

# Thinking in Long-term Perspective and Synecdoche

Jerzy Madejski

ORCID: 0000-0003-2911-2770

*Wiek teorii. Sto lat nowoczesnego literaturoznawstwa polskiego* [*The Age of Theory: One hundred years of Polish literary studies*], ed. Danuta Ulicka (Warszawa: IBL, 2020); *Wiek teorii. Antologia 1* [*The Age of Theory: Anthology 1*], ed. Danuta Ulicka (Warszawa: IBL, 2020); *Wiek teorii. Antologia 2* [*The Age of Theory: Anthology 2*], ed. Danuta Ulicka (Warszawa: IBL, 2020)

A review of *Wiek Teorii* [The Age of Theory] (a monograph and an anthology)<sup>1</sup> should begin with emphasizing that it is a monumental study. It is an important undertaking in the field of theory (and other fields of literary studies), which can be compared to *Kulturowa teoria literatury* [The Cultural Theory of Literature]<sup>2</sup> and *Kulturowa teoria literatury 2* [The Cultural Theory of Literature 2],<sup>3</sup> Anna Burzyńska and Michał Paweł Markowski's textbook *Teorie literatury XX wieku* [Theories of 20th century literature],<sup>4</sup> and *Kulturologia polska XX wieku* [Polish culture studies in the 20th century].<sup>5</sup> It should also be emphasized, however, that this book is more than "monumental." It presents, by definition, a certain way of thinking about literary studies and the humanities in general.

<sup>1</sup> *Wiek teorii. Sto lat nowoczesnego literaturoznawstwa polskiego* [The Age of Theory: One hundred years of Polish literary studies], ed. Danuta Ulicka (Warsaw: IBL, 2020); *Wiek teorii. Antologia 1* [The Age of Theory: Anthology 1], ed. Danuta Ulicka (Warsaw: IBL, 2020); *Wiek teorii. Antologia 2* [The Age of Theory: Anthology 2], ed. Danuta Ulicka (Warsaw: IBL, 2020).

<sup>2</sup> *Kulturowa teoria literatury. Główne pojęcia i problemy* [The Cultural Theory of Literature: Main concepts and problems] (ed. Michał Paweł Markowski, Ryszard Nycz, (Kraków: Universitas, 2006).

<sup>3</sup> *Kulturowa teoria literatury 2. Poetyki, problematyki, interpretacje* [The Cultural Theory of Literature 2: Poetics, problems, interpretations], ed. Teresa Walas, Ryszard Nycz (Kraków: Universitas, 2012).

<sup>4</sup> Anna Burzyńska, Michał Paweł Markowski, *Teorie literatury XX wieku* [Theories of 20th century literature] (Kraków: Wydawnictwo Znak, 2006).

<sup>5</sup> *Kulturologia polska XX wieku* [Polish culture studies in the 20th century], ed. Andrzej Mencwel i inni (Warsaw: Wydawnictwa Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego, 2013).

After all, the monograph and the anthology edited by Ulicka are a major contribution in the context of other fields (including social sciences) as well. When it comes to the theory of history, several valuable anthologies were co-written by Ewa Domańska, including the extensive methodological study *Teoria wiedzy o przeszłości na tle współczesnej humanistyki* [The theory of knowledge about the past and the contemporary humanities].<sup>6</sup> It is a collection of translated texts, but it is the choice of texts that I would like to focus on. Domańska has collected articles on the methodology of history and other sciences that may be useful for researching the past. Ulicka aims to reconstruct Polish literary studies, although she also argues that it is impossible to define such (national, ethnic, geographic) fields.

