and translators' polemics and debates, and finally, among the works' readers. This perspective requires an in-depth and long-ranging sample of secondary texts. Here, I would like to present only an outline of such a study, including only the cursory results of some research into thematic bibliographies and library catalogs.

In terms of volume, Carroll's *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* has garnered the greatest number of critical texts by a large margin, leading in terms of the range of works, the translation issues associated with the work, and the number of translators. The translation set accompanying *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* is the subject of its own monograph, devoted solely to its Polish translations (Ewa Rajewska, *Dwie wiktoriańskie chwile w Troi, trzy strategie translatorskie. "Alice's Adventures in Wonderland" i "Through the Looking-Glass" Lewisa Carrolla w przekładach Macieja Słomczyńskiego, Roberta Stillera i Jolanty Kozak*, Poznan, 2004). It comes as no surprise that the list of publications from the disciplines of translation criticism and linguistics, together tallying over sixteen titles, includes texts by authors of recent translations, including Jolanta Kozak and Robert Stiller.[25]

Second to *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland,* the children's classic in translation that has received the most critical attention is Milne's *Winnie-the-Pooh*. Interest in this text surged only after the publication of Monika Adamczyk-Grabowska's translation, which challenged Irena Tuwim's canonical translation. In 1986, when the new translation appeared (titled *Fredzia Phi-Phi)*, numerous articles, debates and polemics began to appear in the press and in literary magazines to discuss the translator's controversial decision, one that shook up the literary community and roused critics to grab their pens in a defensive and aggressive gesture. Not

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[24]In the interwar period "translations comprised about 20% of children's book production, of which translations from English made up the greatest portion, which refreshingly raised the bar for for Polish writing thanks to its special character of optimism, humor, and unimpeded fantasy." M. Adamczyk-Grabowska, *op. cit.*, p. 42. And in fact, one glance at the map of Polish children's literature might prompt an interesting hypothesis: the "golden age" of Polish children's literature, embodied by Korczak, Makuszyński, Brzechwa, Tuwim, Kownacka and Porazińska, began in the twenty-year interwar period – enough time after the resurgence of enthusiasm for translating the English children's classics that the children who read those classics could grow up and begin to write their own. It is entirely possible that the finest examples of Polish children's literature came about precisely thanks to the translations of English classics having provided authors with an adequate foundation, but this thesis demands its own research that falls beyond the scope of this essay.

[25]Here I will mention only a few exemplary works: M. Kaczorowska, *Alice – Ala – Alicja. Język przekładów wobec języka powieści. Próba oceny*, [in:] *Między oryginałem a przekładem VIII. Stereotyp a przekład*, ed. U. Kropiwiec, M. Filipowicz-Rudek, J. Konieczna-Twardzikowa, Kraków 2003, p. 235–265; J. Knap, *Od Alinki po Alicję – polskie dzieje wydawnicze Alicji w Krainie Czarów*. "Guliwer" 2008, issue 1, p. 30–43; J. Kozak, *Alicja pod podszewką języka*. "Teksty drugie" 2000, issue 5, p. 167–178; R. Stiller, *Powrót do Carrolla*. "Literatura na świecie" 1973, issue 5, p. 330–363.

only did the translator herself write about the new *Winne-the-Pooh*, but Jerzy Jarniewicz, Jolanta Szpyra and Izabela Szymańska as well.[26]

The remaining English-language classics of the Golden Age are discussed only sparsely in Polish criticism, and in some cases, not at all. A great deal has been written on the translations of Mongomery's *Anne of Green Gables,*[27] however. A few texts have been written on Barrie's *Peter Pan and Wendy,*[28] and still fewer on the Polish editions of *The Secret Garden*, although they still amount to a body of criticism.[29] The remaining eleven works of the Golden Age canon of English children's literature have gone unnoticed in scholarship, or have perhaps appeared cursorily in texts that cover much broader issues.

It seems that this state of things bears witness to the condition of Polish criticism dealing with children's literature, whose development has been staggered and selective, reacting only to exceptional or controversial phenomena and neglecting to comment on more typical content and less idiosyncratic translations, which might in fact include commentary on noteworthy individual translation sets, attending to both the competence of emerging translations and to their publication history. In this light, the current scholarship on the translation of children's literature is still in an early stage of development, demanding diverse and broader contributions that might (and must) utilize diverse methodologies—not only traditional ones, but newer and less polished ones. In this article, I have tried to work through, test and propose a macro-perspective model of "distant reading" as a new research tool. This strategy argues that the "textual world" of literary translation is compatible with the most diverse methods of reading, many of which we could not have fathomed in earlier years.

[26]I managed to find thirteen texts devoted to the translations of Milne's most famous book, including: M. Adamczyk-Garbowska, *Albo Fredzia Phi-Phi albo Kubuś Puchatek, z M. Adamczyk-Garbowską rozmawia P. Wasilewski.* "Tak i Nie" 1988, issue 9; J. Jarniewicz**,** *Jak Kubuś Puchatek stracił dziecięctwo.* "Odgłosy" 1987, issue 10; J. Kokot, *O polskich tłumaczeniach Winnie-the-Pooh A.A. Milne'a*, [in:] *Przekładając nieprzekładalne*, ed. O. Kubińskiej, W. Kubińskiego, T.Z. Wolańskiego, Gdańsk 2000, p. 365–378; J. Szpyra, *Awantura o Misia, czyli o polskiej krytyce przekładu.* "Zdanie" 1987, issue 9, p. 48–51; A. Nowak, *Fredzia, której nie było, czyli Penelopa w pułapce.* "Dekada Literacka" 1992, issue 39, I. Szymańska, *Przekłady polemiczne w literaturze dziecięcej.* "Rocznik przekładoznawczy" 2014, issue 9, p. 193–208.

[27]Five texts: G. Skotnicka, *No, to sobie poprzekładamy.* "Nowe Książki"1997, issue 3; M. Zborowska-Motylińska, *Canadian Culture into Polish. Names of People and Places in Polish Translations of Lucy Maud Montgomery's Anne of Green Gables.* "Acta Universitatis Lodziensis. Folia Litteraria Anglica" 2007, issue 7, p. 153–161; J. Zarzycka, *Igraszki z tłumaczeniami.* "Dekada Literacka" 1994, issue 14, p. 9; I. Szymańska, *Przekłady polemiczne w literaturze dziecięcej.* "Rocznik przekładoznawczy" 2014, issue 9, p. 193–208; M. Nowak, *Strategie tłumaczeniowe w przekładzie antroponimów i toponimów w powieści "Ania z Zielonego Wzgórza Lucy Maud Montgomery"*, unpublished text.

[28]Three texts: Bernadeta Niesporek-Szamburska, *Współczesny przekład literacki dla dzieci – sztuka czy kicz? (Na materiale polskich tłumaczeń "Piotrusia Pana" J. M. Barriego)*, [in:] *Sztuka a świat dziecka*, ed. J. Kida, Rzeszów 1996, p. 133–146; A. Pantuchowicz, *"Nibylandie": niby-przekłady "Piotrusia Pana"?.* "Rocznik przekładoznawczy" 2009, issue 5, p. 145–152; A. Michalska, *Jeszcze raz w Nibylandii. O polskich przekładach "Piotrusia Pana" Jamesa Matthew Barriego. Rekonesans eseistyczny*, [in:] *Wkład w przekład 3*, Kraków 2005, p.81–96.

[29]Two texts: W. Grodzieńska, *Trzy przekłady książek dla dzieci.* "Kuźnica" 1947, 15 Dec., p. 10; B. Kaniewska, *Komizm i kontekst. Uwagi o polskim przekładzie „Tajemniczego ogrodu"*, [in:] *Komizm a przekład*, ed. P. Fast, Katowice 1997, p.125–135.

Appendix

Table 1. Sixteen Classic Authors of Children's Literature and their Most Popular Works in Polish Translation

L.M. Alcott	*Little Women or Meg, Jo, Beth and Amy* (1868)	*Małe kobietki : powieść dla dziewcząt* (Z. Grabowska)	1875
		Małe kobietki: powieść dla dorastających panienek (M. Wiesławski)	1939
		Małe kobietki (L. Melchior-Yahil)	2000
		Małe kobietki (D. Sadkowska)	2005
		Małe kobietki (A. Bańkowska)	2012
J.M. Barrie	*Peter Pan in Kensington Gardens* (1906)	*Przygody Piotrusia Pana* (Z. Rogoszówna)	1913
		Piotruś Pan w Ogrodach Kensingtońskich (M. Słomczyński)	1991
	Peter Pan and Wendy (1911)	*Piotruś Pan: opowiadanie o Piotrusiu i Wendy* (M. Słomczyński)	1958
		Piotruś Pan i Wendy (M. Rusinek)	2006
		Piotruś Pan i Wanda (W. Jerzyński)	2014
		Piotruś Pan (A. Polkowski)	2015
L.F. Baum	*The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* (1900)	*Czarnoksiężnik ze Szmaragdowego Grodu* (S. Wortman)	1962
		Czarodziej z Krainy Oz (M. Pawlik-Leniarska)	1993
		Czarnoksiężnik z Krainy Oz (A. Rajca-Salata)	1999
		Czarnoksiężnik z krainy Oz (P. Łopatka)	2000
		Czarownik z Krainy Oz (B. Kaniewska)	2013
F.H. Burnett	*Little Lord Fauntleroy* (1886)	*Mały lord: powieść dla młodzieży* (M.J. Zaleska)	1889
		Mały lord (S. Kowalewska)	1957
		Mały Lord (A. Skarbińska)	1994
		Mały lord (H. Pasierska)	1998
		Mały lord (P. Łopatka)	2000
		Mały lord (K. Zawadzka)	2002
		Mały lord (J. Łoziński)	2015
	Little Princess (1888)	*Co się stało na pensyi?* (J. Włodarkiewiczowa)	1913
		Mała księżniczka (J. Birkenmajer)	1931
		Mała księżniczka (W. Komarnicka)	1959
		Mała księżniczka (E. Łozińska-Małkiewicz)	1994
		Mała księżniczka (R. Jaworska)	1997
	The Secret Garden (1911)	*Tajemniczy ogród: powieść dla młodzieży* (J. Włodarkiewiczowa)	1914
		Tajemniczy ogród (A. Staniewska)	1995
		Tajemniczy ogród (B. Kaniewska)	1997
		Tajemniczy ogród (Z. Batko)	1997
		Tajemniczy ogród (P. Beręsewicz)	2009
		Tajemniczy ogród (S. Milaneau de Longchamp)	2011

L. Carroll	Alice's Adventures in Wonderland (1865)	Przygody Alinki w krainie cudów (Adela S.)	1910
		Ala w krainie czarów (M. Morawska, A.Lange)	1927
		Alicja w Krainie Czarów (A. Marianowicz)	1955
		Przygody Alicji w Krainie Czarów (M. Słomczyński)	1972
		Alicja w Krainie Czarów (R. Stiller)	1986
		Alicja w Krainie Czarów (J. Kozak)	1997
		Przygody Alicji w Krainie Czarów (M. Machay)	2010
		Alicja w Krainie Czarów (K. Dworak)	2010
		Alicja w Krainie Czarów (B. Kaniewska)	2010
		Alicja w Krainie Czarów (E. Tabakowska)	2012
		Alicja w Krainie Czarów (T. Misiak)	2013
		Perypetie Alicji na Czarytorium (G. Wasowski)	2015
	Through the looking-glass and what Alice found there (1871)	W zwierciadlanym domu : powieść dla młodzieży (J. Zawisza-Krasucka)	1936
		O tym, co Alicja odkryła po drugiej stronie lustra (M. Słomczyński)	1972
		Po drugiej stronie Lustra (R. Stiller)	1986
		Poprzez lustro czyli co Alicja znalazła po Tamtej Stronie (L. Lachowiecki)	1995
		Alicja po tamtej stronie lustra (J. Kozak)	1999
		Alicja po drugiej stronie zwierciadła (H. Baltyn)	2005
		Alicja po drugiej stronie lustra (M. Machay)	2010
		Po drugiej stronie lustra (B. Kaniewska)	2010
		Po drugiej stronie lustra (T. Misiak)	2013
K. Grahame	The Wind in the Willows (1908)	O czym szumią wierzby (M. Godlewska)	1938
		Wierzby na wietrze (B. Drozdowski)	2009
		O czym szumią wierzby (M. Płaza)	2014
R. Kipling	The Jungle Book (1894)	Księga dżungli (anonim)	1900
		Księga puszczy (J. Czekalski)	1902
		Księga dżungli (F. Mirandola [Pik])	1922
		Księga dżungli (J. Birkenmajer)	1936
		Księga dżungli (A. Polkowski)	2010
		Księga dżungli (A. Matkowska)	2016
	Just So Stories (1902)	Takie sobie historyjki (M. Feldmanowa [Kreczkowska])	1903
		Takie sobie bajeczki (S. Wyrzykowski)	1904
		Bajki o zwierzętach (A. Świejkowska)	2011
H. Lofting	The Story of Doctor Dolittle, Being the History of His Peculiar Life at Home and Astonishing Adventures in Foreign Parts (1920)	Doktór Dolittle i jego zwierzęta (W. Kragen)	1934
		Doktor Dolittle i jego zwierzęta (M.E. Letki)	1998
		Doktor Dolittle i jego zwierzęta (P. Piekarski)	1998
		Doktor Dolittle i jego zwierzęta (H. Kozioł)	1999
		Doktor Dolittle i jego zwierzęta : opowieść o życiu doktora w domowym zaciszu oraz niezwykłych przygodach w dalekich krainach (B. Adamczyk)	2010

A.A. Milne	Winnie the Pooh (1926)	Kubuś Puchatek (I. Tuwim)	1938
		Fredzia Phi-Phi (M. Adamczyk-Grbowska)	1986
		Kubuś Puchatek (B. Drozdowski)	1994
		O Kubusiu Puchatku (A. Traut)	1993
	The House at Pooh Corner (1928)	Chatka Puchatka (I. Tuwim)	1938
		Zakątek Fredzi Phi-Phi (M. Adamczyk-Grbowska)	1990
L.M. Montgomery	Anne of Green Gables (1908)	Ania z Zielonego Wzgórza: powieść (R. Bernsztajnowa)	1911
		Ania z Zielonego Wzgórza (P. Pierkarski)	1995
		Ania z Zielonego Wzgórza (J. Ważbińska)	1995
		Ania z Zielonego Wzgórza (D. Kraśniewska-Durlik)	1995
		Ania z Zielonego Wzgórza (E. Łozińska-Małkiewicz)	1996
		Ania z Zielonego Wzgórza (K. Zawadzka)	1997
		Ania z Zielonego Wzgórza (R. Dawidowicz)	1997
		Ania z Zielonego Wzgórza (K. Jakubiak)	1997
		Ania z Zielonego Wzgórza (A. Kuc)	2003
		Ania z Zielonego Wzgórza (P. Beręsewicz)	2012
		Ania z Zielonego Wzgórza (A. Sałaciak)	2013
		Ania z Zielonego Wzgórza (J. Jackowicz)	2013
E. Nesbit	The Book of Dragons (1899)	Księga smoków (A. Ziembicki)	1992
		Księga smoków i inne opowieści (A. Fulińska)	2003
		Księga smoków (P. Beręsewicz)	2006
	Five Children and It (1902)	Dary: (powieść fantastyczna) (anonim)	1910
		Pięcioro dzieci i „coś" : powieść fantastyczna (I. Tuwim)	1957
		Pięcioro dzieci i Coś (J. Prosińska-Giersz)	1994
		Pięcioro dzieci i „coś" (P. Łopatka)	2000
	Railway Children (1906)	Przygoda przyjeżdża pociągiem (W. Ziembicka)	1989
		Pociągi jadą do taty (A. Zięba)	2003
B. Potter	The Tale of Peter Rabbit (1902)	Opowieść o Króliku Piotrusiu (M. Czarnocka-Wojs)	1991
		Piotruś Królik (M. Musierowicz)	1991
		Króliczek Piotruś (A. Matusik-Dyjak, B. Szymanek)	2016
R.L. Stevenson	Terasure Island (1883)	Skarby na wyspie: powieść dla młodzieży (W.P.)	1893
		Wyspa skarbów (J. Birkenmajer)	1925
		Wyspa skarbów (K. Jankowska)	1947
		Wyspa skarbów (M. Filipczuk)	2002
		Wyspa skarbów (A. Polkowski)	2015
P.L. Travers	Mary Poppins (1934)	Agnieszka (I. Tuwim)	1938
	Mary Poppins comes back (1935)	Agnieszka wraca (I. Tuwim)	1960

M. Twain	Adventures of Tom Sawyer (1876)	Przygody Tomka Sawyera (J. Biliński)	1925
		Przygody Tomka Sawyera (M. Tarnowski)	1936
		Przygody Tomka Sawyera (anonim)	1943)
		Przygody Tomka Sawyera (K. Piotrowski)	1988
		Przygody Tomka Sawyera (A. Kuligowska)	1996
		Przygody Tomka Sawyera (J. Sokół)	1997
		Przygody Tomka Sawyera (P. Łopatka)	2002
		Przygody Tomka Sawyera (A. Bańkowska)	2007
		Przygody Tomka Sawyera (P. Beręsewicz)	2008
		Przygody Tomka Sawyera (F. Maj)	2010
		Przygody Tomka Sawyera (M. Kędroń, B. Ludwiczak)	2010
		Przygody Tomka Sawyera (J. Polak)	2012
	The Prince and the Pauper (1881)	Książę i biedak: powieść (anonim)	1908
		Książę i żebrak (M. Tarnowski)	1936
		Królewicz i żebrak (M. Feldmanowa [Kreczkowska])	1939
		Królewicz i żebrak (T. Dehnel)	1954
		Królewicz i żebrak (I. Jasiński)	1993
		Królewicz i żebrak (A. Bańkowska)	1998
		Królewicz i żebrak (K. Tropiło)	1998
		Książę i żebrak (M. Machay)	2009
		Książę i żebrak (M. Bortnowska)	2010
	Adventures of Huckleberry Finn (1884)	Przygody Huck'a (T. Prażmowska)	1898
		Przygody Hucka: powieść dla młodzieży (M. Tarnowski)	1934
		Przygody Hucka (K. Tarnowska)	1974
		Przygody Hucka Finna (J. Konsztowicz)	1997
		Przygody Hucka (M. Machay)	2008
		Przygody Hucka Finna (A. Kuligowska)	2012
J.R.R. Tolkien	The Hobbit, or There and Back Again (1937)	Hobbit czyli Tam i z powrotem (M. Skibniewska, W. Lewik)	1960
		Hobbit albo Tam i z powrotem (P. Braiter)	1997
		Hobbit czyli Tam i z powrotem (A. Polkowski)	2002

KEYWORDS

Children's Classic in Translation

"The Golden Age" of English Children's Literature

ABSTRACT:

The classics of English children's literature are works that have survived the test of time. These are wise and beautiful books that are simultaneously exceptionally challenging to translate. The eighty-year period of the "Golden Age" of English-language children's literature was inaugurated with Carroll's *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* (1865) and continued with works by authors such as Louisa May Alcott, J.M. Barrie, L. Frank Baum, Frances H. Burnett, Kenneth Grahame, Rudyard Kipling, Hugh Lofting, A. A. Milne, L.M. Montgomery, Edith Nesbit, Beatrix Potter, R.L. Stevenson, P. L. Travers and Mark Twain, who together comprise the canon of best-known literary works for children. The first Polish translations of these English-language classics appeared, in turn, around 150 years ago, towards the end of the nineteenth century. The work of translating the canon has continued throughout the entire twentieth century and into the present day, frequently producing substantial translation sets for individual titles. Polish translation theory has thus far lacked a means for treating the English-language canon and the history of its translations from any other perspective but that of close-reading and comparative analysis of the original and translated texts of individual titles. This essay's objective is to propose the model of the macropoetics of translation, which might facilitate research on Polish translations of English-language masterpieces for younger readers in the form of overviews, profiles, and intersections, leveraging perspectives that are quantitative (the volume of translations), chronological (how they emerged over time) and qualitative (their reception and critical status), all in keeping with Franco Moretti's proposition of "distant reading."

LITERARY TRANSLATION

Macro-Perspective Translation Studies

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How Does Free Verse "Work"?

On the Syntax of the Avant Garde

Joanna Orska

A Three-Part Model for Free Verse:

Polish criticism has traditionally applied a structuralist reading to the avant-garde poetry developed, for the most part, through the Kraków-based poetic programs of Przyboś and Peiper. Dorota Urbańska's canonical essay on versification in free verse evokes precisely this tradition[1]. I will note that Urbańska's classification of free verse is rooted in a strict dichotomy between verse with and without syntax, defined by line length determined by the author's arbitrary choice. As a text, free verse therefore conveys its poetics to the reader primarily through the act of reading quietly. Urbańska's dichotomy seems derivative of a totalising opposition between verse and prose, linked in spirit to the historical Avant Garde and its demonstration of the autonomy of poetic language. Urbańska's argument has provoked adamant pushback from Adam Dziadek (among others) in his text *Polish Versology — (contra)versy (Wersologia polska – kontr(o)wersje)*, in which he argues that structuralism confronts the problem of free verse, while Urbańska's typology offers no resolution on this matter:

> The difficulty of describing this kind of poetry is of course tied to its lack of regular metre. In the face of this lack, however, can we really say that this poetry is devoid of rhythm, and that rhythm is not conceivable within it?[2]

[1] D. Urbańska, *Wiersz wolny. Próba charakterystyki systemowej*, Warsaw 1995. The consensus among many scholars that free verse can be defined as a dichotomy does not fundamentally diverge from Urbańska's claims. Adam Kulawik designates a dichotomy between intonation and caesurae that he defines as "phonetics" (*Wersologia*, Kraków 1999); still earlier, Maria Dłuska wrote of the emotional clauses of text, referring also to prose and reading expression into caesurae in free verse (*Próba teorii wiersza polskiego*, Warsaw 1962). Aleksandra Okopień-Sławińska's essay similarly supported a binary definition of free verse, referring mainly to the poetics of Przyboś. The prosaic feature of the poetic line resonated with the vocal interpretation of poetry, through the declaration of the critical meaning of some decisions at the expense of other, syntactic ones, while defining line length as the author's arbitrary decision (such as in *Wiersz awangardowy*, "Pamiętnik Literacki" 1965, issue 2). For further reading, see also the newest study *Wiersz wolny: geneza i ewolucja do 1939 roku*, edited by Lucylla Pszczołowska and Dorota Urbańska (...).

[2] A. Dziadek, *Wersologia polska – kontr(o)wersje*, [in:]: *Strukturalizm w Europie środkowej i wschodniej. Wizje i rewizje*, ed. W. Bolecki and D. Ulicka, Warsaw 2012, p. 382.

According to Dziadek, the system Urbańska proposes is not compatible with contemporary poetry because it is "mainly limited to the question of syntax" and therefore has little to contribute to the study of how meaning is generated in poetic texts". With the advent of free verse, regular metre disappears, to be sure. This does not, however, mean that rhythm dies with it as a crucial component of verse production: "In the end, [rhythm] is always present in the literary work, regardless of whether we are speaking of poetry or prose"[3]. I would not stand by Dziadek's strong position on the syntax of free verse, although I do understand his intention to draw the reader's focus to the anthropological, somatic and aesthetic meanings of rhythm, as discussed in texts such as Henri Meschonnic's *Anthropologie historique du langage*. Dziadek wraps up his observations with a question of profound importance, in my opinion: the disintegration of the border between poetry and prose has become the driving factor displacing traditional metre as the core component of verse production. The poets of the Avant Garde were focused, as we know, on a form of intonation tied closely to the rhythm of casual speech. The meaning internal to their sentences – as I hope to demonstrate further on – was also rooted in a form of syntax freed from the logical and semantic requirements that govern normative sentence structure in prose. This became a decisive aspect of the poetics of the avant-garde text. In his text *Free Verse as Graphic Text* (*Wiersz wolny jako tekst graficzny),* Witold Sadowski adopts a position similar to Dziadek's, although his writing precedes Dziadek's and relates somewhat differently to Urbańska's claims. According to Sadowski, we can simultaneously cast two organisational nets over poetry, effectively yielding a four-part model for free verse. Let us not, however, anticipate our argument.

Strictly binary models for a theory of free verse have been offered by several scholars pre-dating Urbańska, such as Aleksandra Okopień-Sławińska and Janusz Sławiński, who were some of the first to comment on the syntax of avant-garde verse[4]. For these scholars, the critical component in the poetics of verse is the intensification of its significations beyond the level of metre. Sławińska and Sławiński's theories take into account the role of syntax in determining line length, but, unlike Urbańska's model, they do not prioritise it as a fundamental component of verse structure[5]. All models of verse structure that honor the strict dichotomy between verse and free verse fundamentally resemble one another. All of them relate to text as a literary product that is organised structurally. For now, we might describe this organisational model as "flat", two-dimensional, and particularly relevant for paper-based text. This becomes especially clear in Urbańska's model – as she herself openly concedes. In a sense, Witold Sadowski's contribution consists of his attempt to transcend this "flat" (not to mention linear) model for verse and its functions, along with the new understanding of syntactic figures he provokes. Sadowski seeks to loosen the tight cords of the corset set in place by this binary model. In his text, Sadowski ultimately takes structuralism as his reference point and argues that the binary model for free verse is not sustainable, mostly due to the need to reinterpret Urbańska's assessment of the graphic notation of verse. Even during the interwar period, criticism argued for the simultaneous application of two descriptive systems to verse to relate to its "incorporation of metre into

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[3] Ibid, p. 383.

[4] Sawicki, Siatkowski

[5] Przyboś's poem thus seems to attain its full meaning and to find its structural basis only when it is read out loud – interpreted vocally by the artist: "This creates a tonal effect unusual for prose, tending to suspend the voice at surprising moments and overcoming worn-in tonal habits of spacing out syllables, which cleanses the work of its imprint of banality and automisation" (A. Okopień-Sławińska, p. 438).

free verse"[6]. Sadowski therefore introduces a three- or even four-part model for mapping out free verse. Looking beyond the "flat" and linear system appropriate for text printed on a page of paper, whose stylistic and poetic properties were the reference point for the structuralists, Sadowski turns (perpetually) toward the "flat" drawing:

> (…) the pronounced graphic division of text into perpendicular and level fragments, grouping verse not so much into stanzas as into blocks, was at the very least appropriate for poems dealing with architectural themes. (…) One might discern a shared sensibility among the poets of the '50s that suggests an attempt to model free verse after architectural cubist motifs[7].

The question I wish to contribute to the ongoing conversation on versification does not take the syntax of the avant-garde sentence as its sole point of departure. I am interested, rather, in the Polish Avant Garde's attempt to reckon with the flatness of the piece of paper and the sense of spatial and dynamic possibilities it implies for syntactic systems. The poets of the Avant Garde tried to interrogate this and framed their poetry under the banner of "construction". This notion can be developed as a rhetoric if the rhetorical and compositional premises of the work (or "action", as I'd like to call it) are used not as tools for describing stylistic aspects of the text, but as a system of creative cues linked to reception and understood in terms of *actio* – the implementation of artistic text. With these ideas in mind, we can view poetic text as a "notation" – the equivalent of written notes in music – while its "implementation" consists of a "mimetic" repetition of the author's creative gestures.

A Rhetorical Understanding of Free Verse as a Work of Structure-Building

The rhetorical tradition associates the recorded poetic text (as a text to be recited for an audience) with music and dance (by way of rhythm). It classifies the arts by the criteria of mimetic signs referencing the senses. Poetry is thus linked to the sense of sound, painting to sight, cooking to taste, and perfume design to scent (in so far as this work serves mimetic purposes), while touch, finally, is linked to the visual arts, architecture, and once again, dance. In order to understand this particular aspect of rhetoric that, in my opinion, must be suspended in the case of poetic syntax (being a particularly directive and compositional notation), we ought to take into account one aspect that was neglected by classical rhetoric – namely, movement. Movement connects poetry with dance, as the performance of prescribed steps. Movement develops its own vision of collective reality and forms a system of points that orient us in space (its map is generated in the brain when we first develop our motor skills). In this way, it might respond to our need for rhetorical and syntactic systems that capture the creative experience as we understand it. We might also describe this as the experience of creative practice: it is simultaneously cognitive and experienced as craft (that which is learned; a set of skills that identifies the artist and seasoned audience members alike as experts). In poetic practices, this process might unfold through a system of "orienting" creative guidelines leading to the reconstruction of a collectively conceived experience of the world. Bearing in mind these compositional cues for the implementation and reception of the "structure" of free verse, we can treat poetic "notation" accordingly as a kind of internal simulation of movement.

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[6] W. Sadowski, *Wiersz wolny jako tekst graficzny*, Kraków 2004, p. 201.
[7] Ibid, p. 203.

The Avant Garde's projects of "constructing" the world always appear in the context of a utopia of "transforming" reality. This fact, which we might see as a form of "politicisation" through text, makes avant-garde verse even more compatible with the concepts proper to rhetoric. Because of its interventions in and divergences from traditions of reception, avant-garde verse has always offered a set of creative/reconstructive cues directed at the reader who, in the case of the historical avant gardes, is assigned the role of student or apprentice in the workshop of the poet-craftsman. In my writing, the word "cue" remains incredibly important in that it directs our attention towards the "directive" forces of rhetoric, which– as a field so firmly linked with communicative tools understood performatively and with the prerogative to persuade and educate one's audience, using new words to produce a "shared" world – is considerably better suited to the study of avant-garde poetry than classical stylistics. Rhetoric persuasively addresses a whole host of theoretical dilemmas, fundamentally disabling any approach to the interventional nature of avant-garde literature that is totalising or single-minded[8]. In modern approaches to poetry, the standard is to take the whole arsenal of rhetorical figures (treated merely as stylistic figures) only under certain conditions, and often divorced from their contexts. According to the vision of stylistics that currently presides over all poetry textbooks in circulation, figures associated with elocution and tropes are marked as significant, while other rhetorical figures and premises fall by the wayside. Following the basic criterion for the work of art (according to which the devices of invention and direction remain concealed, while aspects of memory and speech are suppressed entirely), when faced with the whole spectrum of possibilities availed to us by rhetorical devices and tropes based on linking words, it is clear that readers limit their focus to the semantic dimension of the text and its multiplicity of meaning. This multiplicity of meaning is then articulated according to linguistic conventions and the dictionary's offerings (according to which language is understood as a collection of lexemes). Tropes play a leading role in stylistics, becoming more significant than complex figures such as syntactic and conceptual devices that are rarely mentioned. One might say that it is precisely due to the limitations on the meaning of text, culled from the statement's connection with the signifying whole and allowing us to link the composition more directly with its sphere of *dispositio*, that we can freely subordinate elements of "creative direction" to the sphere of elocution. In the poetry textbooks most heavily circulated in high schools (by Kulawik, Korwin-Piotrowska and Handke), figures of speech (or of syntax) are only explored superficially. Emphasis falls only on aspects of syntax distinct for

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[8] In his introduction to the anthology of translations published in "Pamiętnik Literacki," *Retoryka*, Marek Skwara draws attention to the basic distillations of traditional rhetorical figures (tropes, figures of thought, and conceptual figures) essential to modern and contemporary thinking on rhetoric against their traditional scope (*inventio, dispositio, elocutio, memoria* – associated with memory, memorisation and the mnemotechnics of recitation and *pronuntiatio* – as an actual enactment of the text: *actio*, through speech. One might say that this mode of operation is only relevant for figures related to *elocutio*, and is visible (as Skwara has critically noted) not only in the various attempts to adapt rhetoric to newer approaches to cultural and historical texts (such as de Man's or Derrida's, or from another angle, Hayden White's) – but in textbooks of stylistics and versification that deal with the syntax of the colloquial, spoken sentence without attending to the significant "suprasegmental" implications rightfully associated with its rhetorical meaning. Skwara claims that attempts to apply rhetorical tools to the contemporary humanities always fail to do this legacy justice. This state of things, he argues, is the result of the decline in rhetoric's authority. He evokes the positions of scholars such as Todorov, who argue that rhetoric lost its meaning during the romantic period, when the essential dichotomy between the natural and the artificial was dissolved. Chaim Perelman has said of this crisis: "If rhetorical figures are divorced from rhetoric (the art of persuasion), then they cease to be rhetorical figures, and become instead adornments that merely describe a manner of speaking." (from *Retoryka* [*Tematy teoretycznoliterackie*, from the translation archives of "Pamiętnik Literacki"]), ed. M. Skwara, Gdańsk 2008, p. 18).

their rhythmic, repetitive and recurring qualities, producing correlations and parallelisms. This is due to the poetic line's dominance as a unit of rhythm or meaning, treated as the sole component of verse structure. In this way, the range of activity available to figures of speech is limited to their syntactical "link" to the verse. Free verse, however, should not only liberate rhythm, but syntax as well. Because rhetorical and syntactic aspects of complex figures of speech are generally overlooked, we end up evoking them only cursorily, with impromptu references to diplosis, zeugma (and its derivative syllepsis), anastrophe, hyperbaton, chiasmus, prolepsis, paralepsis and metalepsis as a kind of erudite exception. The same applies to figures of thought, such as aposiopesis and *correctio*. The analysis and interpretation of poetry tends to decode meaning (of metaphors, metonymies and synecdoches) by treating these devices as grand semantic figures, or as tropes pointing back to linguistic meaning. The very process of reading thus leads to the "lexical" fossilisation of the poem's meaning, thereby allowing us to explicate the poetic ambiguity of surprising word combinations. The text delimited twice-over signifies nothing through its own sheer construction (since the composition in turn points back toward the author's constructive decisions) – nothing, that is, but the fact that it is indeed a poem. This anti-rhetorical hermeneutic effect excellently demonstrates how the matter of avant-garde syntax is addressed in Janusz Sławiński's most acclaimed essay on the Kraków Avant Garde[9]. In *Concepts of Avant-Garde Language (Koncepcja języka awangardy)*, Sławiński lists the effects of polysemy produced through syntactic manipulation. He brings special emphasis to paronomasiae and neologisms created by reviving the ambiguous meanings of morphemes. Sławiński brings great insight to the displacement of word formation to the level of syntax in euphonic sentence sequences, and to the false homonymity produced by grouping together words with similar sounds but disparate meanings, or the operation of filling familiar syntactic templates with surprising verbal material. He is less concerned with the much-discussed "blossoming sentence" (he treats Peiper's sentence structure — so distinct from Przyboś's elliptical one — as "periphrastic", which is to say, deeply embedded in anecdotal contexts and potentially yielding undesired polysemic effects). Sławiński only references zeugmas as an aside, and he leaves out sylleptic constructions entirely. He designates all forms of ellipsis and contraction as the syntactic figures most commonly used by the Avant Garde. He sees these figures as tools that allowed Przyboś to depart from Peiper's tenets for the "evolving" avant-garde quasi-prosaic poem. In this sense, anacolutha, for instance, are not read as creative syntactic errors, but as errors that generate a multitude of meanings. This "appellative" tendency, subordinated to the understanding of language as a collection of lexemes, paints a portrait of the poem as a finished set of shimmering associations congealed, as it were, into one piece to project a static image of reality.

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[9] For Zwrotniczan, sentence formation – as Sławiński demonstrated in *Koncepcja języka poetyckiego awangardy* – was a fundamental unit of poetic activity. Only this act allows us to view meaning in terms of its function, thus allowing us to adapt words to one another, "so that the encounter between them becomes a linguistic »event« whose significance is not contingent on whatever takes place beyond the phrasal sequence" (J. Sławiński, *Koncepcja języka poetyckiego awangardy krakowskiej*, Kraków 1998, p. 91). The "action" or "event" Sławiński mentions, unfolding within the text, turns out to be the product of an associative gesture proper to metaphor, understood as a static figure (the approximation of two incongruent elements) rather than as the result of the production of information in a sentence read according to the topic-focus structure of free verse. I have written about this in the text *Życie słowa. Składnia zdania (post)awangardowego*, which appears in the volume *Przyboś dzisiaj*, ed. Zenon Ożog, Janusz Pasterski and Magdalena Rabizo-Birek (Rzeszów 2017).

Verse and Poem. A Three-Level Model for Free Verse

How did Witold Sadowski's three-part (if not four-part) model for free verse fundamentally alter stylistics' "lexical" tropes and premises for reading the poetic text? In Urbańska's conception of free verse, and according to Okopień-Sławińska's earlier notions, intonation remains unambiguously tied to the syntax of casual speech. Its enunciation can therefore be modulated according to line length or logical syntactic conjunctions that the lines might transgress. Regardless of whether we obey the line breaks or syntax while reading, we can view intonation as unambiguously contingent on the natural rhythm of the sentence. As Sadowski has noted, other kinds of rhythm appear regularly in free verse. So many poems incorporate a sense of regular meter, often by citing a specific tradition (the author of *Free Verse as a Graphic Text* (*Wiersz wolny jako tekst graficzny)* cites an example from Herbert). Bearing this in mind, we can locate yet another manifestation of the prosaic form within poetry, one that might even obey two verse systems simultaneously (verse regulated by both metre and intonation). Poems composed accordingly can generate their own poetic meaning simultaneously on two plains. In this way, in terms of metre, the poetic unit's break might fall in the very middle of an arbitrarily established line, or might correspond to syntax or intonation. We can read a verse of this sort in a number of ways – by following the intonation suggested by the text's segmentation, or the intonation of the sentence structure as it spills over line breaks, or according to the metre's rhythm. This last choice is the obvious one for many of Piotr Sommer's poems, since the poet often manipulates metric rhythm, oscillating between the rhythm of casual speech and metre, be it regular or tonal. Multiplying the poem's meaning by exploring its possible intonations brings about a whole new realm of reader-guided choices that can alter the meaning of the text. Placing emphasis on the poetic meaning of intonation "pushes" to the background the problem of syntax. Urbańska associates syntax with "flat" composition and the poem printed on one page. In this approach, we drift instead towards the moment of the "speech act" (*enuntiatio*) "scored", as it were, by the poetic text.

Can we consider this three- or four-part sketch of the poem to be spatial? Let us provisionally decide that the text read simultaneously by several tonal criteria does in fact transgress the borders of verse and veers toward the realm of poetic stylistics and rhetoric alike, which is to say, towards the voice. Free verse thus becomes contingent on speech, utterance, and the style of speaking, depending on how one chooses to read the text. The range of possible intonations allows us to finally treat the poem's "score" as a set of "cues" – a composition to be enacted, not only at the level of elocution. The reader can choose to treat verse as something linked, first and foremost, to regular rhythm, or instead to prioritise the contours of the sentence divided into lines, or perhaps to acknowledge both these criteria in equal measure. In his writing on versification, Adam Ważyk suggests that the binary model of verse — the legacy of structuralism that has informed conventions for reading free verse today— imposes entirely unnecessary constraints. Ważyk does not emphasise the syntax of everyday speech as a counterpoint to both prose and metric rhythm in versification, making his approach somewhat at odds with the poetics of the Kraków Avant Garde. For Ważyk, the tradition of Polish poetry prioritises rhythm to excess as a crucial component of verse composition, and we therefore might as well dismiss it entirely. Ważyk, who brought us *Amphion* (*Amfion*), gives more weight to the mnemonic techniques of poetry, or the means by which it is memorised. As he writes in *Essay on the Poem* (*Esej o wierszu)*:

> Poetry wants to either be memorised word for word, or read several times (…) The poet dreams that
> one reader might return again and again to his work. He does not crave a vast number of readers;
> he only wants loyal ones. The information he conveys should be frequently revisited if it cannot be
> remembered indefinitely. (…) Degradation of information runs parallel to the rise of entropy. The
> poem's structure, evoked in order to delay this process, is nonetheless vulnerable to it as well[10].

Ważyk does not pause to question why exactly poetry "wants to be memorised" – he does not
identify rhetorical mnemonic functions or procedures used for memorising text. In his approach
to versification, however, the traditional rhythms of Polish poetry (developed by Kochanowski,
Trembecki, and Mickiewicz) serve the function of a broadly accepted standard, solidified and thus
internalised through frequent repetition. Ważyk's "*vers libre*" does not make sense unless we are
discussing a new form of free verse that disregards traditional metre. In this way, the poet of *"vers
libre",* turning his focus to the colloquial, prose-like sentence as the essential unit for composing
verse, integrates into his verbal structure various aspects of traditional verse as a kind of dalliance
between free verse and the traditional system that has always been the point of departure for the
Avant Garde's poetic model[11]. The three-part model of verse, constructing the poem by building
tension between the various forces within versification (in free verse: metre, syntax, and arbitrary
line length) seems rather intuitive for Ważyk, since he has alluded to "craft" in his essays on versifi-
cation. Ważyk's system of versification seems to expand beyond the space of line in traditional free
verse. In Ważyk's system, the stylistic methods that determine the poetics of free verse, having
been confined by structuralism to the flat page and the lexical mode of language, can once again
approach the act of speech. This *actio* is tied to the moment of *pronuntiatio* and *memoria*. Rhythm
and repetition restored from regular versification become just as compelling as the mnemonic
function of the poetic gesture – no longer necessary in print culture, but retaining the true inti-
macy of the reader who comes to intimately know a literary text by relying on former knowledge.