At the beginning of the 21st century, a number of important anthologies in the field of the social sciences were published, including *Współczesne teorie socjologiczne* [Contemporary Sociological Theories]<sup>7</sup> and *Socjologia: Lektury* [Sociology: Selected texts].<sup>8</sup> These collections demonstrate the differences in the approach to the discipline and the concept of the anthology. Perhaps, they also reflect the approaches to the discipline in various research centers (Warsaw, Poznań, Kraków). This notwithstanding, *Współczesne teorie socjologiczne* was supposed to be representative of sociology in general in a way (also in terms of its organization as a volume). Compiled when the integrity of the discipline (in the context of other sciences) was being challenged, it still presents an integrative approach to contemporary sociological trends. In the introduction, Marek Ziółkowski refers to Walter Wallace's principles of scientific sociology.<sup>9</sup> Sztompka's anthology was original, in the sense that it justified the concept of the textbook of "Sociology."<sup>10</sup> In the introduction to *Socjologia: Lektury*, it is stated that the selection of texts is meant to "shape sociological imagination."<sup>11</sup> Therefore, the discipline itself is not the main focus, because: "Sociological imagination is necessary to fully and consciously participate in a democratic society."<sup>12</sup> Indeed, Sztompka describes his other work, *Słownik socjologiczny* [The Sociological Dictionary], in a similar manner. In the introduction, Sztompka thus describes the target reader: "The book is an indispensable resource not only for sociologists and students, but also for politicians, journalists, managers and local officials. In a word, it is an indispensable resource for every citizen who wants to live their life consciously and rationally."<sup>13</sup>

If we were to ask at this point how Ulicka's anthology relates to the above works, we would have to say that it is closer to *Współczesne teorie socjologiczne*. It aims to integrate the discipline into

<sup>6</sup> *Teoria wiedzy o przeszłości na tle współczesnej humanistyki. Antologia* [The theory of knowledge about the past and the contemporary humanities: Anthology], ed. Ewa Domańska (Poznań: Wydawnictwo Poznańskie, 2010).

<sup>7</sup> *Współczesne teorie socjologiczne* [Contemporary Sociological Theories], selected and edited by Aleksandra Jasińska-Kania, Lech M. Nijakowski, Jerzy Szacki, Marek Ziółkowski (Warsaw: Wydawnictwo Naukowe Scholar, 2006).

<sup>8</sup> *Socjologia. Lektury* [Sociology: Selected texts], ed. Piotr Sztompka, Marek Kucia (Kraków: Wydawnictwo Znak, 2007).

<sup>9</sup> Marek Ziółkowski, "Teoria socjologiczna początku XXI wieku" [Sociological theory of the beginning of the 21st century], in: *Współczesne teorie socjologiczne*, 25.

<sup>10</sup> Piotr Sztompka, *Socjologia* (Kraków: Wydawnictwo Znak, 2006).

<sup>11</sup> *Socjologia. Lektury*, 5.

<sup>12</sup> *Socjologia. Lektury*, 5.

<sup>13</sup> Piotr Sztompka, *Słownik socjologiczny. 1000 pojęć* [The Sociological Dictionary: 1000 terms] (Kraków: Znak Horyzont, 2020).

a situation where the influence of other sciences is threatening and the boundaries of theory are blurred, in Polish literary studies as well. To some extent, *Wiek Teorii* is a reaction to the warnings voiced during the 2004 Congress of Polish Studies in Krakow. Discussing the challenges that Polish philologists (would) face, Włodzimierz Bolecki referred to the professional status of the author of *Disgrace*, John Maxwell Coetzee. David Lurie, an excellent English scholar, an expert on Shakespeare and nineteenth-century English poets, teaches at a polytechnic university, a former university.<sup>14</sup>

Impressive monographs and anthologies have been published in other fields as well. A very good anthology of philosophy, *Przewodnik po literaturze filozoficznej XX wieku* [Guide to the philosophical literature of the 20th century], has been published recently.<sup>15</sup> The editor of the study justified its “ergocentric” nature thusly: “The book allows us to engage with the living philosophical thought, which cannot be replaced by any schematic presentation of any philosopher’s work, which is usually the case in various encyclopedias. We form an opinion about the philosopher’s concepts, their importance for a given philosophical field, as well as intellectual culture in general, having read their works. Another important factor is the reaction to the book, the discussions that it triggers, etc.”<sup>16</sup>