On the other hand, not all the principles of verse composition can be renewed and revitalised
simply when activated in poetry that engages its reader rhetorically. Syntactic devices, as I will
attempt to demonstrate here, introduce yet another aspect to our model of verse, which is to
say, another system of syntactic incisions into the work, based on figures of speech, or the
potential for syntactic error in poetry. The devices typical for avant-garde syntax enable the
"construction" of verse mentioned above. I understand syntax not so much as a fossilised set of
figures of speech as mere "decoration". By activating the constructive potential of syntax, ren-
dering it contingent on verse and relating to it as one more defining element of poetic units of
meaning (thus breaking up verse into sentences of poetic prose), we liberate the syntactic units
of individual lines from their constrictive obligation to co-create the poem's order. Once again,
we can now understand this order as a set of cues provoking us to make choices. In free verse,
sentences remain liberated only when we house them within a normative, logical and semantic
order, for only then can they cease to function as syntactic standards working against the ar-
bitrary line breaks of free verse. In this way, syntactic breaks within the line yield (even more)
pauses and conjunctions. We can thus construct poetic meaning through the potential latent
in these linkages. These syntactic and constructive gestures might recall the process of a build-

[10]p. 24
[11]A. Ważyk, *O wierszu wolnym*, in: *Amfion. Rozważania nad wierszem polskim*, Warsaw 1983.

ing a house, brick by brick. The space of the poem is, of course, an imagined space; however, if we treat its internal order as a set of creative, compositional cues addressed to the reader, then the poem does become a building – a creative task to be performed. As Ważyk has argued, free verse remains somewhat free in reality, and somewhat constrained, while in this case, syntactic operations are dispersed between the syntax of proper speech and grammatical error.

The syntactic theory of avant-garde poetry has implications closely bound to the spirit of rhetoric. In order for any syntactic theory of avant-garde free verse to be at all possible, however, we must first state the thesis that there is no such thing as a poem without syntax. The very premise of the poem without syntax insists on using line breaks as the primary component of verse composition. There are, however, syntactic maneuvers that diverge from normative syntax. These semantically marked figures become an element of the text's poetics, although they might play this role in prose and poetry alike. Prose poetry might, in fact, operate on this very basis. In a formulation not unlike the three- or four-part model of poetry, we will view rhythm and metre as devices of verse composition, and view syntax and intonation in terms of arbitrary line length. If a poem works by virtue of its entire syntactic structure, then the reader should bear in mind line length alongside the components identified here. Line length is distinct from sentence length or the poem's length as a whole, which, in our reading, is understood as a rhetorical interval.

Advantages of the Rhetorical Theory of Poetry

Heinrich Lausberg's classic work, *Handbook of Literary Rhetoric: A Foundation for Literary Study,* is particularly helpful for demonstrating the hermeneutic potential of carrying over an expanded toolkit from rhetorics to poetry is. Polish rhetoric textbooks (Ziomek's *Retoryka opisowa*, Korolko's *Zarys podstaw retoryki*) deal directly with the art of public speaking, while Lausberg refers instead to cases where the priorities of speech and literature converge, overlap or intersect. In this area, I am mostly interested in the confluences associated with the manipulation of "compound words" (and to a lesser degree individual tropes). Rhetoric has traditionally been applied to literary works. Most relevant for the Avant Garde would be any emphasis on the practical and dynamic character of rhetoric. Later on in this essay, I refer specifically to devices that use "compound words" thought of as "ornamentation", rather than correct grammar or clarity of speech (*ornatus* – alongside *literaria* and *claritas*). Rhetoric – as the art of composing complex phrasal systems, and as a practice that relies on the activation of techniques in speech – transcends (though not always) the dichotomy seen as non-negotiable in Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics*: the dichotomy between *poiesis* and *praxis*[12]. It does this by placing emphasis on the

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[12]Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics* is often evoked by philosophers for its emphasis on the distinction between Greek *poiesis* (creation) and *praxis* (action, also described as experience). This distinction is based on the action's objective. *Poiesis* thus refers to all forms of creation whose objectives can be located within the act itself, but refer to what is outside of it, while in the case of *praxis*, the objective is written into the action itself, or, to be more precise, the action's successful execution. Both, however, reside within "practical philosophy", placing virtue on equal grounds with the "consistent disposition" of man (a form of "valor", according to Aristotle). Aristotle says: "All Art deals with bringing some thing into existence; and to pursue an art means to study how to bring into existence a thing which may either exist or not, and the efficient cause of which lies in the maker and not in the thing made; for Art does not deal with things that exist or come into existence of necessity, or according to nature, since these have their efficient cause in themselves. But as doing and making are distinct, it follows that Art, being concerned with making, is not concerned with doing." (Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, trans. H. Rackham, Cambridge 1926, Book 6, Section 1). From the rhetorical perspective (my perspective), one might add that in today's cultural approach to literature, representing "creation" as something that has no real source (such as in other works or in memory, even, of material – *vide* the tradition of versification), is hard to justify. This issue becomes irrelevant if we treat poetry as a system of cues designed for the reader to then "implement".

execution, repetition and implementation of a set of rules for producing a desired effect. It thus places the consumer of art in the role of the expert: the consumer plays her assigned role to produce an effect that is in fact "practical" (the practice of art) as defined by the work of art (*poiesis)*. The product, however, is not always an "object", such as a shoe created according to the rules of the shoemaker's art. Art (*techne*, *ars*) according to the definition we might take, for now, from Lausberg's acclaimed handbook (which aggregates and organises citations from all significant authorities on rhetoric) is understood in the "active" context of rhetoric as "an ordered process that strives for perfection"[13]. This process – as Lausberg explains– can appear rather natural and can resemble a natural course of events (such as the branching out of a tree). It can occur either accidentally, or as the product of a deliberate process (*techne/arte*). Artistic production (*epuos*, *opus*) that does not correspond to nature (*fisis*) cannot come into being without a complicit party, such as an individual's natural disposition to engage in activity. If this individual lacks experience (*apeiria*), then art is passed over to fate (*tiche*) – in other words, the work of art develops on the basis of *fisis* through *apeiria* and *tiche*. Each repetition of a known but poorly understood form of activity builds up to "experience" (*empeiria*). In experience (*empeiria*), fate (*tiche*) directs us according to our knowledge. In this way, each repetition that describes and confirms experience is in fact already an imitation (*mimesis*). For practical purposes, rhetoric perceives creative acts as inseparable from the work's reader/viewer. These acts thus consist of reproducing or emulating templates. In rhetoric, imitation (the replication of templates) is always associated with science, and as such remains the *mimesis* of artistic practice. In the context of avant-garde poetry (which exceeds this definition by its very nature), poetics (an art distinct from rhetoric) can bring to poetry more than *memoria* and *pronuntiatio*. Poetics can introduce *inventio* and *dispositio*: the ability to create that which does not yet exist and to expose the creative process in the form a compositional record, so that it can be put into practice. Creative cues now visible, for example, in the "syntactic" record of the creative process, can be described precisely as the "construction/building" of the avant-garde poem. The rhetorical approach to the communication process must be applied in those cases where the poem and its execution are understood as actions, and not as an artistic object or found artifact.

According to the tenets imported from rhetoric into poetry, the avant-garde work is a work that develops the conditions for its own operation – as revealed in the "notations" as a form of *dispositio*, which I interpret as the reader's creative cues. With the help of these "cues", the poem is a composition "to be rehearsed". I associate these "notations" with creative acts of syntax: composing intervals longer than the poetic line and enabling us to trace the author's constructive strategies throughout the space of the work as a whole. The creative, craftsman's experience is encoded into the avant-garde work and is then repeated by the reader, becoming visible only in the composition/disposition of cues. If we view the elements of *dispostio* on the level of *elocutio*, then the work imitates/records the actions that led to its creation. These might be the actions of the author himself, or of some other master of the craft. By putting them into practice (bringing the element of practice to the level of elocution), imitating and rehearsing given templates, the poem and its author make available the artistic experience gained throughout their course of artistic actions. The avant-garde poem thus "performs" experience, using techniques catered to that experience. As Lausberg suggests in his *Handbook of Literary*

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[13]H. Lausberg, *Handbook of Literary Rhetoric: A Foundation for Literary Study*, trans. Matthew Bliss, Boston 1998, p.1.

Rhetoric, viewing the matter from a rhetorical angle rather than the stylistic one referenced above: "Every *ars* can be taught (…) and learned (…) by the communication of the rules (…) of the *ars* in question (…) If the pupil possesses the natural predisposition (…) and practices the knowledge learned through practical application (…) *techne* (thus, an element of *poiesis* –J.O.) again flows into *empeiria* (an element of *praxis* – J.O.), only now the *empeiria* is rationally enlightened by the *techne*".[14] Rhetoric's ability to serve the purposes of art and the individual's needs by way of the repetition of deliberate rules is extremely relevant for the interventional and radical tendencies of the Avant Garde. In his essay *A Rhetoric of Motives,* Kenneth Burke demonstrates that rhetoric should prompt us to undertake the actions it describes (Aristotle, Cicero) and to generate new positions (Quintilian)[15]. Tying the art of persuasion to ethical positions allows us to apply the terminology of rhetoric to poetic composition. In this case, we must view expressive devices in terms of their ability to communicate and to arouse specific emotional states without necessarily achieving pragmatic ends. And yet, it was Quintilian who promoted rhetoric in the first place and brought it to the very heart of the education system by demonstrating that an excellent speaker makes an excellent citizen. When we speak of the performativity of rhetoric, therefore, we do not come up against the same theoretical problems tied to theories of performativity in literature or poetry. In the case of rhetoric, the recorded text is an exemplary and masterful application of a set of rules whose implementation leads to their illumination, evocation (elocution is here understood as an *actio* as well: as execution), and to the formation of new (creative) positions through the internalisation of these rules, now infused with personal experience. Of course, creating these positions can be understood on a number of levels: in avant-garde poetry, the teacher of these guidelines might be a deranged experimental teacher, or a naive teacher à la Rancière, simply applying his knowledge of the rules as an informed reader. One thing remains indisputable: avant-garde poetry is agentive poetry, performative in the sense that it always strives to teach us something, thus provoking us to engage in a form of creative imitation, understood literally. To read the avant-garde poem properly, we must not understand it so much as we emulate and perform it.

As a final comment on the usefulness of applying a rhetorical approach to avant-garde poetry: in Lausberg's classification of *artes*, emphasis is placed on either the execution of the action, or the subject who performs that action (*artifex*, *actor*)[16]. Any action has three degrees of con-creteness that determine whether a work of art is classified as poietic, practical or theoretical. The poietic arts, as we know, are based on the ability to make something that "might be, or might not be" (a boot, a poem, critique). And yet, both poems and works of music (or even cri-tique, for that matter) are generated according to the rules of poetry and music (understood as theory) rendering them as "events" (for they are not objects), when they are made accord-ing to the appropriate practical art. On the other hand, the practical (performative) arts are also rooted in action, and must (or perhaps can) conceive the existence of the "poietic" *opus*. This renders the timeless, poietic work as a present and transitive one, for example, in the case of a play performed on a stage. In the end, Lausberg notes that film and music manage to

[14]Ibid, p. 3.

[15]K. Burke, *ARhetoric of Motives*, Berkeley 1969, p. 49.

[16]H. Lausberg, *Handbook of Literary Rhetoric…*, p. 5.

narrow the gap between the practical and poietic arts[17]. Due to the changing creative philosophies of the twentieth century, the situation of avant-garde poetry is rather similar since, as we know, it often referenced film. The process-oriented, dynamic poem's content becomes the equivalent of the film, although this does not preclude treating the avant-garde text just as we might treat the recording printed on the celluloid film strip, existing only to anticipate the moment when the film will be projected. In this way, the avant-garde poem becomes something like the documentation of artistic activity, or rather, a detailed script for an action. This is a radical revision of traditional notions of the poem. The deleuzian figure of the "movement image" does a good job of illuminating this notion of the modern poem. Deleuze used this figure mainly in reference to cinema, but it echoes throughout his philosophical reflections on literature. Deleuze writes:

> The writer's specific materials are words and syntax, the created syntax that ascends irresistibly into his work and passes into sensation. Memory, which summons forth only old perceptions, is obviously not enough to get away from lived perceptions; neither is an involuntary memory that adds reminiscence as the present's preserving factor. Memory plays a small part in art (even and especially in Proust). It is true that every work of art is a *monument,* but here the monument is not something commemorating a past, it is a bloc of present sensations that owe their preservation only to themselves and that provide the event with the compound that celebrates it. The monument's action is not memory but fabulation. We write not with childhood memories but through blocs of childhood that are the becoming-child of the present. Music is full of them. It is not memory that is needed but a complex material that is found not in memory but in words and sounds [...][18].

The avant-garde poem will never be a finished poem, although it does become a consolidated text. It produces meaning precisely by disrupting syntactic order – and this is why we must understand it as active and processual. For it retains these syntactic orders so that we might be able to realize them in our own free manner, in accordance with art.

Syntax of the Avant-Garde Poem

In his study, Sławiński takes into account several theses regarding the syntax of avant-garde phrasing (metaphorical and periphrastic). In Sławiński's opinion (bearing Peiper in mind), syntax becomes, first and foremost, a device for putting meaning into dynamic play. This principle, however, is particularly relevant in the case of Peiper's "blossoming sentence", whose components build out the poem, becoming "addenda" to the poem itself and filling out its original concept with further commentary[19]. To do such a poem justice, we must implement a style of reading that doesn't dwell on the periphrastic nature of Peiper's pseudonyms, but

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[17]Ibid, p. 6-7.

[18]G. Deleuze, P. Guattari, *What is Philosophy*, trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Graham Burchell, New York 1994, p. 167-8.

[19]Sławiński goes on to write: "Its elaboration consists of the constant reclaiming of bygone phases, thus amounting to transience incrementally disrupted by its opposite, hindered in turn by the sameness of repeated elements. The beginning and end of a sentence are not only moments that mark its trajectory. They are points that define the limits of its system: between them (...) lies a whole range of variations" (Sławiński, *Koncepcja języka poetyckiego awangardy*, p.127-28).

moves on to reconstruct how and why the poem was initially composed through frequent repetition and layering, and how exactly its "dynamic instability of meaning" unfolds. To do so, we would have to approach the entire avant-garde poem as a rhetorical interval or as a constellation of several such intervals, as I have proposed. *Periodos* refers to the "cyclical course" of a statement, running towards an unspecified endpoint (unlike, say, perpetual speech (*oratio perpetua*)). At the beginning of the rhetorical interval, dispersed, inchoate elements appear, becoming mutually coherent only at the end. The first part of the rhetorical interval builds suspense (rhetoric defines this as *protasis*), while the second subdues this suspense into *apodosis*. Failure to resolve the interval's setup is treated as an error (*vitium*). In the absence of a verbal articulation of the apodictic idea, we find ourselves dealing with an *elliptikon schema*. A detractive gesture produces an end for the interval that can be defined as *anantapodosis*. If the contrast to the apodictic idea is less obvious, as might be the case if a necessary conjunction is missing, then *apodosis* merely diverges from expectations, and this is called *anakoloutos*. Each rhetorical interval therefore has a circular structure, often composed of several "circular systems". These interrelated systems most often appear as antithesis.

From a rhetorical perspective, elocution consists of three distinct figures[20]: through incorporation (*per adiectationem*, perhaps through the repetition of words, synonyms, or words that sound similar, which is to say, through a form of tautology; or through accumulation, such as enumeration, *epitheton* or *polisyndeton*), divergence (*per detractionem*, which includes all forms of ellipses, zeugmas and syllepses, as well as asyndetons), by means of ordering (*per ordinem*, such as anastrophe, hyperbaton or some forms of isocolon, meaning, the conformation of rhetorical elements, their quantitative comparison, or syntactic ordering). It is therefore important to note that tropes, as well as figures of speech and thought, do not represent discrete worlds. So many devices can be identified with a number of the terms above, depending on their mode of operation in syntax, or the function they are assigned by the surrounding words. In the end, all these conceptual figures can be understood as broad figures by which the listener shapes her interpretation of the discourse as a whole (for convenience, we might call them suprasegmental). They can also be treated as syntactic figures, or even tropes. In this way, allegory and synecdoche are simultaneously tropes (and are treaded accordingly in stylistics), and compositional figures. As conceptual figures, *praeteritio* (sometimes called paralepsis) and *reticentia* (also called aposiopesis) can be interpreted as the counterparts of irony. *Praeteritio* consists of the rhetorical gesture of evading certain issues, while *reticentia* consists of staying silent. Semantically speaking, these figures might be perceived as forms of detraction. Within syntax, however, they are often simply ellipses. If we turn to semantic figures of thought, *correctio* operates in the same, suprasegmental way in that it consists of the need to correct a thought by repeating a piece of the syntactic relationship.

The most prominent devices of avant-garde syntax, determining entirely distinct creative strategies, are various forms of periphrasis and ellipsis. The former, as a stylistic device that expands our means for describing a given fact or phenomenon, is a figure of speech that functions by repetition (tautology) as well as accumulation enriched with modifications or corrections.

[20]Here I am following Jerzy Ziomek's classification, which is a somewhat simplified and abridged form of the classification Lausberg offered (J. Ziomek, *Retoryka opisowa*, Wrocław 1990, pp. 203-205)

Detractive figures constitute another creative strategy usually associated with ellipses: in this case, a trajectory is developed for the poem using mainly zeugmas, although these can also include modifications and corrections. The detractive syntax of the avant-garde sentence was most typical for Przyboś and Brzękowski, and to a certain degree, its legacy can be seen in the work of Karpowicz, Miłobędzka, and in the "avant-garde" poems of younger poets such as Marcin Sendecki. Syntax partially tied to cutting and detracting as ordering mechanisms, while partially employing additive and repetitive devices and meaningful (constructive, rather than lexical) tautologies mainly emerged out of Peiper's blossoming sentence as a prototype. This structure seems to have been influential in the long run, if we look at Wirpsza's poetry. We can also find traces of it in the contemporary poetry of Krzysztof Siwczyk. If I am evoking three major innovators of the historical Avant Garde who surface frequently in literary studies (Peiper, Przyboś and Brzękowski), I am not doing so in order to classify their individual outputs by trope within some kind of hierarchical schema. Miłobędzka, orienting herself towards the constructivist premises of avant-garde syntax and constructing her own sentences by way of detraction, often references syntactic figures we might associate with Peiper's legacy. However, if she manipulates syntactic devices introduced by Przyboś or taken up later by Karpowicz, this does not mean that her poetics have evolved directly out of Przyboś's project. Avant-garde syntax simply lives within the poetic tradition, right alongside the traditional metre of the Enlightenment or Romantic poets. So it is, perhaps, in similar memorisation experiments, and its constructive implications can be used as a form of *techne,* regardless of how similar the work of two poets may be. In this sense, Wirpsza does in fact continue the trope of Peiper's syntactic model (the additive-tautological line). Meanwhile, in an entirely distinct poetic context, we see similar exercises in the work of Piotr Sommer, who might be described as post-avant-garde only in the most narrow sense. Sommer's poetic syntax thus absorbs into itself a number of gestures that recall the syntactic devices of the modern American poets he himself translated. In brief: the revolution in Polish poetry launched by the poetics of the Kraków Avant Garde, whose legacy has had a major impact on all interpretations of the system (or lack thereof) of free verse in Poland, was effectively a revolution in the syntactic structure of the sentence.

To wrap up, I would like to demonstrate a few possible manifestations of the additive-tautological tradition, in which the sentence that constitutes the verse is constantly developing and operating within the space of a rhetorical interval (or several such intervals), simultaneously building structures of meaning that appear spatially. Let us first consider Tadeusz Peiper's well-known poem *Chorale of Workers* (*Chorał robotników*), from the collection *A*. The author has cited this volume as a "poem-obsession" and the source of his blossoming syntax in *Nowe usta*. I would recall that Peiper tends to describe this syntax in terms of motion:

> (…) the projection of visions occurs at full speed. Under the influence of those that came before, new visions undergo instantaneous degradation, fragmentation, displacement and removal. All this occurs on invaded territory as new, incoming visions gallop at the invader's same fast clip. At this point, we must take note that this movement is not derived from the description of movement (…) We are not dealing with movement in the world, but with movement between words[21].

[21]T. Peiper, *Tędy. Nowe usta*, with commentary by S. Jaworski, Kraków 1972, p. 301.

And the poem itself:

Shadow
black bird,
black bird of our sighs
suckles at the golden udder, suckles the sun,
black bird.　　　　　　　　　　　　(1)

Aaa, we wa -nt it we wa -nt it.
To have!
To have!
The golden udder we wa -nt to have

Ours! your song,
ours! your golden song,
ours, of the black, your golden song,
your song sculpts us the world,
our world
world.　　　　　　　　　　　　　(2)

Let's see. Shall we see? We steal with our eyes!
We steal, we steal, we steal
with our eyes.
Smoke has a knife.
the knife of our sighs,
the knife, it slices the sun into coins and coins it hands out.
Smoke has a knife and slices.　　　(3)

(Cień
czarny ptak,
Czarny ptak naszych westchnień
ssie złote wymię, ssie słońce,
czarny ptak.　　　　　　　　　　(1)

Aaa, my chce my je mieć.
Mieć!
Mieć!
Złote wymię chce my mieć.

Nam twój śpiew,
nam złoty twój śpiew,
nam czarnym złoty twój śpiew,
twój śpiew rzeźbi nam świat,
nam świat
świat.　　　　　　　　　　　　　(2)

Patrzymy. Patrzymy? Kradniemy oczyma!
Kradniemy, kradniemy, kradniemy
oczyma.
Dym ma nóż,
ma nóż dym naszych westchnień,
ma nóż, kraje słońce na grosze i grosze rozdaje.
Dym ma nóż i kraje.   (3))[22]

If we read Peiper's poem verse by verse, it comes across as a declaration ordered by anaphorae and epiphorae, understood as stylistic syntactic figures. The rule governing repetition is thus "immobilised" and assigned the role of marking poetic correlations according to the rules of traditional verse analysis. If we understand repetition in these terms, this will only reinforce our dependence on line breaks in the absence of metric norms. Reading syntactic figures according to the rhetorical conceptual apparatus does not rule out this insight, but incorporates it as a device for organising and beginning to expand a rhetorical model for the poetics of the full sentence. If we are to treat the poem in its entirety as a set of rhetorical intervals, then we must first acknowledge that we are dealing with a text that consists of several (three) moments linked together transitions that might be described as interjections– an element proper to ongoing speech (*oratio perpetua*) and therefore not subject to the circular law of the period. Whereas in poetry we speak of verses, in rhetoric (the art of speech), we speak of cola (and their constituent commas). In Peiper's sentence structure, syntax is suspended in the tension of the drawn-out, nearly scanned sentence – or perhaps multiple sentences that cannot be spoken without violating the rules of grammar – thus yielding a colon-comma division that lends itself more easily to analysis. Aside from its verse structure, this poem has one more division internal to the verse. The three intervals that make up Peiper's *Chorale of Workers* are based on four consecutive declarations that are extremely metaphorical and develop their meaning in tandem (the latter pair will elaborate on one theme in two variations): "black bird of our sighs suckles at the golden udder"; "ours, of the black, your golden song, your song sculpts us the world"; "Smoke has a knife. the knife of our sighs,"; "The knife, it slices the sun into coins". In Peiper's poem, these statements halt in the middle of their course, and only then develop further. These halting maneuvers (each interval might be represented as a hand reaching out for something and then pulling back in the face of something else) unfold on two levels simultaneously: that of the verse, and of the sentence. The rhythmic order that I here call the poem's scan, which is to say, the rhythmic tendency towards the poetic scan (and in certain places this comes across rather vividly) becomes yet another aspect to consider. Rhythm can be read somewhat similarly, in terms of its particular "trimming of sentences": *"Cień//czar/ny/ptak//czar/ny/ptak/na/szych/westch/nień"*23 ("Shadow//black bird//black bird of our sighs)" (here, double slashes mark the verse's endpoints, while boldface indicates stressed syllables, although the syllable "*ny*" can also be stressed). How do sentences operate within these three rhetorical intervals? In this case, we must understand "interval" in rather simple terms, as an individual, built-out sentence. Rhetoric supports this definition of an interval. The distinction between the rhetorical interval and the poetic line, defined by Lausberg as an amorphous *oratio perpetua*, remains its "circularity", As I have already mentioned, the interval is organised thus: incomplete thoughts are introduced at the beginning and then need to be assimilated. When the initial, tension-building idea (*protasis*) is not resolved, this results in a form

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[22]T. Peiper, *Poematy i utwory teatralne*, Kraków 1979, p. ... The intervals are numbered by me.
[23]This effect is more visible in the Polish (translator's note)

of detraction designated as *anantopodosis*. In this sense, the sentence develops over the course of three intervals to a limit point defined as the syntactic climax, and is then dispersed and ultimately pulled back in. As a result, we must note that while *Chorale* does develop as a whole, its climax is left open at the end. Certain commas and their accompanying colons are only resolved through the sentence's syntactic layout: from basic links back to the subject group, the logical beginning of the sentence, which are then specified further by subsequent groups that define the subject and its object, after which we move on to the predicate group, which again brings more specificity to the information supplied by the text as a whole. This process can also be specific, multi-stepped and "fragmented". The entire middle stanza (the second interval) can thus be scanned as follows: *"Nam twój śpiew,// nam/czarnym złoty/ twój śpiew,// twój śpiew/ rzeźbi/ nam świat// nam świat//świat"*[24] (Ours! your song, // ours! your golden song,// ours, of the black, your golden song,// your song sculpts us the world,// our world// world). Here, the division of units is laid out according to the mounting tension and the subsequent denouement through resolution. In the second part of the sentence, however, these resolutions halt, and are instead are pulled back into one scanned word. If we read carefully and "in fragments", we see that new syntactic elements are at work, such as interjection (in the form of hyperbaton or a parenthetical clause, depending on which level of the composition we examine). This seems somewhat strange, especially when we scrutinise the predicate (the act of sculpting) in this light. We can begin to see how the trajectory of the sentence develops through repetition: anadiplosis is used as a form of *correctio* ("your golden song,/your song sculpts us the world"). Meanwhile, the sentence closes its circle through the gesture of close epanadiplosis ("Ours! your song... our world"). These are parentheticals, of course, because the developing sense of the statement functions as a kind of aside, extending the sentence to the limit of the second repetition ("us the world/ our world") in order to then finalise the developed sense of the detraction. Peiper's poem, *Chorale of Workers*, teems with hunger and longing. It throbs and reaches out – precisely by way of this gesture to expand and draw out the sentence structure by way of a rhetorical device we might call anantopodon. I have only managed here to point out one somewhat insignificant element of the game of syntax that we constantly bear in mind while interpreting *Chorale* as a whole. I have left out homonyms, the matter of chiasma (one of which nearly emerges in the third interval, creating its own form of climax), the question of homonymic rhymes, various phonic combinations, and paronomasia (which can also be understood in terms of the instrumentalisation of letters, or rhetorical repetition). When we analyse the internal divisions within Peiper's poem rhetorically, we lay bare the text's constructive cues (on the level of that composition's elocution). This, in turn, allows us to grasp yet another layer or dimension that expands our reading of poetic sentences – the layer of the "construction/implementation" of the text, contingent on its engagement of normative meanings syntax. This builds yet another form of tension that runs parallel to the line breaks, tearing through the syntax of normatively-read sentences. Rhetoric, which is also informed by the knowledge of syntax, allows us to examine poetic operations upon the sentence, now liberated from the conventions that the prose sentence must obey. We can then examine our own syntactic reconstruction within the space of the "complete" sentence that makes up the rhetorical interval: the poetic moment. In this sense, "active" syntax compels the reader to approach the poem unhindered by aesthetic or cognitive notions already harnessed to everyday communication norms. Instead, we are compelled to reconstruct the poem as a process in and of itself. The avant-garde poem thus becomes a poem "in motion", not unlike a silent film. This is in keeping with the political emphasis on its didactic and persuasive functions, tied to the art of speech as a performative act.

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[24]See above

Naturally, not all the syntactic triumphs of the Avant Garde are necessarily persuasive or di-
dactic. The strong prevalence of syntactic "actions" in contemporary Polish poetry extends the
legacy of the Avant Garde, but more often than not, it generally references rhetoric in terms
of free verse and its attempt to mobilise the rhythm and syntax of the colloquial, spoken
sentence within poetry. In this way, many of Piotr Sommer's poems offer a distant realisation
of additive-tautological poetic strategies. Let us look, for instance, at his poem *Yesterday* (*Wc-
zoraj)* from *Pastoral Song* (*Piosenka pasterska)*:

Fall in the small gardens around the houses –
aside from some jasmine all is still
clothed and the sparrows
jumping from one lilac

to the next – yield such a bare
moral, such a downfall? the passage
of leaves beyond the rusted fence
they shield us so well

from the eye of passerby, the neighbor
who once, long ago, worked in the passport bureau
and from the headlights of the car, that chases the leaves

like wind, so that faster and faster and
perhaps driven by this speed

you hasten your step

(Jesień na małych działkach wokół domów –
oprócz kilku jaśminów wciąż jeszcze
w ubraniu i wróbli
przeskakujących z jednego bzu

na drugi – dobywa z siebie taki goły
morał, taki upadek? przesłanie
liści za przerdzewiałym płotem
które tak ładnie chronią nas

przed okiem przechodnia i sąsiadki
co kiedyś kiedyś pracowała w biurze paszportowym
i przed światłami samochodu, które gonią liście

jak wiatr, tyle że szybciej szybciej i
chyba z powodu tego pędu
przyspieszasz kroku)[25]

[25] P. Sommer, *Po ciemku też*, Poznań 2013, p. 246.

Sommer's poem, not unlike Peiper's, has a "developing" syntax, whose rhetorical devices as constructive directives (compositional cues) coincide with several other layers of the composition that serve other interests. The sonnet (as a poetic subgenre) offers a clear template for the poem's internal breaks with its binary structure, its tone-based line structure, and meaningful enjambements associated with syntax as a form of versification. *Yesterday* is made up of two colons (two sentences that add up to one interval), organised according to a hierarchy of conceptual development. The thoughts proceed from that which is less discursively complex (referring bluntly to autumn), then become a metaphorical commentary on autumn, and ultimately lead to more conceptual content that allows us to convey a specific narrative. The poem's organisation, shaped by intonation and syntax, is thus a component of versification, flowing more smoothly as the rhetorical interval develops as a whole. This creates additional segments within individual lines. The first sentence, acting as our beginning (*protasis*), reaches a climax in the second stanza, marking its strong internal division with a question mark. This break takes the place of more traditional divisions between the expressive portion of the sonnet and its subsequent commentary. The denouement of the tension introduced at the poem's beginning (in the form of commas): "Fall in the small gardens around the houses –" articulated as "yield such a bare moral, such a downfall?", unfolds as the deceptive, superficial fulfillment of the rhetorical interval's expectations. The thought breaks off with the expression of doubt, which simultaneously makes room for new developments. The pauses interject additional subsections within the colon: the first one ending as the line does, yielding something like an exposed and thus emphatic pause, while the second bisects the first line of the second stanza, making it difficult to then trace the sense of the sentence as a whole. In keeping with Sommers' idiosyncratic style, lines and enjambements break up a long declaration. They seem to be pulled straight out of *oratio perpetua*: they are ongoing and do not necessarily lead to a defined endpoint. All other syntactic devices remain somewhat hidden. We can provisionally treat the second line as a continuation of the statement "about autumn": "aside from some jasmine all is still clothed". The entire development towards the sentence's climax is also broken off, or deceivingly extends towards its equivalent through two descriptions, by way of adverbials or an adverbial and modifier. The development of the initial commas suggests that the jasmine as well as autumn itself might both be "clothed". Introducing the equalising unit: "and the sparrows // jumping from one lilac// to the next", might go so far as to suggest that "Fall is still clothed", just like the jasmine and the sparrows. If we follow the logical course of the sentence, modeled as a form of hyperbaton, then "still clothed" is a unit that disrupts the correct word order of the statement as a whole, whose listed units ought to lie side by side. In this way, the motif we trace tapers away in the next stanza, when we come upon yet another pause that now marks the end of the parenthetical. Only now do we realise our own error. For it is not possible that the autumn and the jasmine and the sparrows (linked with autumn and by way of anacoluthon used colloquially, with "aside from" also meaning "and"), all simultaneously yield "such a bare moral" – thus, the very idea becomes pure comedy. The parenthetical is constructed, rather, via two parallel statements ("jasmine [...] is still clothed" and "sparrows jumping") in the form of adverbials acting as modifiers if we choose to link these modifiers to the autumn. We can also choose to perceive them as developed counterparts of the "bald moral", which appears significantly later and is equally linked to everything associated with "Fall." If "autumn" is not, in fact, "still clothed" – and thus it is "some jasmine [..] and the sparrows" that produce "such a bare moral, such a downfall?", then we are instead dealing with an interjection that is simultaneously an inversion. Here, Sommer constructs his poem as a kind of misleading intensification and dispersion of sense:

syntax is always ambiguous and amphibolic. That which enacts its own accumulation, supplementing the field of descriptions linked to the subject, turns out to be dependent on what is to come, as if the speaker has run ahead of his thought, and then seeks to return to the topic at hand. We can describe this figure of speech as a developed prolepsis: a push toward the culmination of the sentence understood as an event. At the end of the long, slow postponement of the climax in the form of syntactic anticipation or retardation, we have, at last, aporia. In the poem *Yesterday,* the meaning of the sentences, through specific "subdivisions" (be they logical or marked as line breaks, produced by pauses and enjambements on the one hand, and rhetorical and syntactic devices on the other) is somehow undermined. From line to line it softens, rather than accumulating and solidifying over the course of traditional intervals. We might say that from the very start, the syntactic gesture anticipates the image of leaves blowing about in the wind that appears in the climax. By this same token, the fragment underscored by repetition in the form of anadiplosis and *correctio* ("such a bare/ moral, such a downfall?") can be interpreted as the conceptual figures of aposiopesis or *dubitatio*. In compositional terms, the fragment can be read as the fulfillment of the interval's expectation of anticlimax at the expense of the reader's expectations (in lieu of additional commentary on that "Fall in the small gardens", we receive a question, or doubt, surfacing in the word "bare" and perhaps laced with disappointment). In the first two stanzas, through a special kind of anticlimax within the syntax, the developed parts of the sentences that constitute the colons and intervals by way of erroneous logic, two antithetical "lines" of one statement are spliced, only to be merged in the second part. We might say that they exchange meanings, or perhaps that meaning circulates between them, just like in a rhetorical interval. The second part should therefore yield the desired anticlimax. Unfortunately, it turns out that Sommer's sentences are somewhat "inflated", as it were. They project their pursuit of concrete sense (*apodosis)* by way of seemingly colloquial, but in fact rather devious logic. The expectations, however, are established only on the surface, as a kind of pretext (thus, as an anacoluthon). Syntactic order is subject to the principle of its own accumulation of sense, through its deceivingly logical specifications. These specifications inevitably lead not to explication, but to questions and to the scattering of sense. The subsequent interval in *Yesterday* is also an entire sentence. Its syntax is meticulously segmented through ambiguous enjambements. In its entirety, it might be described as an epanadiplosis that is then revised, crossing over into the suspension of a voice associated with aposiopesis. In this way, the second part repeats the syntactic and rhetorical premise of the first part, so much so that its circular nature becomes emphatic: "the passage/ of leaves beyond the rusted fence…" leads us to the headlights of a car "that chases the leaves/ like wind". The initial antithesis of two syntactic motifs culminates in paradox: the stressed repetition of the same meaning at both endpoints of the interval. Perhaps this is only true on a homonymic level (the leaves behind the fence, kindly shielding us from the neighbor's eye, are not necessarily the same leaves that flutter before the headlights). And yet, in terms of syntax, the sentence is internally contradictory and withholds latent meaning. This device, which borders on epanadiplosis, is a series of enumerations and therefore a figure of accumulation ("leaves" shield us "from the eye" of both "the neighbor" and "the headlights of the car"). We might treat this as a kind of polysyndeton: a sequence of addenda linked by the conjunction "and". Here, the syntax is simpler than in the first colon. And yet, due to the paradoxical nature of the "leaves" that appear once to "shield us so well/ from the eye of passersby, the neighbor", and once as those "hastened" by the headlights, the sentence is cobbled together by repeating the earlier antithesis in a rather abbreviated manner, in a state-

ment that is internally contradictory and runs counter to logic. The leaves simultaneously "shield us" and are "chased" by the headlights, thus failing to shield us at all. These leaves are simultaneously those that continue to thickly blanket the lane bordering the garden, and those that have already fallen. This leads us to the final denouement of the poem's climax, which again – by way of anacoluthon – fails to explain anything, and at first accelerates through regular, expressive repetitions ("so that faster and faster") and through conjunction (the use of verse to suspend the voice, as if right before the disclosure of a secret). These techniques lead us to a simple declaration that explains nothing and simply provides the next piece of the puzzle. Perhaps, in this way, the subject speaking in the poem is introduced: "and/ perhaps driven by this speed/ you hasten your step", for it is to this climax that the the mayhem of the "syntactic leaf" strives. *Wczoraj* – in spite of its use of past tense – reveals this moment of anxiety vividly, so that the syntactic devices appear as an extremely rich notation: as the memory of movement. If we adopt this approach, we must ultimately grapple with the insinuation that the speaker is simultaneously "inside", in the garden, on the side where the Fall is static and stable, and "chased" down the street, alongside the leaves, caught in the headlights of a car. In this way, the syntax of the text as a whole becomes a kind of reconciliation with a memory of steps that are slow at first, and then rushed for some unknown reason, a reason toward which we crane our necks, both carefully and clumsily.

Keywords | Abstract | Note on the Author

KEYWORDS

performativity

the Avant Garde

b l o s s o m i n g   s y n t a x

Abstract:

The question I wish to pose through my remarks on versification is not limited to the syntax of the avant-garde sentence. It is rooted, rather, in an attempt to reckon with the flat nature of the sheet of paper, and the spatial and dynamic possibilities it implies. The artists of the Polish Avant Garde attempted to refine this, identifying their poems as "constructions". Rhetoric allows us to hone this possibility, if its premises for the composition of a work (which I prefer to define as an "action") are mobilised not only as tools for describing the stylistic aspects of a text, but as a system of creative cues that engage the reader. This process is understood as *actio* – the implementation of the artistic text. In this approach, the poetic text becomes a "notation", not unlike the sequence of notes documented in music, while its "implementation" consists of the "mimetic" repetition of the author's creative actions.

FIGURES OF SYNTAX

FREE VERSE

p o e t r y

r h e t o r i c

NOTE ON THE AUTHOR:

Joanna Orska is a critic and literary scholar. She works at the Institute of Polish Philology at the University of Wrocław, in the Department of Polish Literature after 1918, where she organises critical workshops and seminars on contemporary literature. Her reviews and critical essays have been published in a number of social, cultural and academic journals, including "Teksty drugie", "FA-art" and "Odra". Recent books include: *Przełom awangardowy w dwudziestowiecznym modernizmie w Polsce, Liryczne narracje. Nowe tendencje w poezji polskiej 1989-2006, Republika poetów. Poetyckość i polityczność w krytycznej praktyce* (2013). She lives in Wrocław.

Prose Cycle
(Narrative Cycle; Story Cycle)

A term in literary theory by which one might determine the external connections between the stories comprising the given cycle. In *A Dictionary of Literary Terms (Słownik terminów literackich),* edited by Janusz Sławiński, under the cycle and its related terms, we find the following definitions:

> Novel sequence – a form of literary cycle: a series of novels tied together into an overarching whole by means of a compositional frame that embraces them all (e.g. *One Thousand and One Nights*, Boccaccio's *Decameron*), or with the help of a common thematic element (be it a character or a motif) that appears in each constituent novel, (e.g. Arthur Conan Doyle's Sherlock Holmes novels, Ilya Ehrenburg's *Thirteen Pipes*) or through the narrator's continuous point of view towards the portrayed world dispersed throughout the sequence's installments (e.g. Maria Dąbrowska's *People from Over There*), or finally, through a conceptual problem that matures throughout the sequence (e.g. Zofia Nałkowska's *Medallions*). In the eighteenth century, the novel sequence became one of the sources of the literary novel[1].

A separate entry defines the literary cycle:

> Literary cycle – a set of works belonging to the same genre and tied into an overarching whole by a commonality of content (a literary character, motifs, ideas), either through a similarity of compositional resolutions, a compositional frame, or even the unity of the literary subject. Each work included in the cycle tends to maintain an advanced structural autonomy and might be taken as a self-sufficient whole in itself: e.g. the medieval cycle of knights' *chansons de geste*) or a sonnet cycle (Mickiewicz's *Crimean Sonnets*).[2]

The definition of the cycle given above explicitly emphasizes the necessity of an external linkage between the stories comprising a given cycle (the presence of a compositional frame or connections on the level of the portrayed world). In this way, the definition recalls research on the cycle initiated by the Russian Formalists in the 1970s. American scholars propose yet another view on the criteria that constitute a narrative cycle, in which the indispensable element is the "necessary presence between the stories of a specific link of a semantic nature."[3] In his book *Representative Short Story Cycles of Twentieth Century*, F. L. Ingram calls the story cycle "a book of short stories so linked to each other by their author that the reader's succes-

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[1] Entry for "Novel Sequence", J. Sławiński, in: *Słownik terminów literackich ed. Janusza Sławińskiego*, 2nd edition, Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich, Wrocław 1989, p. 79.