I mention these various studies, because they demonstrate how knowledge may be organized. Perhaps Ulicka considered other ways of organizing the history of theory than the monograph and the anthology. Still, out of many ideas that may be found in *Wiek Teorii*, only one could be fully developed. The introduction to the monograph, essentially a study in the field of methodology and the theory of knowledge, makes it clear that the past, also from the point of view of science, is a set of possibilities. Here is one example. Ulicka refers to Viktor Shklovsky’s text *Art as Technique* (1917). Rightly so, because in many studies, this article marks the beginning of modern literary studies in Poland. Shklovsky shows the difference between formalism and the earlier symbolist theory of poetry and introduces the category of *ostranienie* [defamiliarization]. However, Ulicka also mentions in the introduction Jan Michał Rozwadowski and his 1911 lecture entitled *Zjawisko dysautomatyzacji i tendencja energii psychicznej* [Dis-automatization and the tendency of mental energy]. Ulicka mentions *ostranienie* in the context of inventing an original concept at a given moment in time. And she further adds that Polish researchers mainly referred to Rozwadowski. It is an intriguing point, because locating the concept of the Polish literary scholar in the past and comparing it with Shklovsky’s concept could lead to different ways of writing history. And the different visions of past of literary studies are at the heart of the volume. In many places in the monograph, it is emphasized that we have “our” Polish history of literary theory. We only have to re-discover it. This is the case with *ostranienie*. We are familiar with this concept (because it is mentioned

<sup>14</sup>Włodzimierz Bolecki, “Pytania o przedmiot literaturoznawstwa” [Questions about the subject of literary studies], in: *Polonistyka w przebudowie. Literaturoznawstwo – wiedza o języku – wiedza o kulturze – edukacja* [Polish Studies in Reconstruction: Literary studies - language - culture – education]. Zjazd Polonistów, Kraków 22-25 września 2004, ed. Małgorzata Czermińska, Stanisław Gajda, Krzysztof Kłosiński, Anna Legeżyńska, Andrzej Z. Makowiecki, Ryszard Nycz (Kraków: Towarzystwo Autorów i Wydawców Prac Naukowych Universitas 2005, vol. I).

<sup>15</sup>*Przewodnik po literaturze filozoficznej XX wieku* [Guide to the philosophical literature of the 20th century], vol. 1-5, ed. Barbara Skarga, Stanisław Borzym, Halina Floryńska-Lalewicz (Warsaw: PWN, 1994-1997).

<sup>16</sup>Barbara Skarga, “Przedmowa” [Foreword], in: *Przewodnik po literaturze filozoficznej XX wieku* (Warsaw: PWN, 1994): vol. 1, 5.

in anthologies and textbooks), but we forget about Rozwadowski's "dis-automatization." And this is indeed serious, because *ostranenie* is one of those terms that is mentioned in the most important Western textbooks; of course, it is Shklovsky's term. For example, Burke wants us to realize how knowledge systems change in the process of recreating history.<sup>17</sup> Moreover, *ostranenie* has acquired a transdisciplinary status. Literary scholars, aestheticians, historians of science and contemporary cultural studies researchers all refer to it.

Indeed, grand narratives are in crisis, but Ulicka and her team manage to present the reader with their comprehensive, thoughtful, critical, and ingenious story about the past. An alternative approach to the history of the discipline is crucial in this respect. Ulicka states:

The price to be paid for organizing the space-time of modern Polish literary studies according to a different criterion is high: it runs the risk of suggesting that there was no Polish formalism, structuralism, phenomenology, hermeneutics and psychoanalysis, the sociology of literature and all these 'schools' and 'movements.' They existed but they also intertwined. They were situated in the border zones. The careful decision to avoid traditionally adopted criteria and concepts, apart from the reasons mentioned above, was also guided by a pragmatic approach: we did not want to evoke stagnant beliefs associated with them (M, 128).

Thus, *Wiek Teorii* is not ordered according to the traditional criteria of literary studies: the editor of the volume refers the reader to the existing studies and anthologies instead. The editorial team organizes twentieth-century literary theory in the context of its "long duration;" however, Ulicka refers to Stefan Świeżawski's "długomyślność" [thinking in the long-term perspective] instead. She also refers to Morris Opler's term "cultural themes" (M, 544).

The idea behind such an alternative history of the discipline is clear. However, the principle of selecting (specific) topics is not always clear. I do not think that it is controversial, but it should be explained. *Wiek Teorii* is actually structured as a textbook of poetics (subject, stylistics, genology, narrative, represented world, literature in relation to other arts, reference). Heterologies, specific borderline genres (as defined in different textbooks), are an interesting addition.