[2] Entry for "Literary Cycle" J. Sławiński, in: *Słownik terminów literackich ed. Janusz Sławiński*, 2nd edition, Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich, Wrocław 1989, p. 64.

[3] K. Jakowska, *O cyklu opowiadań. Z teorii i historii cyklu narracyjnego w Polsce*, Wydawnictwo Uniwersyteckie Trans Humana, Białystok 2011, p. 13.

sive experience on various levels of the pattern of the whole significantly modifies his experience of each of its component parts."[4] Krystyna Jakowska, one of the best known scholars of cyclicality, considers these terms to be incomplete and therefore offers her own definition of the narrative cycle, calling it: "a collection of various stories in which each story forms a finished whole, and yet all of them are tied together. Due to their coherence, the entirety of the cycle relates to each of its constituent stories as an overarching whole – one that is both semantic and compositional. Each story, then, through its proximity to the cycle, modifies its own meaning – its meaning becomes new and greater than when we read it in isolation."[5]

Research on the narrative cycle started drawing the interest of Polish literary scholars rather late, in the 1990s. Theories of the poetic cycle, however, gathered interest in Poland much earlier. The most famous study is Wiesława Wantuch's text *On the Cycle of Lyric Poetry*, in which the author not only defines the concept of the poetic cycle on Polish territory, but also presents three fundamental variants of the literary cycle, supporting each one with appropriate examples. For Wantuch,

> The poetic cycle is a composition pulled between two poles: it strives towards closure, exposing specific properties of its structure, which is not the sum of its parts, and towards the autonomy of each individual work entering into the array. Depending on which of these tendencies prevails over the other, it becomes possible to identify three main types of cyclical systems: concentric, linked, and annular (ring-shaped).[6]

In Wantuch's opinion, the first variant is the most determined one: its most fitting example is so-called "wreaths of sonnets (*soneti di corona*)", with all constituent works united not only by a common theme, but by a consistent equation: 1+14. Additionally, the beginning of each sonnet becomes the opening verse of the following one. For this reason, one cannot read them out of order, for this would undermine the artfulness of the system. As another example, Wantuch also cites Antoni Słonimski's *Collected Poems*. The composition of these works is organized around a center that supplies the genre, theme, vocabulary and poetic subject of the first sonnet. Her next example from literature is Mickiewicz's *Crimean Sonnets*, whose composition is organized in an entirely different manner. We might sort its constituent parts into the following groups: "sonnets of the steppe" (*View of the Mountains from the Kozłow Steppe*), "the sea sonnets" (*Quiet Sea*, *Sailing*, *Storm*), and "the mountain sonnets". In this section, one also finds the confessional sonnets as well as the conversational sonnets between the Pilgrim and Mirza (the sonnets citing Mirza, or the descriptive sonnets).

> The composition of the Crimean Sonnets might be compared to an artfully rendered chain, in which each element, not so similar to the ones that come before and after it, undoubtedly belong to the same pattern and extend it (…). Mickiewicz's cycle hangs together by means of easily detectable and consistent linkages. Its continuity essentially becomes an organizational structure that is beyond definition and outside of genre.[7]

[4] F. L. Ingram, *Representative Short Story Cycles of the Twentieth Century*, Mouton, The Hague 1971, p. 19

[5] Ibid, p. 25.

[6] W. Wantuch, *O poetyce cyklu lirycznego*, in: *Miejsca wspólne. Szkice o komunikacji literackiej i artystycznej*, ed. Edward Balcerzan and Seweryn Wysłouch, Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe, Warsaw 1985, p.43.

[7] Ibid, p. 47.

The third kind of cycle – the annular cycle – is exemplified by Bolesław Leśmian's *Figures* (*Postacie*): "Compared to the previous examples, Leśmian's cycle seems to be the least coherent. Its constituent works differ in terms of their length, their rhyming schemes, and their vocabulary (...). It is only the markedly "ring-like" structure of the opening and concluding poems that allows us to detect one consistent speaker and uncover proof that allows us to ascribe all of the texts to him."[8]

In her analysis of poetic cycles, Wantuch evokes not only individual examples, but a number of overarching theses concerning all literary works collected into cycles. The scholar brings special focus to the necessary conditions for a cycle's coherence, as described by Maria Renata Mayenowa:

> A coherent text must meet the following criteria: 1) it must be ascribed to one speaker, which is to say: each "I want", "I know", "I feel", "I believe" in all modal frames throughout the text must contain an "I" that refers to a consistent person or consistent group of people; 2) it must have the same addressee, which is to say: each "you" of all possible modal frames must refer to a consistent person or consistent group of people; 3) finally, it must have one consistent subject.[9]

The second important element is the emphasis on the necessity of an active reader who must recognize the basis for a collection's cyclicality either by drawing exclusively from the system of texts composing the given cycle, or perhaps by utilizing their own background knowledge on metatextual information provided by a given text in order to accurately read the information presented therein.

Systematizing concepts of cyclicality in reference to prose is much more complicated. As Bogumiła Kaniewska has pointed out, the novel sequence "belongs to those forms of "indeterminate" genre: it is simultaneously a united whole and a collection of wholes, one text and a sequence of texts, delimited twice over."[10] Most scholars treat the cycle as an exclusively compositional phenomenon. In his text *The Composition of the Literary Cycle* (*Kompozycja cyklu literackiego*), Jan Trzynadlowski defines the poetic cycle "as a system of rigors determining the composition of successive works as an explicit set: a coherent whole comprised of subordinate organisms"[11] while the German scholar Rolf Fieguth considers the cycle to be a derivative genre, claiming that "despite the broad spectrum of variations that appear within its [the cycle's – P.M] scope or revolution, it exhibits surprisingly consistent genre properties."[12]

Krystyna Jakowska has noted that the linking of a cycle's constituent texts can be developed on several levels. They can be linked on an external level, using a visible compositional frame,

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[8] Ibid, p. 48-49.

[9] M. R. Mayenowa, *Poetyka teoretyczna*, Wrocław 1978, p. 256.

[10] Bogumiła Kaniewska, *Między cyklem a powieścią*, p. 23-35

[11] J. Trzynadlowski, *Kompozycja cyklu literackiego*, "Acta Universitatis Wratislaviensis. Prace literackie IX", issue 67, Wrocław 1967.

[12] R. Fieguth, *Rozpierzchłe gałązki. Cykliczne i skojarzeniowe formy kompozycyjne w twórczości Adama Mickiewicza*, trans. M. Zieliński, Warsaw 2001, p. 28.

the narrator's attitude, a problem, theme, identified hero, or portrayed world.[13] On the "textual and metatextual" level, which is to say, the internal one, texts can be linked by integrated titles, slogans, beginnings, endings, a "delineation of a cycle" and the linear sequencing of stories.[14] Reconstructing the total sense of a cycle is only possible through the process of reading the collected stories in a linear order.

To develop a history of the narrative cycle in Poland, Jakowska distinguishes a few basic types of narrative cycles: the historical cycle, the portrait cycle, the autobiographical cycle, the "philosophical" or issue-based cycle, and the "intertextual" cycle. The first of these focuses as its title suggests, on historical events. Examples of these events include: the January Uprising (E. Orzeszkowa, *Gloria victis*, A. Strug, *Ojcowie nasi*), the post-uprising repressions (W. Sieroszewski, *W matni. Nowele jakuckie*, A. Szymański, *Szkice*), the 1905 revolution (A. Niemojewski, *Ludzie rewolucji*, A. Strug, *Ludzie podziemni*, E. Słoński, *W więzieniu*), World War I and the Polish-Russian War of 1920 (J. Kaden-Bandrowski, *Mogiły*, Z. Kisielewski, *Krwawe drogi*, Z. Nałkowska, *Tajemnice krwi*, W.S. Reymont, *Za frontem*, K. Wierzyński, *Granice świata*), World War II (Z. Nałkowska, *Medaliony*, W. Solski, *Opowieść o Szwejku*, K. Wierzyński, *Pobojowisko*), and in particular, the following themes: German concentration camps (T. Borowski, *Kamienny świat*, J. Andrzejewski, *Noc*), Soviet labor camps (H. Naglerowa, *Kazachstańskie noce*, P. Bednarski, *Błękitne śniegi*), and the Katyń massacre (W. Odojewski, *Zabezpieczanie śladów*, J. Trznadel, *Z popiołów czy wstaniesz? Opowiadania "stamtąd"*). A robust group of cycles is devoted to themes of the Holocaust (A, Sandauer, *Śmierć liberała*, J. Mauer, *Liga ocalałych*, K. Żywulska, *Pusta woda*) as well as Martial Law (J. Anderman, *Brak tchu*, D. Terakowska, *Guma do żucia*). The fragmentary form of these stories perfectly accommodates the nature of the experiences described, capturing their lack of linearity.

Jakowska divides her next group of cycles - the portrait cycle - into "character sketches," "galleries," cycles of naturalist portraits, and realist portraits. The so-called "character sketches" are "strings of small narrative forms collected together (…) as a rule deprived of a definitive end".[15] These have been created since antiquity, and are situated at the border between the cycle and the series. Long ago, character sketches were distinct for their satirical character, although in the twentieth century they deftly tackled psychological and social themes (Zofia Nałkowska's *Charaktery*) and even wartime themes (*Charaktery dawne i ostatnie*, also by Nałkowska). "Galleries", in turn, present images and physiological sketches compiled into collections. They might also be called "albums". They can have a satirical character (A. Niewiarowski, *Galeria panien na wydaniu*) or a nostalgic one (M. Bałucki, *Typy i obrazki krakowskie*). Portrait cycles began to appear towards the end of the nineteenth century and into the twentieth century, most often consisting of short stories or novellas. The most prevalent theme of the portrait cycle is the problem of evil. Among acclaimed portrait cycles, a few deserve our attention: *One* by G. Zapolska and *Zawody* by J. Kaden-Bandrowski. The last type of portrait cycle is the realist portrait, created towards the end of the nineteenth century (M. Konopnicka, *Moi znajomi*, E. Orzeszkowa, *Melancholicy*), in the interwar period (M. Dąbrowska, *Ludzie*

[13]K. Jakowska, *O cyklu opowiadań. Z teorii i historii cyklu narracyjnego w Polsce*, Wydawnictwo Uniwersyteckie Trans Humana, Białystok 2011, p. 25.

[14]Ibid. 13.

[15]p. 40.

stamtąd, M. Kuncewiczowa, *Dwa księżyce*, H. Boguszewska, *Ci ludzie*), and rarely in the present day. Realist portraits portrayed individual characters immersed in the events and realities of their times. Their protagonists are often assembled together on the basis of contrast – the author selects people coming from diverse environments and representing various viewpoints.

The third group is the autobiographical cycle, which "maps the life cycle of the narrator-protagonist-author, creating a type of *bildungsroman* contained within a story cycle."[16] This genre evolved out of the autobiographical passions of writers from the twenty-year interwar period. The 1920s and 1930s are rich with cycles portraying the experience of young individuals who grew up in an age that was not free – these include J. Kaden Bandrowski's *Miasto mojej matki* and M. Dąbrowska's *Uśmiech dzieciństwa*. Cycles from the 1980s and 1990s portray the life of young people growing up in socialist Poland – K. Nowicki's *Drugie życie* and M. Nowakowski's *Portret artysty z czasów dojrzałości* are two examples.

The fourth group is the philosophical cycle, or the issue-based cycle, which tends to mobilizes psychological and social themes. Its lineage reaches back to antiquity. In the twentieth century, cycles of this kind most often expressed the sentiment of a disharmonious world (A. Wat, *Bezrobotny Lucyfer*, W. Gombrowicz, *Pamiętnik z okresu dojrzewania*, E. Stachura, *Jeden dzień*). The last group is the intertextual cycle, which is based on another literary text, such as a prayer (G. Zapolska, *Modlitwa pańska*), a catechism (R. Tomczyk, *Uczynki miłosierne*), or perhaps on the template of the institution of marriage (Z. Nałkowska, *Małżeństwo*). A dialogue with the cycle's primary source yields a proliferation of meanings and allows the reader to discern additional senses behind the words.

According to Jakowska, to form a history of research on the literary cycle in Poland, one must prioritize tracing a history of frames, or "the most visible, external factor integrating the story cycle". In classical Polish representations, the cycle's frame had a distinctly narrative character. The frame often provided its own plot in which the cycle was embedded. In the eighteenth century and even into the nineteenth century, writers were still attempting to work towards a narrative whole. With the passage of time, the plot-oriented frame fell into disuse, although the author's obligations to a story cycle continue to include the "creation of a narrating character and the development of the story's scenario: the exposition of where the story is being told and who is listening."[17] Novel series of the late nineteenth century no longer have an autonomous narrative framework that contains its own plot. Its tone becomes "rambling" – most often belonging to the first-person voice of the author, weaving playfulness together with a "serious" moralizing tone, and being self-referential and free in its composition.

The next change took place with the advent of the naturalist cycle. In this case, the rambling format gave way to a subjective frame with poetic attributes, especially in the works of the Young Poland movement. In twentieth-century stories, the frame was replaced with

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[16] K. Jakowska, *Cykl opowiadań próba historii. Intuicje i sugestie*, in: *Cykl literacki w Polsce*, ed. Krystyna Jakowska, Barbara Olech and Katarzyna Sokołowska, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu w Białymstoku, Białystok 2001, p. 43.

[17]Ibid, p. 44.

other means for tying together a cycle's constituent texts. Among these Jakowska mentions: "a chronological series of events, wordplay between the titles, a citation from the text's introduction in its conclusion, a logical system, or reference to a template external to the text."[18] Stories concerning World War II are distinct for their return to the frame, most likely due to the renewed need to establish credibility for the described events. The frame is likewise reinforced quite visibly in stories from the 1980s and 1990s. In *The Walls of Hebron* (*Mury Hebronu)*, Stasiuk links the last story directly to the first. Leszek Elektrowicz's cycle opens with a "Prologue", and closes with an "Epilogue", a decision that Jakowska interprets as an indication of contemporary writers' compulsion to solidify the frames of their story cycles.

[18]Ibid, p. 45.

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Patrycja Malicka

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KEYWORDS

cykl problemowy

linked system

POETIC CYCLE

concentric system

cyclical system

cyclicality

lyrical cycle

cycle

annular system

Abstract:

This entry attempts to demonstrate the linkages and distinctions that emerge between descriptions of the literary cycle, the novel sequence, and the poetic cycle in the context of the prose cycle, as well as to summarize the current state of research on these issues in Poland. Although research into the matter of cyclicality had already drawn the interest of Russian Formalists, this theme sparked interest in our own country as late as the 1990s, mainly at the initiative of scholars from the University of Białystok's Faculty of Philology. This text attempts to systematize concepts of cyclicality in the prose context with the help of scholarship by Krystyna Jakowska, Bogumiła Kaniewska, Jan Trzynadlowski and Rolf Fieguth.

novel sequence

prose cycle

literary cycle

HISTORICAL CYCLE

portait cycle

autobiographical cycle

philosophical cycle

ISSUE-BASED CYCLE

INTERTEXTUAL CYCLE

Note on the Author:

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Research On
The Literary Cycle
In Poland

Patrycja Malicka

Research on the narrative cycle was initiated by Russian Formalists as early as the 1970s. In Poland, however, this issue did not spark much interest. It was only in the 1990s that scholars began to turn their attention to themes associated with cyclical works, although their research was mainly confined to the poetic cycle. Wiesława Wantuch became particularly preoccupied with this subject. In her text *On the Cycle of Lyric Poetry* (*O poetyce cyklu lirycznego*)[1] she not only defines the criteria for the cycle in a poetic context, but also evokes all available theories (including those of Stefania Skwarczyńska and Janusz Sławiński)[2] and ultimately offers her own definition of the poetic cycle:

> The poetic cycle is a composition pulled between two poles: it strives towards closure, exposing specific properties of its structure, which is not the sum of its parts, and towards the autonomy of each individual work entering into the array. Depending on which of these tendencies prevails over the other, it becomes possible to identify three main types of cyclical systems: concentric, linked, and annular (ring-shaped).[3]

Wantuch's text also provides an overview on the subject of the cycle as a basis for composition. Following Jerzy Ziomek, Wantuch recalls that the cycle is defined by its "fragmentary quality, a kind of game between autonomy and coherence on both levels of its structure: each work is a closed whole, but nonetheless is an indispensable element displaced from the total composition. These factors establish a certain compositional dynamic that informs the integration of various genres within the category."[4] According to Wantuch, "various tensions between the lyric and the epic determine the form and coherence of the cycle".

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[1] W. Wantuch, *O poetyce cyklu lirycznego*, in: *Miejsca wspólne. Szkice o komunikacji literackiej i artystycznej*, ed. Edward Balcerzan and Seweryna Wysłouch, Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe, Warsaw 1985, p. 42-62.

[2] See Stefania Skwarczyńska, *Wstęp do nauki o literaturze*, Warszawa 1954, p. 458; *Hasło cykl powieściowy, cykl literacki, cykl nowelistyczny*, in: *Słownik terminów literackich*, ed.. Janusz Sławińskie, 2nd edition, Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich, Wrocław 1989, p. 79

[3] W. Wantuch, *O poetyce cyklu lirycznego*, op.cit. p. 43.

[4] Ibid, p. 53.

Similar observations on the theme of the Polish poetic cycle appear in the writing of Rolf Fieguth, a Slavist of German origin. His most productive texts include *Poetry in its Critical Phase and Other Readings from Polish Literature* (*Poezja w fazie krytycznej i inne studiach z literatury polskiej*, Izabelin 2000) as well as *Scattered Branches. The Cycle and Associative Compositional Forms in the Work of Adam Mickiewicz* (*Rozpierzchłe gałązki. Cykliczne i skojarzeniowe formy kompozycyjne w twórczości Adama Mickiewicza*, Warsaw 2002). His remaining texts fell under the auspices of the project *The European Poetic Cycle: Poetry and History of the "Derivative" Genre* (*Europejski cykl poetycki: poetyka i historia gatunku „pochodnego"*), which was conceived and spearheaded by Fieguth himself. Fieguth's achievements have inspired Polish scholars to take a closer look at the cycle. This became the subject of the volume *From Kochanowski to Mickiewicz. Essays on the Polish Poetic Cycle* (*Od Kochanowskiego do Mickiewicza. Szkice o polskim cyklu poetyckim* Warsaw 2004), by a group of scholars working with Bernadetta Kuczera-Chachulska.

At about the same time, in 2000, a series of publications came out of Białystok that addressed themes of cyclicality not only in poetry, but in prose as well, and ultimately in other fields of art, such as painting and music. Under the banner of the series *Concerning the Cycle* (*Wokół cyklu*), the Faculty of Philology at the University of Białystok published the following titles: *The Literary Cycle in Poland* (*Cykl literacki w Polsce*, 2001), *The Cycle and the Novel* (*Cykl i powieść*, 2004), *Semiotics of the Cycle. The Cycle in Music, Art and Literature* (*Semiotyka cyklu. Cykl w muzyce, plastyce i literaturze*, 2005), and finally, *Cycles and Cyclicality: Essays Dedicated to Professor Krystyna Jakowska* (*Cykle i cykliczność. Prace dedykowane pani profesor Krystynie Jakowskiej*, 2010). Aside from these contributions, several texts have appeared that analyze cyclicality in the oeuvres of specific authors. Among these, it is worth naming Ewa Szczepkowska's publication, *Włodzimierz Odojeski's Podil Cycle. Characters. Landscapes. Territories of Memory.* (*Cykl podolski Włodzimierza Odojewskiego. Postacie. Krajobrazy. Obszary pamięci*, Warsaw 2002).

The narrative cycle as a subject has been most thoroughly theorized in the scholarship of Krystyna Jakowska. In her book *On the Story Cycle. On Theory and the Narrative Cycle in Poland* (*O cyklu opowiadań. Z teorii i cyklu narracyjnego w Polsce*, 2011), Jakowska summarizes the current state of research on this subject and uses a broad spectrum of examples to chronicle the narrative cycle throughout the ages. Her method is both theoretical and in keeping with a broader literary history. In her text *The Story Cycle: An Attempt at a History. Intuitions and Proposals* (*Cykl opowiadań próba historii. Intuicje i sugestie*), Jakowska attempts to historically map the narrative cycle as a genre. She also proposes her own typology of the cycle: the historical cycle, the portrait cycle, the autobiographical cycle, the "philosophical" or issue-based cycle, and the "intertextual" cycle.[5] Each of the above types has its own place in the history of literature, although only a few of them have been adequately recognized in any contemporary history of the genre. As Jakowska has emphasized, however, it is quite clear that a history of the cycle deserves its own place within contemporary theory. There is a need for scholars who will scrutinize both the origins of the cycle in classical Poland, as well as those from the turn of the century, the interwar period, and in contemporary publishing. Jakowska's students have enthusiastically taken up this trajectory of research, and have closely examined specific iterations of the poetic cycle on the scale of centuries, identifying points where they meet, and where they diverge.