Let us add that the editor of the volumes, who is, considering her previous work, very well-prepared for such an undertaking, is not afraid to take risks posed by such an ambitious goal. For example, Ulicka was not afraid to entrust difficult tasks to the younger generation of literary scholars. They have taken on the challenge, of course; more than that, their individual voices are present in the respective texts. Each contribution demonstrates to the reader how the history of literature (and science) may be written. In this respect, Tomasz Bilczewski's text on the history of subjectivity, *Subiekt – obiekt – abiekt: „pajęczo wiotka tkanina”* [Subject - Object - Abject: "spider-fine fabric"], is intriguing and ambitious. Bilczewski discusses Konstanty Troczyński, Aleksandra Okopień-Sławińska, Ryszard Nycz, and Michał Paweł Marowski. This is an interesting and well-founded comparison. It is, for example, representative of particular phases of Polish literary studies. The subject is discussed in the formalist,

<sup>17</sup>See: e.g., Peter Burke, *Social History of Knowledge: From Gutenberg to Diderot* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2000): 10.

communicative, post-structural, and deconstructionist context. Moreover, Bilczewski draws attention to other notions of describing subjectivity that still crystallize in Poland. If I were to make a comment, I would possibly suggest not replacing but adding a text. For example, a good supplement to the concept of subjectivity would be a short text by Juliusz Kleiner, *Rola podmiotu mówiącego w epice, w liryce i w poezji dramatycznej* [The Role of the Speaking Subject in Epic, Lyric and Dramatic Poetry].<sup>18</sup> I refer to two concepts specifically. Kleiner's text is rooted in the aesthetics of expression. This tradition should also be represented in Bilczewski's text. Moreover, Kleiner's concept of the subject could be useful, after certain modifications, in the discussion of Janusz Sławiński's influential structural theory of the subject (*O kategorii podmiotu lirycznego* [On the category of the lyrical subject]). One could also ask whether Bilczewski ends his discussion on the subject too early. It continued in the 1990s and in the 2000s and sociological theories and philosophies and deconstruction played an important role in this discussion. Moreover, subjectivity was discussed in the monographs of contemporary writers (Witold Gombrowicz, Czesław Miłosz, Tadeusz Różewicz, Miron Białoszewski ...). Still, what is missing from the anthology can be found in the monograph. In the monograph, Bilczewski discusses the intriguing (and yet forgotten) 19th-century history of the subject and the latest postmodern concepts. In a word, in the monograph he presents the reader with the history of the subject from Maurycy Mochnacki<sup>19</sup> to Roma Sendyka.<sup>20</sup>

One of the important texts in the entire volume is Artur Hellich's essay on heterologies. It is an impressive study. I would like to draw attention to at least two aspects. First, Hellich's study shows the diversity of approaches in literary studies. He introduces various forms of academic writing, including the academic autobiography, the professor's study and the obituary, as well as lyrical (mainly folk) forms. Hellich analyzes these various forms in an interesting way. And they have been discussed in critical studies extensively. Special issues of (scientific and literary) journals on academic writing have been published, as well as monographs of academic genres,<sup>21</sup> and translations of classic works on the Western academic novel.<sup>22</sup> Secondly, Hellich analyzes academic writing in the historical and generational context. Indeed, autobiography plays a different role depending on the theory with which the authors identify. The status of Irena Sławińska's, Czesław Zgorzelski's, Maria Janion's or Michał Głowiński's texts is different. The same applies to the younger generation of scholars (Marek Bińczyk or Inga Iwasiów).

In the anthology, heterologies are represented by texts by Franciszek Siedlecki, Janusz Sławiński, Henryk Markiewicz, Edward Balcerzan, and Aleksander Nawarecki. The question of just how representative these names and texts are could also be raised at this point. In any

<sup>18</sup>Juliusz Kleiner, "Rola podmiotu mówiącego w epice, w liryce i w poezji dramatycznej" [The Role of the Speaking Subject in Epic, Lyric and Dramatic Poetry], in: *W kręgu historii i teorii literatury* [In the context of history and theory of literature], ed. Artur Hutnikiewicz (Warsaw: PWN, 1981).