[5] K. Jakowska, *Cykl opowiadań próba historii. Intuicje i sugestie*, p. 37-47, in: *Cykl literacki w Polsce*, ed. Krystyna Jakowska, Barbara Olech and Katarzyna Sokołowska, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu w Białymstoku, Białystok 2001.

In addition to literary histories of the cycle, the genealogical theme is also a significant thread of research. Many scholars discuss the story cycle exclusively in terms of its composition,[6] which results in too severe a simplification. That the narrative cycle constitutes a genre is clear: after all, it is bordered by the short story on one end, and the novel on the other. Moreover, at the junction between cycle, story and novel, an entirely new form has emerged, called the "omnibus novel", which can be read either as a novel or as a collection of stories.[7] Bogumiła Kaniewska, among others, has written substantially on the similarities and distinctions between the cycle and the novel:

> The novel and the narrative cycle in fact have much in common: both genres grew out of a need for a somewhat comprehensive portrait of the world. Both make use of various forms of correspondence and introduce a relatively broad cast of characters. They activate a number of motifs and tend to cover a rather extensive stretch of space or time. In their classically structured forms, their plots are logically organized. The differences, however, are most pronounced on three levels: composition, reception and the inner workings of the text.[8]

As Kaniewska emphasizes, in the novel we encounter the predominance of the whole over the fragment, while the cycle, by contrast, is organized differently: in this case, the fragment dominates the whole. The cycle and the novel also differ in terms of the reading strategies they incite. The novel is linear and continuous. It develops over the course of the reader's journey, while the cycle "envisions a certain *parallel quality* for its reception: its individual pieces are in fact read in a determined order – usually one imposed by the author – but behave autonomously and occupy the reader's consciousness as wholes in themselves, arranged side by side". Reading the novel in fragments, the reader becomes quite aware that the order has been somehow disrupted in advance. When reading a cycle, however, the reader feels "authorized" to read selected stories or fragments and omit the rest, given that "such an action is written into the very poetics of the cycle."[9] The novel is always treated as one linear and continuous text, while the cycle, even one that is impeccably organized, will always remain a collection of distinct, autonomous texts. On the other hand, in contemporary Polish prose, we see more and more instances of authors resigning from features like finality, coherence and continuity, in favor of an asymmetricality of narrative, events and their sequence. This shift renders the contemporary novel closer to the story cycle, which in turn reveals the influence of the cycle on the novel's form. Kaniewska's examples of novels influenced by the poetic cycle include Andrzej Stasiuk's *Nine* (*Dziewięć*) and Olga Tokarczuk's *Primeval and Other Times* (*Prawiek i inne czasy*). Kaniewska concludes her argument with the claim that "the relationship between the novel and the cycle cannot be summarized as the impact of one form on the other – it becomes necessary here to speak of a certain common sphere, a sphere of common possibilities that both genres employ to an even degree."[10]

Defining the narrative cycle on the basis of its contrast with another genre paves the way for a coherent definition. For Jakowska, the narrative cycle is

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[6] See Jan Trzynadlowski Kompozycja cyklu literackiego, "Acta Universitatis Wratislaviensis. Prace literackie IX", issue 67, Wrocław 1967.

[7] K. Jakowska, *O cyklu opowiadań. Z teorii i cyklu narracyjnego w Polsce*, Białystok 2011, p. 15.

[8] B. Kaniewska, *Między cyklem a powieścią*, in: *Cykl literacki w Polsce*, Białystok 2001, p. 23-35

[9] Ibid, p. 26.

[10] Ibid, p. 34-35.

a collection of various stories in which each story forms a finished whole, and yet all of them are tied together. Due to their coherence, the entirety of the cycle relates to each of its constituent stories as an overarching whole – one that is both semantic and compositional. Each story, then, through its proximity to the cycle, modifies its own meaning – its meaning becomes new and greater than when we read it in isolation.[11]

Jakowska's list of the most common linkages between the individual stories comprising a cycle includes: a visible compositional frame, the narrator's attitude, a problem, theme, identified hero, portrayed world, and language attributes (as well as thought structures). All works deserving the term "narrative cycle" activate these features.

Scholarship on the Polish narrative cycle often focuses on a particular author's body of work. Ewa Szczepkowska has studied the work of Włodzimierz Odojewski precisely in terms of its cyclicality and recurrent motifs. Szczepkowska has already analyzed the writer's Podil cycle in her book *Włodzimierz Odojeski's Podil Cycle. Characters. Landscapes. Territories of Memory* (*Cykl podolski Włodzimierza Odojewskiego. Postacie. Krajobrazy. Obszary pamięci*, Warsaw 2002), as well as in her text *Concerning the Twilight of the World* (*Wokół zmierzchu świata,* on the matter of the narrative cycle in Odojewski's work) which is included in the above-mentioned volume *The Cycle and the Novel* (*Cykl i powieść*, Białystok 2004). Echoing Inga Iwasiów, Szczepkowska notes that the "opposition between the fragment and the whole becomes the basis for the Podil cycle's construction, ultimately proving to be Odojewski's finest narrative technique."[12] The author's entire oeuvre reveals a tension between the fragment and the whole. While reading Odojewski's individual stories, we often must refer to the remaining stories in the volume, or even to texts located in other volumes that are called to mind by a specific person, place or feeling.

The stories of the volume *Forgotten, Not Extinguished* (*Zapomniane, nieuśmierzone*) are tied together by the theme of emigration. The cycle's unity is developed through the introduction of a subject – through that subject's loneliness and sense of alienation. The writer obscures the hero's individual characteristics, and in this way imbues the whole volume with universal meaning. The linking factor of the volume *Let Us Go, Let Us Go Home* (*Jedźmy, wracajmy*) is chronology: the cycle begins during the war and culminates in an emigrant's tale. Moreover, scattered throughout the collection are the author's signature themes and motifs: war, revenge, and the impossibility of reconciling the past. In *No Air* (*Bez tchu*), meanwhile, we can discern a certain autobiographical and commemorative feature, since the author self-reflexively incorporates signals of a "unifying whole" throughout the volume. The analysis presented here allows us to note changes that structure a single author's career over a period of time.

To conclude, it is worth adding that research on the cycle in Poland has not been confined to literary material, but has extended into fields such as music and the arts. This bears witness to the far reach of these themes and to the new possibilities that continue to appear as we develop them.

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[11]K. Jakowska, O cyklu opowiadań. Z teorii i cyklu narracyjnego w Polsce, Białystok 2011, p. 25.
[12]I. Iwasiów, Podążając za Katarzyną – szkic o prozie Odojewskiego, in: Odojewski i krytycy, p. 202.

KEYWORDS

Wiesława Wantuch

studies of cyclicality

literary cycle

narrative cycle

PROSE CYCLE

Abstract:

This article discusses the state of research on the category of the cycle in Polish literature, against the backdrop of European scholarship. At first, the theme of cyclicality particularly interested scholars in reference to lyric poetry. Here, it is worth naming the contributions of Stefania Skwarczyńska, Janusz Sławiński, Wiesława Wantuch, Jerzy Ziomek and Jan Trzynadlowski. Since 2000, driven in part by the work of the German Slavist Rolf Fieguth, we can chart a significant rise in interest in this category among Polish scholars – in lyric poetry and prose alike. The subject becomes especially important in Białystok circles, where scholars under Krystyna Jakowska's stewardship published a series of publications that meticulously analyzed these themes. Noteworthy titles among these include: *The Literary Cycle in Poland* (*Cykl literacki w Polsce*, 2001), *The Cycle and the Novel* (*Cykl i powieść*, 2004), *Semiotics of the Cycle. The Cycle in Music, Art and Literature* (*Semiotyka cyklu. Cykl w muzyce, plastyce i literaturze*, 2005), and finally, *Cycles and Cyclicality: Essays Dedicated to Professor Krystyna Jakowska* (*Cykle i cykliczność. Prace dedykowane pani profesor Krystynie Jakowskiej*, 2010).

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Borys Szumański

An Experimental History of Literature?

critics :
Franco Moretti *Graphs, Maps, Trees: Abstract Models for a Literary History*, Translated by Tomasz Bilczewski and Anna Kowalcze-Pawlik, Krakow 2016.

Graphs, maps, and trees: these three discrete yet interrelated figures are proposed for a history of literature by Franco Moretti, world-renowned comparativist and literary scholar, in the book he published in 2005. It was only last year, however, that the book made its way into the hands of Polish readers in the form of a new translation by Tomasz Bilczewski and Anna Kowalcze-Pawlik. The book is innovative in that it vehemently calls for the integration of a new feature into the scope of literary history. As a kind of academic manifesto, it poses new questions articulately and directs its readers toward new ways of thinking and pursuing research, with a great potential for provoking controversy.

Graphs, maps, trees… these features populate the book with which Moretti officially breaks into the arena of Polish culture and science. This book is the fifth in a series of seven of Moretti's monographs. It is situated somewhere past the halfway mark, as it were, of the Italian scholar's body of work. Yet this publication stands out as the very foundation of the hermeneutic method

that Moretti, as a scholar rooted in Marxist critique and working in the English (and German) department(s) at Stanford University in California, has diligently developed over years of work. Through a materialistically conceived history of a literature (in particular of the novel) and by attempting to comparatively grasp in one stroke a whole plurality of languages and cultures, Moretti's preoccupations compelled him to develop the method he calls "distant reading" – a method explicitly intended to push back against the practice of close reading developed on American soil and turn instead to quantitative methods for literary studies, supported by empirical research.

Moretti's book, freshly translated into Polish, grew out of a several year-long project that, through energized attempts and extrapolations, ultimately became *Graphs, maps, and trees…* The book draws from the hermeneutic methods of three distinct academic disciplines – in this order, sociology (and statistics), geography (in particular, geometry) and biology. The Italian-

born scholar attempts to usher these methodologies into the world of literary studies.

In the book's first section on graphs, Moretti adopts tools from the sociology of literature (in particular, statistics) to visually represent a model of the external parameters governing the popularity trajectories of various literary genres (the rise, duration and fall of their popularity) by applying quantitative methods. At first, the scholar focuses on representing trends associated with English-language literature from as early as the seventeenth century and as late as the nineteenth. He ultimately broadens the scope of his research to literary processes rooted in scattered moments in time and corners of the globe (France and Italy, India, Spain, Nigeria, Denmark, Japan) that are nonetheless subject to the same parameters. By this, I refer to the staggered and multifaceted development of the novel as well as the cyclical nature of emerging transformations that, when "read from a distance", reveal the evolution of literature to be paradoxical trajectory that betrays a tendency to maintain continuity within change. Taking examples from English-language prose, Moretti shows how individual subgenres emerge from the depths of history, flourish for an average of twenty-five to thirty years, and then vanish once more into obscurity. Moretti claims that a similarly cyclical dynamic in the history of English literature – although this cycle's intervals are shorter – shapes the alternation between women and men's domination of the publishing market. Moretti rationalises these revealed contingencies somewhat vaguely and cursorily, referencing biological and generational categories and pointing to the "naturalness" of the successive regime changes. These shifts allegedly responded to changes in the political sensibilities of various generations, and gave rise to a need for new and better forms of artistic expression as a tool for describing reality. It is worth noting that one of the foundational theses supporting Moretti's remarks is the Marxian-minded conviction that a form of literary art is always clasped in direct relationship with the ideological and political fabric of society that encompasses it.

This belief also surfaces in the book's second section, which is devoted to maps. Moretti describes the transformations unfolding in a specific genre – village stories. Works discussed include Mary Mitford's *Our Village,* John Galt's *Annals of the Parish* and Bertold Auerbach's *Schwarzwälder Dorfgeschichten*. Moretti lays out the eponymous maps to support his sketch of the parameters governing the world of the rural idyll, and to trace their transformations. Moretti treats the creation of maps as the preparation of a text for further analysis. This consists of reducing the text to specific categories, then abstracting the text and rendering it as a new artifact that amounts to something "more than the sum of [its] parts: [it] will possess 'emerging' qualities, which were not visible at the lower level".[1] In this sense, Moretti, as he himself admits, draws more from geometry than from geography. After all, he is interested in the spatial relations between the objects of his research rather than the representation of space. On this premise, he manages to reveal the cyclical trajectory of the rise of the idyll, within which the village becomes, in a way, the center of the universe. By identifying this feature in all the worlds he analyses, he unveils the dynamic of their transformations: the decentralization and disintegration under the pressure of the intrusive "outside", which entailed progressive industrialisation and the diversion of societal interests towards the cities.

The book's third part uses trees. In form and content, they reference the diagrams introduced by Charles Darwin to represent evolutionary shifts, using characteristic graphics describing morphological changes. In this section, Moretti draws from the premises of nineteenth-century theories of evolution in order to grasp the parameters

[1] Franco Moretti, *Graphs, Maps, Trees: Abstract Models for a Literary History,* New York 2005, p. 53.

governing laws of differentiation, selection and the exchange of (literary) genres. Referencing the principles of natural selection as they are culturally understood, based on mutation and adaptation to a (cultural) environment, the scholar attempts to execute his studies on a microscopic scale. Operating on the level of select characteristic features believed to be essential for a given literary genre (the cultural equivalent of the "gene", appearing in the figure of literary "phenotypes"), he attempts to reconstruct a series of divergences to which a given genre is subject, thereby *de facto* generating a hypothesis on the relationship between characteristic features and the environment that together determine the "survival" and success of the (literary) genre. In this section, Moretti focuses on the detective novel. Citing an example from the famous Sherlock Holmes series penned by Arthur Conan Doyle, alongside other detective novels of the period, he attempts to reconstruct the series of innovations (concerning the presence and role of the trace in the novel's structure), that determined the success of the analysed example. Moving backwards (from the branches to the trunk), the analysis takes on the form of the titular tree that successively branches out according to staggered moments of differentiation: dichotomized, inter-genre differences that together produce an image of a given genre's "evolutionary process".

The scholar's methodological vision is bold and incisive. As an aside, we might add that this is not only a theoretical vision, but one verified through practice in his work with students at the Stanford Literary Lab that he founded.[2] In a short and condensed form (excluding the introduction and afterword, the book fills about a hundred pages) *Graphs, Maps, Trees...* resembles a kind of academic manifesto. The American scholar is forthright about his position and the objectives that motivate him:

[...] within that old territory, [literature – B.S.] a new object of study: instead of concrete, individual works, a trio of artificial constructs – graphs, maps, and trees – in which the reality of the text undergoes a process of deliberate reduction and abstraction. 'Distant reading', I have once called this type of appraoch; where distance is however not an obstacle, but *a specific form of knowledge:* fewer elements, hence a sharper sense of their overall interconnection. Shapes, relations, structures. Forms. Models.[3]

Moretti's own notion of "distant reading" runs distinctly counter to the method of "close reading" proposed by deconstructivism. Taking, on the one hand, Russian Formalism and structuralism as its foundation, while referencing cultural tools on the other, the scholar attempts to develop a new model of research that is intended to be – markedly – expansive rather than alternative. "A more rational history of literature. That is the idea", comments Moretti further on in the book. The scholar presents this whole undertaking with a certain dose of nonchalance, as if his argument were petty, light and obvious. Yet in truth, it is quite the opposite.

We might interpret Moretti's rather serious vision for literary studies as a reaction to the current status of literary studies. Although Moretti never states this outright, it is not hard to come away with the impression that he perceives contemporary literary history as hardly rational, mired in scattered readings of individual texts, too incidental and detailed, never seeing the forest for the trees – losing a sense of the whole, which is to say, the whole literature of a given period and the entirety of historical processes grasped along a long timeline. Contemporary literary history, Moretti might argue, disintegrates into deconstructive "close (and treacherous) readings" of canonical works, while a whole host of books waits on the wings to be read. To notice these ignored books, it is not only necessary to

[2] All work developed at the Literary Lab is published in the form of so-called *pamphlets* on its official website: https://litlab.stanford.edu [26 June 2017].

[3] F. Moretti, p. 1.

tear one's eyes away from individual texts, but in fact to bolster one's reading with tools that allow one to transgress the borders of individual, human sight. In this sense, Moretti tries to undermine the contemporary tendencies prevalent in literary studies that are still current in Poland. At the very least they appear in Ryszard Nycz's significantly titled text *Cultural Nature, Weak Professionalism. Some Remarks on the Object of Literary Knowledge and the Status of the Discourse of Literary Studies (Kulturowa natura, słaby profesjonalizm. Kilka uwag o przedmiocie poznania literackiego i statusie dyskursu literaturoznawczego tekście),* published as the introduction to the volume *A Cultural Theory of Literature (Kulturowa teoria literatury).*[4] Generally speaking, although he remains interested in culturally oriented research, Moretti seems to withhold his opinion on weak professionalism and the current status of the discourse of literary studies. Although his observations lack a vengeful tone – and in fact are expressed in a light and welcoming attitude – he does propose a return (or perhaps the recreation from scratch) of a "hard methodology", and by implication, a "hard object" of study. It is rather telling that Moretti opens his book by citing from Robert Musil's *The Man Without Qualities* as a kind of allegation: the quote offers the image of a man seeking the golden center between literature and truth. Stating the issue thus, and in light of his remarks further into the book, we can ascribe to Moretti the stance of the scholar whose seeks to establish truth for the subject of literature. This idea seems as intriguing as it does grueling and ultimately problematic.

Moretti's methodological proposal poses a question that was last asked with similar emphasis over a century ago by Wilhelm Dilthey: the question of the very nature of the object of literary studies; of the method best suited for this research; and speculation (from the point of view of our knowledge today on academic discourse[5]) on the relationship that emerges between method, discourse and the object of knowledge they produce.

In attempting to confront this impasse, he discerns in the literary reflections of his time, Moretti reaches back towards a time before Dilthey's distinction between the natural and human sciences. On a certain level, he interrogates this division and redirects literary history towards scientific method. Referencing statistics, geometry and biology – an approach that Moretti believed would provide the opportunity to break free from hermeneutic individualism and perspectivism towards the scholar's accumulation of raw data, preparing – under ideal conditions – an objective and broad sample of material for analysis and interpretation. In Moretti's opinion, the great benefit of this new method would be the expansion of perspective on the one hand, and on the other, the very capacity to reference that external, empirical element that might usher in the unexpected, inconceivable, and that which surpasses subjective projections – the *demonstrandum* that demands explanation and appears to confront reality itself:

> And problems without a solution are exactly what we need in a field like ours, where we are used to asking only those questions for which we already have an answer.[6]

This would be that elusive "hard object" that might bring us into contact with reality. By that measure, this is something that would authenticate and validate the findings of literary research. This would offer the remedy sought after by so many scholars who feel frustrated and lost about

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[4] See. R. Nycz, *Kulturowa natura, słaby profesjonalizm. Kilka uwag o przedmiocie poznania literackiego i statusie dyskursu literaturoznawczego* [in:] *Kulturowa teoria literatury. Główne problemy i pojęcia.* ed. M.P. Markowski, R. Nycz, Universitas, Kraków 2012.

[5] See also: M. Foucault, *The Order of Discourse.* Inaugural lecture at College de France, December 2 1970. trans. I. McLeod [in:] *Untying the Text: a Poststructuralist Reader.* ed. R. Young, Routledge, Boston, 1981.

[6] F. Moretti, p. 26

the contemporary condition of literary studies – a literary studies that is "suspended in the void", as it were, incapable of unambiguous resolutions or generalizations, ready to stand by mutually exclusive claims, inconclusive, and whose social legitimacy lurks beneath a question mark. The methods proposed by Moretti provide (with one exception I will go into later) a certain purity of vision. The countless operationalisations, reductions and abstractions that underlie "distant reading" yield transparent and evocative forms and models that reveal at one glance "how things really are" in text and in literature. On this basis, we can formulate hypotheses and interpretations that illuminate the actual, objective state of things.

Moretti's vision might well come across as both inspiring and fortifying. It can shame and challenge one to make an effort. This vision is inspiring in so far as it opens up new perspectives for literary studies, and promotes a vision of scholarship that gives us the means to falsify claims. It is therefore located within the order not of interpretation, but of truth. It is shaming in that it reveals the insufficiencies that have plagued literary scholarship to this day (Moretti emphasises that traditional scholarship has in fact limited its focus to approximately 1% of canonical texts and authors, referring to the remaining 99% of all published books only sporadically or not at all, allowing them to instead fade into obscurity). His vision galvanises us to master these new skills and forms of knowledge that enable us to study literature in the spirit of empirical research.

There are undoubtedly disciplines within literary studies that might successfully apply (or already apply) the premises of research from the social sciences, if not from the hard sciences. Yet it is a suspicion all too humanist in nature that might object to scientific certainty with the following doubt: can literary studies in fact allow itself to be reduced to the form that Moretti proposes? One of the main features defining literature as the object of literary studies is that very resis-

tance to reductive thinking, peeking towards "something greater" that might have no place in other social discourses. Of course, literary studies should not be conflated with literature. Even so, I believe it should be possible to tether it close to literature. I find that the great value of literary studies emerges precisely in those moments when the discipline surpasses its own borders, loses the conceptual and methodological "ground beneath its feet" and allows itself to draw its borders from scratch. The special value of literary studies – so distinct from other discourses – might lie in its (self-)critical potential and its capacity to relentlessly question its own methods and earlier parameters. In other words, its ability to remain in constant motion.

It seems that the method Moretti proposes is not in a position to offer such things. Despite the fact that he devotes much of his book to the cyclicality of the processes governing literature (the cyclical trajectories and exchanges of literary genres, the ratios of writing by women and men on the publishing market, the worlds represented in village stories, the cyclical appearance and disappearance of literary forms in dispersed parts of the world), he himself structures his narrative in the spirit of progress. The subsequent sections of the book maintain the literary convention of an investigation, using a form of suspense that recalls the adventure or detective novel (the book, by the way, reads beautifully for this very reason). Moretti guides his reader (rarely detouring her into the backroads) along the path towards a shared resolution of the stated problem, along the way offering the thrill of emotion that accompanies the discovery of the concrete truth of the surrounding world.[7] The "distant reading" mod-

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[7] It is worth adding that in spite of his references to scientific method, Moretti does not offer any final conclusions: what is "real" in his book is simply its collection of graphs, maps and trees. Their explications, however, are rather informal and superficial. His explanatory hypotheses are intriguing, but are created ad hoc, as it were. For the most part, they are not ultimately problematised or resolved.

el proposed by Moretti operates on the axis of hypotheses and their falsifications. This can be easily spun into a statistical fiction which, paradoxically, significantly complicates applying this critical gesture to its own categories.

Speaking somewhat metaphorically, statistics – and here I am referring specifically to the book's first section on graphs – do not make it possible to transform the reader/scholar. Statistics might make it possible to redefine terms, but I fear that this does not amount to the same thing, due to the absence of the actual experience of reading. It is worth noting that the very idea of "distant reading" (in theory, for Moretti as a scholar is impressively erudite, seeing all sides of the picture and having much reading under his belt) has little to do with the act of reading as it is traditionally understood. There is no encounter with the book: instead, there is the encounter of the text (understood as a sum of words) with numbers, models, and methods. If reading takes place at all here, it is chiefly in order to create categories and operationalisations that might enable us to delegate further reading to the statistics program. On this basis, it becomes possible to generate graphs and continue the act of reading on a more abstract level. How are these two modes of reading different? They differ in how they place emphasis and allot time to the texts read. "Distant reading" devotes the most time to mapping out the research material and to creating categories and methods for grasping its "essences" (in this approach, citing this concept is not entirely unjustified), while significantly less time is left for interpreting and discussing findings. This is the precise inverse of the classical reading mode, according to which the process of reading and of interpretation run parallel to one another.

The statistical method in fact operates according to three parameters: quantity, intensity, and relation. It allows one to observe deviations from the norm, to falsify claims, and to compare values. It does not, however, allow one to yield much more

in interpretation beyond the inferences projected along the way, for it does not provide the freedom described by Nietzsche and many others, of the thinking subject linked to the object of his knowledge: it merely relocates the two. In the case of Moretti's method, the subjective burden of interpretation is displaced to a decidedly less dramatic place than it has within traditional literary studies, and a more convoluted way of categorizing and activating its data.

> The concept of genre is a crucial one for Moretti's book. Although literary genres form the very basis of his observations, their definition remains clearly outlined. It is only in the third section on trees that Moretti makes the following observation:

Take the concept of genre: usually, literary criticism approaches it in terms of what Ernst Mayr calls 'typological thinking': we choose a 'representative individual', and through it define the genre as a whole […] But once a genre is visualized as a tree, the continuity between the two inevitably disappears: the genre becomes an abstract 'diversity spectrum' (Mayr again), whose internal multiplicity no individual text will ever be able to represent.[8]

The dynamic notion of genre introduced in the section on trees, operating according to the criteria of characteristics and considering definitive shifts in time is a definite gain and interesting proposal, that Moretti manages to develop through his references to the methodologies of Charles Darwin. It is difficult, however, to suppress the impression that the critique of the genre articulated in this citation also refers to the book's first section on trees. It is clear that in using statistical methods, Moretti was not able to rely on the developmental, dynamic definition of the genre grasped in the third section. As Moretti himself has written – "whereas graphs abolish all qualitative difference among their data, trees try to *articulate* that

[8] F. Moretti, p. 76.

difference".[9] The question thus arises: how does Moretti define genres in the first section and build their taxonomy in such a way as to retain his findings in the form of graphs? Literary works rarely identify their own genres, and when they do, it is not necessarily a judgment in which we can blindly trust. Genre categories tend to emerge *ex post facto,* and while they can be said to be an indispensable element of literary production, they are not literature's object, but rather the object of the knowledge of literary history. It is precisely here that the question of operationalisation arises. By this I refer to the question of how and by which criteria we define data in such a way that we can use it as the foundation for a statistical program and its results, and render them as visualisations in the form of graphs. Moretti's own lack of an unambiguous position on this issue, along with the extensive bibliography that follows the book's first section ("Note on the Taxonomy of Forms") seem to suggest that the scholar classifies individual genres according to the formal and chronological definitions proposed by the authors of the articles and books he uses as his sources. To some extent, this is a relatable choice – the great volume of material that Moretti chose to include in his research demands the support of an expert's guidelines, but at the same time, they significantly impact the results. This state of affairs thus begs the question: is the regularity of the results produced by the research at Stanford truly the consistency demonstrated by literary texts? Is it not the derivative of a consistency and monolithic quality constructed on the very premises that the scholar critiques in the excerpt quoted above, invoking Mayr? And if so, then can we actually claim that we know anything more of that 99% of unread books? Or do we only continue – though this time, we cover our tracks – the extrapolation of our knowledge of canonical works taken as prototypes for defining genres, thus creating the very basis for the operationalisations and models proposed by Moretti?

Of course, my remarks might be unfounded, and it might well turn out that Moretti, as a seasoned scholar, has exhaustively thought through this issue of the fortuitous operationalisation that allows him to evade a simple repetition of categories developed by other scholars,[10] although he has given us no grounds on which to confirm this. By referencing statistical methods, he has neglected the elementary premises of hermeneutic process. When reading Moretti's book – or specifically, its first section– we never learn how many or what kind of books were used for analysis, or how their data was harvested to form the basis for defining categories, and by which criteria these categories persist, and finally, what method was used for conducting research and with what level of significance this research proceeded. The reader is deprived of all this information, and as a result, from the point of view of the empirical sciences, Moretti's references, his work, as it appears in the book, resembles popular science – impossible to verify and reconstruct. Of course, this cognitive form is relatable, to an extent. Moretti's book stands at the very fore of this kind of research, and for this reason, in order to garner interest and to make his work approachable, he must have had to simplify it a great deal. Moretti himself seems to describe the results included in the book as a mere springboard towards true further research. This does not change the fact that between his strong claims and his actual actions, a wide margin appears.

The marriage to scientism that Moretti boldly proposes seems intriguing for yet another reason. Through his appeal to science, Moretti confidently offers a remedy to one of the most critical infirmities plaguing literary studies:

[9] Ibid, p. 77

[10] This is an exceptionally difficult statement. Firstly, because an adequate genre classification of books that one has never read seems to be particularly strenuous, but secondly, because the very phenomenon of the literary genre – as Moretti himself as shown – has multiple meanings and is internally heterogeneous and always changing – and as such, it is difficult to submit this concept to a classification system that might satisfy the requirements of its disjointedness and competency.

[…] the study of national bibliographies made me realize what a minimal fraction of the literary field we all work on: a canon of two hundred novels, for instance, sounds very large for nineteenth-century Britain (and *is* much larger than the current one), but is still less than one per cent of the novels that were actually published: twenty thousand, thirty, more, no one really knows – and close reading won't help here, a novel a day every day of the year would take a century or so … And it's not even a matter of time, but of method: a field this large cannot be understood by stitching together separate bits of knowledge about individual cases, because it *isn't* a sum of individual cases: it's a collective system, that should be grasped as such, as a whole […].[11]

Moretti invokes the demon of the whole, on the one hand, in order to use him as a threat, and on the other, to promise to grasp him under his thumb. This argument might wield a certain influence, for it simultaneously invokes the anxiety and desire experienced by all literary historians. While the phantasm of the whole has remained dormant for some time thanks to deconstructivism that preferred in its place the poetic fragment or the text not yet fully grasped.[12] By citing the empirical sciences, he invokes the spirit of that exiled ideal – comprehensive, full reading – although he brings it to a new level. He proposes a paradoxical formula: the total reading of all existing works, made possible by the fact that, at the end of the day, not one of these works is actually read. This proposition offers the chance to realize the fantasy of comprehensive reading, while offering freedom from that ravenous, haunting ideal. For it promises total certainty. How many literary historians struggle everyday with a constant feeling that they have

not yet read enough, a discomfort spawned by literature not yet mastered. In this case, the idea of the whole coincides with identification as an expert, and bores its way out from within. If we define the expert of nineteenth-century literary history as the person who "knows everything on this subject", we also imply that this person has "read everything on this subject", and here we run into our pain point. While this state of things seems to have always existed, in so far as the expert was not defined by the number of texts, but by their accessibility – today, in the age of the internet and of omnipresent information, the awareness of this problem has become particularly rankling. As a remedy, we attempt – just as Moretti proposes – to delegate this work to programs and machines, tools that make it possible to step beyond the limitations of the human condition and to lean out towards the idyll of the whole. Since the use of supercomputers offers the promise of grasping the whole cosmic universe in one glance, why should it not grasp the whole universe of reading? This, however, leads to our next paradox, one tightly bound to the previous one: in order to clear the scholar's conscience, we delegate reading to machines that free us from the obligation of reading. As a result, in lieu of reading more, we read less and less.

Yet the elementary question remains: does "distant reading" in fact offer a comprehensive gaze? And the question immediately follows: what would actually constitute this comprehensive gaze? Scanning all literary texts on earth? Then what do we do with all the unpublished texts, hidden away in the drawers of writers waiting for better times? Or those texts lacking dates or titles, will these also be "read" or will they be discarded as an unclassified "miscellaneous"? Finally, how do we define literature and what texts does it include? Without doubt, literature does not only consist of literary texts, but of their social functions, their reception history and criticism, their popularity in the canon and their evaluation. These parameters turn out to

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[11] F. Moretti, p. 3-4.

[12] Pierre Bayard's book (despite its ironic, quipping tone) *How to Talk About Books You've Never Read,* speaks to the very contemporary nature of this problem. The book responds to this state of affairs and becomes a *de facto* guidebook, counseling its reader on how to manage the frustration (and shame) brought on by this unconditional ideal of the whole.

be blurred and difficult to grasp. And even if we managed to grasp them, would this "whole" really be so reliable? By what criteria can we sort these wholes in order to make use of them? Do we not simply convert the flood of letters into a vertiginous data dump?

The idea of a literary system, referencing Even-Zohara's notion of literary polysystems, has, according to Moretti, is more ideal and aspirational than actually attainable. The widening of perspective and attempt at "distant reading" – studying the contingencies that arise out of literature and literary texts is surely a wise idea worthy of our attention. Applying statistical methods to expand the scope and increase the probability of certain basic judgments about literature seems to be of great value. The true benefits of this notion, however, will be clear only when we take into account an awareness of our own cognitive and human limitations, associated directly with the limitations and insufficiencies of the methods we use. Empirical methods are also tethered to these limitations, and in this way, they too have no right to lay claim to a comprehensive gaze. I would therefore suggest that when Moretti speaks of comprehensive understanding, he is not referring to totalizing explanations that the method he promotes does not, in the end, facilitate. He is referring, rather, to the ability to grasp phenomena from many perspectives, understood in their broadest possible complexity.

This is when Moretti's remarks become the most intriguing. Leaving open the question of the Stanford scholar's methodological basis, we open up a space in which we can treat the sciences cited in his book as the source of discourses that the literary discourse uses in his work. In this sense, the discourses of the natural and mathematical sciences provide us with a whole host of metaphors, as well as new ways to think about, conceptualise, and represent data that might inspire the literary scholar.

This would be a paradoxical intervention on the "hardening" of the humanities, to draw out instead the consequences of academic languages submergence in discourse (and the resultant *de facto* surpassing of Dilthey's binary sketched above). This seems to be precisely what Moretti is doing. With his tone of nonchalance, along with a bit of boldness, he strives not so much for the premises and methods of the natural sciences, as for their special manners of speech and tools for describing and representing phenomena and – most importantly– visualizing them. In this sense, Moretti's book resembles a kind of thought experiment. At times – I must confess – a successful one. There remains no doubt that referencing statistics and biological morphology's methods of depiction has provided a catalyst for conceiving anew some literary phenomena, from fresh perspectives that lead to new and compelling conclusions. Although many of Moretti's premises and concepts lack a firm foundation (such as we might expect of strict scientific methods), it nonetheless seems that they are most of all intended to inspire thought and foster creativity, to pose new questions and develop new concepts. Referencing the image of morphological trees, and to a certain extent graphs and charts as well, leads to the integration and functionalization of a great wealth of genre distinctions. By this measure, it provokes us to recognize the homogeneity of the concepts available to literary studies, both from a synchronic perspective (as we cover so many different literary genres by speaking of "novels" and "poetry"), and diachronic perspective (specifically in reference to the awareness of genres' internal variations and transformations throughout time; the interrelations between genres – their moments of convergence and divergence. Transplanting evolutionary theory into the territory of the humanities does not seem entirely possible – as Alberto Piazza remarks in the afterword to Moretti's book – but the idea in and of itself, and moreover, the attempt to apply it in life, seems somewhat cra-

zy, but certainly intriguing and inspiring. It leads to an expansion into new questions and new approaches, enabling retrospective research of the latent "purposes" of genre transformations. It allows us to reach direct conclusions, as it were, about the cultural "environment", in which certain literary genres flourished. It thus offers a new narrative and new set of visual forms for the phenomena associated with literary history.

Moretti's appeal to objectivism and to a sense of rationality remains an unrealized postulate, which seems to be to the book's benefit. I believe this is because the discourse on literature suffers from an excess of rationalism and scientific ambitions, rather than their lack. It is also because Moretti's postulate opens up the discursive and visual potential of the natural sciences. Borrowing from this aspect of the hard sciences helps us reach more creative and refreshing insights for literary history. However much a method influences its object, so do experimental methods of research allow us to distill new and unexplored vistas.

The main benefit of Moretti's book is its capacity to embolden and inspire literary scholars. The book demonstrates how much we still have to accomplish in the field of literary history, encourages us to seek out new methods, and by this measure, inspires us to renew the very discipline. What's more, the book invites its readers into a laboratory of literary history – during individual research as well as meetings with students. Moretti shows us that not only can literature itself be experimental, but it can invite us to experiment ourselves: the expansion and cultivation of the methodological and cognitive joy of the procedure. Within the humanities, the ambitions of Moretti's method must be taken with a drop of irony as one of many possible discourses on literature. This should not, however, drive one to frustration or grief – to the contrary, it should be accepted as an incentive to explore and plunder the possibilities yielded in the en-

counter between (academic) culture and literature; the search for a way to creatively apply the premises and tools of other disciplines to our discussion of literature. How "scientific" this is can be measured not so much by objective, external criteria, as by the level of engagement, creativity, ingenuity and thought-provoking academic rigor, as well as the readiness to share one's ideas with others. One cannot deny these aspects of Moretti and his book.

When we speak of the translators' work, however, their task was not easy. Moretti's language oscillates between the gentleness and simplicity of spontaneous speech, on the one hand, and abstraction and specialized jargon, on the other. The scholar's tone betrays a palpable distance towards his owns statements, a tendency to joke and to construct long, complex statements resembling casual speech, in which the subsequent motifs are tied fluidly together. On this point the translators have acquitted themselves rather well. In Polish, Moretti's style becomes more verbose, its statements becoming more formal and precise. It seems that the translators came to an agreement that Polish scholarly discourse is not yet ready for this idiosyncratic marriage of casual, colloquial speech with the academic treatise. As a result, Moretti seems somewhat restrained in Polish, although he still reads as a scholar with a specific, idiosyncratic diction. A certain challenge in translating *Graphs, Maps, Trees…* is also posed by the matter of translating specialist terms (not only from the hard sciences, but from the humanities, as well), that Moretti uses amply in his writing. I am referring, for example, to the genre distinctions of English literature. Figure 9, representing British genres of the novel between 1740 and 1900, makes a strong impression. The translators decided to translate the genre distinctions introduced by Moretti (keeping their original names in parentheses), thus building a rather handy dictionary of English literary genres of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries that must have required

enormous effort, thought, and searching. It is not just any task of translation that is so bound to the work of localization and the translation of nuanced citations from world literature that the author often tacks onto the graphs, maps and trees of the book's title.

Aside from the countless stylistic trappings that turn clear sentences from the original into ones that, in translation, demand thorough reflection, the translation does not provoke any real reservations. I am unsettled, however, by the fact that the translators seem to have fallen into a trap to which they should have been sensitive, considering their work in translation studies. In the second section of *Graphs, Maps, Trees…*, where we read about the transformations of the British village, as described in John Galt's *Annals of the Parish,* we find the Polish-language text to feature such fragments as:

> Nowa rzeczywistość przestrzenna wbiła się mocno jak klin pomiędzy Dom a Świat, podporządkowując zarówno jeden jak i drugi element narodowemu rynkowi, w którego obrębie średni dystans pokonuje co tydzień, jeśli nie codziennie, za sprawą regularnych nowinek – książek, gazet, kwestii politycznych, a wszystko to w liczbie mnogiej – zjawiska te będą się mnożyć przez całe przemysłowe XIX stulecie. Z dawnej epoki cudów przeżyły tylko żółwie.[13]

In English, the excerpt reads:

> Between Home and the World, a new spatial reality has wedged itself, subordinating them both: the national market, whose intermediate distance is traversed every week, if not day, by those *regular novelties* - books, newspapers , politics: all plurals - which will keep multiplying throughout the industrial nineteenth century. From the Age of Wonders only a turtle survives. [14]

The translators handle many obstacles lurking within the text with grace, demonstrating their translators' toolkit. Naturally, problems do arise when, in translation, it is not clear that the new "spatial reality" that wedges itself between home and the world, subordinating both, is in fact the national market, as the original text clearly expresses. The "regular novelties" are not "phenomena" (*zjawiska*), but in fact, specific products, media and mediations that become widespread in the nineteenth century and wipe out everything but… turtles, of course? The presence of this slow, digressive animal provides a rather surprising coda to the subsection V in the section on maps, which addresses the end of the rural era and the dawn of industrialism. The motif of the tortoise appears two more times in the book: once within the text, and once within the description for Figure 20. I cannot say this with total confidence, but my guess is that the translators fell prey in this case to that same error that Stanisław Barańczak describes in *A Small but Maximalist Translation Manifesto (Mały, lecz maksymalistyczny manifest translatologiczny…):*

> In one excerpt of the seventeenth-century poet Richard Crashaw, he [Jerzy Sito – B.S.] mistakenly understood the English word "turtle" according to its basic contemporary sense of a "turtle" ("*żółwia*"), which gave him a springboard to paint the picture of a pair of lovers intwined together "like sweet little turtles wound into a ball" – a picture that moreover seems improbable to common sense speculations on the forms of intimacy technically available to that carpaced reptile of the Chelonia genus: this might well be a testament to the bravura of Crashaw's baroque imagination, if not for the fact that in the seventeenth century, the word turtle indicated the all-too-conventional "turtle dove".[15]

[13] F. Moretti, *Wykresy, mapy, drzewa. Abstrakcyjne modele na potrzeby historii literatury* przeł. T, Bilczewski i A. Kowalcze-Pawlik, WUJ, Kraków p. 59.

[14] F. Moretti, p. 49.

[15] S. Barańczak, *Mały, lecz maksymalistyczny manifest translatologiczny albo: Tłumaczenie się z tego, że tłumaczy się wiersze również w celu wytłumaczenia innym tłumaczom, iż dla większości tłumaczeń wierszy nie ma wytłumaczenia,* "Teksty drugie" 1990, issue 3, p. 46.

The turtle dove as a basic method for transferring information across long distances in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries seems a more compatible fit for Moretti's paragraph than a turtle. I offer this information mostly as a curiosity (albeit a meaningful one) rather than an accusation. Although Moretti's book is quite short, it references books and circumstances of distant epochs and places in an offhand but often cryptic manner. It is difficult, in these circumstances, to expect absolute knowledge on the part of the translator of all linguistic nuances and contexts associated with the original text. If we expect anything at all in such straits, it is that Tomasz Bilczewski, one of Poland's foremost translation theorists and comparativists, might recognize the fragment cited from Barańczak. This seems rather clear. And if he is in fact familiar with this text, then we can assume that this turtle that closes the paragraph should evoke some puzzlement or wonder in the translators, which ought to bring to mind the very problem Barańczak describes. If things proceeded otherwise, this might mean that the turtle did not catch the translators' attention in any special way and failed to prompt further discussion. This, in fact, is a problematic symptom, for it might hint towards a certain mechanical quality (perhaps done too fast?) of the work, that dulled their sensitivities, and a waning of the translators' interest. This impression is confirmed elsewhere in the text whenever Moretti's statements lose their signature, casual panache and in Polish, read as sanitised and obedient to academic discourse. Perhaps Moretti's dictions in the original and in translation could be approximated more boldly if the translators did not only understand what Moretti was trying to say on the level of semantics (in spite of Moretti's deceivingly simple agenda – or perhaps precisely because of it – this was an extraordinarily difficult task that the translators survive quite in tact), but attempted to grasp – even intuitively – the senses that emerge on the level of the pragmatics of expression, which

for this author, seem particularly significant and quintessential …

This book, brought to Polish readers in 2016 by Bilczewski and Kowalcze-Pawlik within a series by the publishing house Hermenia, is an important and fascinating publication. It offers a clear proposition for how we might think about literature, and fantastically fills in a gap in Polish literary discourse. With *Graphs, Maps, Trees,* the translators, on Moretti's behalf, renew the question of our picture of literary status and its current status (the question of its object and method), begging us to once more think through its premises and submit them to critique. In the end, Moretti's proposal is also an invitation to experiment with literature, and with the study of literature: to air out the cupboards of literary historians and step beyond them into a laboratory pulsing with life and creativity.

Keywords | Abstract | Note on the Author ● ● ●

KEYWORDS

l i t e r a r y   s t u d i e s

GRAPH

interdisciplinarity

ABSTRACT:

This critical essay is devoted to Franco Moratti's book Graphs, Maps, Trees: Abstract Models for a Literary History, whose Polish translation came out in 2016. Its critical focus rests mainly on the first figure of the triad proposed in the title, and assesses the Stanford comparativist's strategy for carrying over methodologies from the empirical sciences to the study of literature. The essay's commentary provides an opportunity to interrogate contemporary links between the humanities and the hard sciences. These reflections ultimately prompt us to question this division and, following in Moretti's footsteps, help us unearth new approaches to literary studies that take their cue from the discursive practices of the hard sciences. This essay does not take as its point of reference the experimental approach that Moretti proposes, but instead an approach of creative experimentation - provoking an attitude of openness and the impulse to cultivate new, counter-intuitive methods for revisiting classical philological concepts.

statistics

MAP

tree

NOTE ON THE AUTHOR:
Borys Szumański (1990) is a doctoral student at the Department of Polish Philology and Classics at UAM. He is currently writing his doctoral thesis, titled "Translation Discourse in the Light of Psychoanalytic Theory". His main interests include the theory of translation, representation, and psychoanalysis. He has studied the work of Edward Stachura and Rafał Wojaczek and postwar Polish prose. He occasionally works on language theory and the poetics of songs.

Angelika Trzcińska

A Generation (Not So) Passed?

A Study at the Crossroads

This 2016 monograph, in which the "'56 Generation" receives (yet another) round of scholarly reflections, might arouse the skepticism of some readers, who would be fully entitled to the following concern: do we need yet another publication revisiting an issue that has already, over the course of years, been more or less effectively resolved, yet continues to attract an impressive trail of research and voluminous coverage in newspapers and books? The simplicity of the answer reveals that the question is itself rather trivial. Of course there are aspects of this topic that, for any number of reasons, remain unexplored. Of course there are issues that, with the benefit of hindsight and with new tools developed, say, in literary theory, deserve, or perhaps require, revised consideration.

For all these reasons, the question stated above must be problematized. My intention here is not to negate this quandary, but to reveal the funda-

mental challenge embedded in any attempt made today to renew our understanding of this subject that has occupied Polish scholarly consciousness for years. This is related to the necessity of identifying, and perhaps even ranking, two particularly distinct trends that have emerged as research approaches. These might be described under the headings *multiplication* and *configuration*. The first approach intends to supplement or complete an already-existing body of research, perhaps by devoting attention to marginalized authors to expose concepts not yet observed, or by using hermeneutic methods that are continuously emerging in literary theory. The second approach consists of revisiting material that has already been analyzed: configuration, in this case, is not the superficial re-arrangement or assessment of research, but the work of revising and updating material to reflect a new perspective. Already-existing research remains present in this approach (even when that "presence" is construed negatively). To classify one of these approaches as more rigorous and in-

tellectually satisfying than the other is an individual choice (first, for the researcher making the choice, and then for the reader, who evaluates the choice and its results).

At this point, I should point out that the articles that make up the book *The '56 Generation. Authors. Works, Meaning* engage the distinction outlined above. The contributing authors, therefore, have the opportunity to realize the potential seeded in this methodology,   making this book intellectually valuable and at times revelatory, although this is the stated approach to the subject rather than its actual execution. To determine whether this book does, in fact, make good on this potential, I will undertake an abbreviated but polemical overview of the texts within this category. My objective here is to capture the current condition of the "generation" as a category and to finally determine how this book relates to this category, and how effectively the book explores it.

Generation – Incompleteness as the Basis of Duration

The concept of the "generational" in its most canonical and monumental meaning is first introduced by Kazimierz Wyka. Wyka authored a number of incisive reflections that had a significant impact on the work of German scholars (such as W. Pinder), whose radicality and prestige[1] would ultimately be the source of increasing methodological doubts. Lidia Burska has pointed out that "the concept introduced in 1963 in the book *Polish Modernism* (…) was in fact, as we know, formulated in the 1930s, when the author was writing his doctoral thesis."[2] Burska scrupulously explores this idea, identifying its strong and weak points and revising it to reflect contemporary socio-cultural realities. It would therefore be redundant to restate these claims here. It is, however, worthwhile to under-

score those concepts that symbolically reflect the radicality of the claims referenced above. In other words, Wyka popularized the notion of the "generational experience" understood as a "foretaste of the end of the world",[3] or an absolute experience that becomes the departure point for its participants' axiological and moral epiphany. Wyka also exposed the fatalist and deterministic role of the historical process.

Jan Błoński later adopted the methods introduced in *Literary Generations (Pokolenia literackie)* to support his classification of authors debuting around the year 1956. The clumsiness of the scholar's criteria soon became evident. As a result, aside from a critical review of the current state of things, his claims took on the pronounced character of postulates and directives:[4]

> To be quite clear: I do **not at all wish** [emphasis A.T.] for the heroes of young writers – and young writers themselves – to "**settle down**" (…). To the contrary, even today they often seem quite civil. **I do not want** them to suddenly forget the myths of uniqueness, anarchy, sentiment and so forth. **Instead**, **I long** for them – when grappling with the total available spiritual reality of the epoch – to transform both their own and their readers' feelings and understandings; I long for that which has been depicted in the figure of literary myth to be elevated to the realm of ideas.[5]

These personal directives quickly devolved into a retraction and cast doubt on the very basis for using the idea of the "generation" in this context. Even within the scope of one publication (*Zmiana warty*) the author speaks of the '56 Generation and "a generation – let's call it

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[1] Wyka understood a "collective generation" to be a defined group of people participating in an event that elevated them.

[2] See Lidia Burska, *"Pokolenie" – co to jest i jak używać?*, in: "Teksty Drugie" 2005, issue 6, p. 17.

[3] Jan Garewicz's phrasing. See J. Garewicz, *Pokolenie jako kategoria socjofilozoficzna*, in: "Studia Socjologiczne" 1983, issue 1. See also the definition of the concept: A. Nasiłowska, *O pokoleniach literackich – głos sceptyczny*, in: "Teksty Drugie" 2016, issue 1.

[4] See the books: *Zmiana warty* (1961), *Odmarsz* (1978).

[5] J. Błoński, *Zmiana warty*, Warsaw 1961, p. 141. See also the commentary on Błoński's argument: J. Brzozowski, *"Odmarsz", Jan Błoński, Kraków 1978: [recenzja]*, in: "Pamiętnik Literacki" 1980, issue 71/4.

– of '56", and admits to the allegations of other critics that his evaluations and judgments are ambiguous. Finally, only a few years later, he writes: "Sometimes it seems to me that I invented the whole problem of the "'56 Generation," the problem at the very heart of my book *Zmiany warty* – so little of it remains"[6].

While Błoński diagnosed a weakness among authors for failing to truly engage with the demanding but indisputably valuable framework of their "generation", contemporary scholars often point out the disadvantages of that same category, considering the flaws inherent to the very idea of the "generation". It is quite telling, however, that this reversal bears the mark of an intriguing superficiality (pozorność).

For a number of reasons, the notion of a generation invariably absorbs the features of contemporary academic thought.[7] In her article *Generation - What is This and How can we Use It? ("Pokolenie" – co to jest i jak używać?)*, Lidia Burska sets forth a concept that effectively captured scholars' attention. Namely, she highlighted the performative[8] and not moral status of this category, or, more broadly speaking, its axiological status. Counter-intuitively, this claim does not degrade the generation as a phenomenon. To the contrary, it grounds it, finding a place for it within contemporary thought.

Of course, Burska has acknowledged critics' tendency to fetishize the generation as a category but simultaneously calls for a change in perspective, which does not at all amount to a total abandonment of the concept.[9] Her remarks are also interesting for their emphasis on the role of the audience in classifying authors and phenomena as "generational".[10] This point can also be interpreted as an attempt to soften the category's borders.

Paradoxically, it is precisely the above-mentioned fallibility of the term "generation" that turns out to be an epistemically valuable if not fundamental source of the digressions above. To emphasize this point: the term's very incompatibility with changing social and cultural conditions broadly construed is a significant driver for the term's persistence in the minds of critics and literary scholars. The term lingers not only in the form of its absolute negation, but often amidst an attempt to restructure or reevaluate (perhaps with the clarity of hindsight) existing claims. All this has the effect of essentially rehabilitating the category as a whole.

The somewhat misleading form of the (never conclusive) "reckoning" with the generation as a category becomes quite visible in the book *"Contemporary" Generation. Authors. Works. Meaning.*

Generation '56. Authors. Works. Meaning.

This publication is organized into three thematic fields, as its subtitle suggests. The texts included in the first and most substantial section, *Meaning* interrogate the existence/non-existence of the category itself (as in "*Tail of a Comet,*" or, *Did the Poetic '56 Generation Exist? / "Ogon komety", czyli czy istniało poetyckie pokolenie "Współczesności"?)*, the conditions

[6] J. Błoński, *Odpowiedź na ankietę "Orientacji"*, in: *Odmarsz*, Kraków 1978. I cite from: A. Stankowska,"*"Ogon komety", czyli czy istniało poetyckie pokolenie "Współczesności"?*, in*: Pokolenie "Współczesności". Twórcy. Dzieła. Znaczenie*, ed. Z. Kopeć, J. Galant, A. Czyżak, E. Chodakowska, Poznań 2016.

[7] For example, see: A. Legeżyńska, *Jaka zmiana warty? Problem pokolenia w dzisiejszej literaturze*; A. Fiut, *Zmiana warty – po latach*; L. Burska *"Pokolenie" – co to jest i jak używać?*; A. Bielik-Robson, *Nie ma takiego pokolenia;* in the thematic issue of "Teksty Drugie" – *Powrót pokolenia?* 2016, issue 1.

[8] The performativity of this category becomes visible in literary critique, which projects certain phenomena and states of things rather than ascertaining and registering the present reality. See also: A. Stankowska, op. cit., p. 60-61.

[9] See L. Burska, op. cit., p. 31.

[10] See also, p. 29 (ibid).

and ultimate forms of its manifestation, (*'56 and the "Contemporary" as an Aesthetic Category* [*"Współczesność" jako kategoria estetyczna*]) and the status it attains against a backdrop of concrete events and phenomena, such as war, censorship and "Russianness" (*Censorship of the First Activities of the "Contemporary" Generation* [*Cenzura wobec pierwszych wystąpień pokolenia "Współczesności"*]).

The book's second part (*Authors. Works*) consists of articles that take specific authors as their point of departure (*Janusz Krasiński and the '56 Generation* [*Janusz Krasiński i pokolenie "Współczesności"*]), or literary phenomena (*The Narcissis(t/m) of the "Contemporary." An Attempt to Read the Prose of Ireneusz Iredyński through a Prism of Narcissistic Motives* [*Narcyz(m) "Współczesności". Próba odczytania prozy Ireneusza Iredyńskiego przez pryzmat motywów narcystycznych*]) or individual works (*"Clangor" with a Portrait of a Generation in Relief – Urszula Kozioł's Farewell* [*"Klangor" z portretem pokolenia w tle – pożegnania Urszuli Kozioł*]).

At this point, I should emphasize that the monograph's co-authors adopt an ambivalent attitude towards the term "generation", ranging from an exploration of the term, to denials of its usefulness and a turn to "safer" concepts. However, there remains no doubt that the issues mobilized in this book are inscribed with several years of exchanging views, which the reader more or less directly attributes to the category's ambiguity. In this way, the category of the generation becomes a metonymy for the entire academic discourse revolving around it. To understand the consequences of the concept, we can acknowledge the title chosen for the book reviewed here. Moreover, this formal gesture reflects one of the overarching convictions driving this publication: to give the category of the generation what it is due by highlighting its flaws and unquestionable merits alike.

In his contribution, Marian Kisiel offers a postulate we might adopt as the entire monograph's signature motto: "to read once more this idea of the 'contemporary' in this body of work." In this case, how we understand this uncapitalized noun becomes critical. This is not at all a matter of wishing or expecting, as was the case with Błoński's sense of "fitting" and "deserving" to be tied to one's generation. Above all, this is a matter of the real and attributed aspects of that "contemporary present" and how those elements became values in themselves, having a real impact on the formation of a comprehensive and dimensional portrait of the time:

> What is "modern," and therefore "contemporary" must reckon with two basic rights [undermined by the "drivers" of the generational – author's note]: the right to creative freedom (…) and 'the right to express the tragedy of experience.' And only when we bring this awareness to the category of the "contemporary" do we see the whole wealth of its entanglements and contingencies.

This attitude of proposing that we revisit and reevaluate this category rather than rejecting it wholesale is a recurring perspective in the monograph, and it supports the quality of its contents to a meaningful degree.

The authors of this publication consistently avail themselves of the benefit of hindsight. On the one hand, this allows them to make radical insights and to finally clarify many issues that had long been up for debate. It also allows them to propose new interpretive methods that had gone unnoticed.

Agata Stankowska's contribution is one of several in the book that makes use of this kind of two-way thinking. What Lidia Burska describes as the performativity typical of "scholars who think cultural initiation is conforming the world to the matrix of grand narratives",[11] Stankowska radically revises:

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[11] L. Burska, op. cit., p. 21.

Let us examine (…) in turn the performative act of the critic [J. Błoński], inscribed in the historical literary narrative thesis, or perhaps it would be better to call it the (never in fact completed) project of calling into existence the "so called" '56 Generation.[12]

The author describes the ramifications of Błoński's work bluntly: "The intellectual's mirror that Błoński places before the creative output of his generation surely renders its image close to caricature."[13] This statement asserts that the resignation from events that might constitute the "generational experience" is in fact conscious, and does not result from perceptive handicaps or a lack of creative aptitude. Finally, she poses a question that incites us to mobilize new critical perspectives: "Could it be that [Błoński's] assessment [of the generation] is not and never was too critical? After all, so many scholars still subscribe to it."[14]

The reader will find elsewhere in the volume this mandate to distance oneself from the critical voices marshalled towards a given generation and the need to problematize the objections unambiguously condemning one side of the literary critic-author relation. Anna Legeżyńska has written that "the ethical dimension of poetic turpism as with the prose of the "dregs" never received its due appreciation from Przyboś or from any of the critics of lyric poetry after October (…)"[15] She goes on: "(…) to accuse the alleged '56 circle of being apolitical and refusing to engage turns out to be a petty allegation"[16]. Ewa Wiegandt also notes:

It becomes necessary to verify the earlier judgment that it was literary criticism that created the generation of '56 (the "Contemporary" Generation). (…) For critics and writers alike, the category of the generation has become one that expands the autonomy of authors and their work (…).[17]

Undoubtedly one of the most engaging organizational methods employed in this volume is configuration, as mentioned above. Here, I understand configuration as a revision that problematizes, rearranging elements of an already existing assemblage (in this case, some form of consolidated image of the phenomenon referred to as the '56 Generation). The new configuration can be based on a formative analytical insight afforded by hindsight. Many articles in the monograph exemplify the effective usage of this concept.

In the second part of the book *The '56 Generation. Authors. Works. Meaning,* the reader encounters texts that have developed an arsenal of tools useful for describing phenomena. These tools broaden the scope of the subject by "installing" within it new elements from literary theory and history, and by mobilizing a set of tropes/motifs that are not new in themselves, but have not yet been applied to this context. The methods are then verified through the interpretation of literary works.

As an example, take Agnieszka Polachowska and her proposal to use Narcissus' motives as a reference point. According to Polachowska, this choice directs a tempo of reading that activates new and unarticulated interpretations. What's more, Polachowska's reading supplements the myths identified and categorized by Błoński as generational.[18] Moreover, it becomes,

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[12] A. Stankowska, op. cit., p. 60.

[13] Ibid, p. 65.

[14] Ibid, p. 57.

[15] A. Legeżyńska, *Współczesność – niedokończony projekt?*, in: *Pokolenie "Współczesności". Twórcy…*, op. cit., p. 45.

[16] Ibid.

[17] E. Wiegandt, *Pokolenie "Współczesności" a pokolenie '56*, in: *Pokolenie "Współczesności". Twórcy…*, op. cit., p. 15.

[18] See. A. Polachowska, *Narcyz(m) "Współczesności". Próba odczytania prozy Ireneusza Iredyńskiego przez pryzmat motywów narcystycznych*, in: *Pokolenie "Współczesności". Twórcy…*, op. cit., p. 216.

in fact, their fullest realization, betraying so many of those myths' characteristic attributes ("a feeling of distinctiveness/peculiarity and estrangement, disturbed erotic relations, and a powerlessness towards reality"). The scholar concludes that: "(...) to use the constant presence of narcissistic motives in literature as an interpretive tool allows us to identify the displacement of accents and meanings."[19]

Agnieszka Czyżak proposes another compelling perspective, this time focusing on the later work of Urszula Kozioł, the Wrocław poet who "bid farewell to her dependency on a generational community"[20]. Czyżak takes advantage of the potential embedded in the phenomenon of "the reckoning movement", which turns out to be a means for artistic positioning towards that which has passed. To emphasize, I describe here a positioning towards that which, in spite of everything, has been undergone in some form. Accordingly, it turns out that after all these years, the concept of the generation still operates and begs attention. The concept is finding a place for itself that is discrete yet irrefutable. And thus, its subsequent portrait emerges, this time in the form of art:

> And yet, by creating an *ex post facto* vision of the generational community, Urszula Kozioł does not speak of what historians of literature call the "generational experience" (…). What she has in mind is a community of existential experiences of diverse provenance whose sum total becomes a knowledge of the world and a position thereby determined that can both shared communally.[21]

The articles referenced here certainly do not exhaustively represent the sum of texts that merit attention within this book. To the contrary, we must treat them as the introduction to a promising whole whose unquestionable value becomes its unrestrained gaze at what has been – a gaze that is by no means regressive.

Finally, I would like to emphasize that the noted division in this publication between configuration and multiplication does not follow a trajectory that unambiguously coincides with its formal organization (Parts I and II of the book). To the contrary, in both of the volume's sections, we find traces of both methods for ordering knowledge outlined here. In the section titled *Meaning,* however, it is the configurative element that particularly grabs the reader's attention. Finally, the classification proposed here is but one of many possible means for organizing contemporary strategies for reflecting on the subject of the '56 Generation.

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[19] Ibid, p. 224.

[20] A. Czyżak, *"Klangor" z portretem pokolenia w tle – pożegnania Urszuli Kozioł*, in: *Pokolenie "Współczesności". Twórcy…*, op. cit., p. 239.

[21] Ibid, p. 247.

KEYWORDS

the generation today

The '56 Generation

literary criticism

Abstract:

This article's author performs a critical analysis of the ways in which the '56 Generation has been approached as a subject in a book published in 2016. The backdrop of these reflections includes, among other things, a polemical overview of the category's history, and the way in which contemporary intellectual thought relates to already existing and often still persistent views of reception. This scholar proposes two terms for organizing our reflections on the category of the generation: multiplication and configuration.

Jan Błoński

performativity

Note on the Author:

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