<sup>19</sup>Maurycy Mochnacki, *O literaturze polskiej w wieku dziewiętnastym* [Polish literature in the nineteenth century], (Łódź: Wydawnictwo Łódzkie, 1985).

<sup>20</sup>Roma Sendyka, *Od kultury „ja” do kultury „siebie”: o zwrotnych formach w projektach tożsamościowych* [From the culture of „me” to the culture of „the self”: Reflexive forms in identity projects], (Kraków: Towarzystwo Autorów i Wydawców Prac Naukowych Universitas, 2015).

<sup>21</sup>Maria Tarnogórska, *Genus ludens. Limeryk w polskiej kulturze literackiej* [Genus ludens: The limerick in Polish literary culture], (Wrocław: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Wrocławskiego, 2012).

<sup>22</sup>Elaine Showalter, *Faculty Towers: The Academic Novel and Its Discontents* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005).

case, this list shows that heterologies are written by male literary scholars, but not by female literary scholars. This notwithstanding, Aleksander Nawarecki's text is certainly a philological gem in this section. Here is an excerpt from it:

So what does this quintessentially Silesian phrase mean? Literally, as it is easy to guess, as much as the simple question "Where are we?" in English "Où nous sommes?" in French. The question seems to be taken straight out of a conjugation table in a foreign language textbook. But this literal translation is not accurate, because when a Silesian person appears to not know where they are, for example when they fall asleep on a train, they ask: "Kaj my som?" And that means something other than "Kaj my to som?" The difference is minimal, but significant - it is determined by the presence of "to." When "to" appears, the whole phrase ceases to be an actual question and becomes emotional in nature instead. It turns into an unanswered question, a rhetorical question that is no longer an inquiry, but an expression of surprise. As if adding "to" would turn a typical paradigmatic structure into an idiom. An idiom that has no exact equivalent in literary Polish, German, or Czech. Thus, it is absent in languages whose closeness and influence often distances the Silesian dialect from the Polish canon. Indeed, it is an idiom that is strikingly original, quintessentially Silesian. (A2, 81)

Nawarecki's text is indeed interesting. It is an example of academic literature, i.e., it is written by a literary scholar. Moreover, Nawarecki essentially wrote a Polish version of the Anglo-Saxon version of the familiar essay.<sup>23</sup> But after all, Nawarecki's text is also a proclamation of micrology, which the scholar has been practicing, commenting on and popularizing for many years.<sup>24</sup> Respectively, "Kaj my som?" is a great example of the wonderful accomplishments of the Silesian school of Polish studies. Perhaps this type of interpretational approach should even be called Upper Silesian hermeneutics. Nawarecki's excellent essay is also representative of contemporary regionalism, even though the authors of the anthology did not include the Silesian author in this category.<sup>25</sup>

I would also like to add that Hellich does not make the most of Ulicka's concept, who in her book distinguished between autobiography and author-biography in academic writing (*Literaturoznawcze dyskursy możliwe* [Possible literary discourses]). Hellich describes his text as heterologies. Interestingly, this term is associated with the reception of French philosophy (and the analysis of otherness),<sup>26</sup> and Hellich after all is not interested in this aspect.

*Wiek Teorii* also offers several more detailed interesting approaches. For example, only integral texts are reprinted in the anthology. I must confess that I hate abridged editions, even if they only concern footnotes, in collected volumes. Respectively, all texts also have their own introductions – which function as comments or a form of polemic. Moreover, footnotes are

<sup>23</sup>Anne Fadiman, *At Large and At Small: Familiar Essays* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2008).

<sup>24</sup>Aleksander Nawarecki, "On the Silesian Micrological School (1999-2005). A Sprinkling of Reminiscences," *Forum of Poetics*, no. 7, (2017): 6-15.

<sup>25</sup>*Regionalizm literacki w Polsce. Zarys historyczny i wybór źródeł* [Literary regionalism in Poland: Historical outline and selection of sources], ed. Zbigniew Chojnowski, Małgorzata Mikołajczak, (Kraków: Towarzystwo Autorów i Wydawców Prac Naukowych Universitas, 2016).

<sup>26</sup>See, e.g., Michał Kruszelnicki, *Drogi francuskiej heterologii* [The roads of French heterology], (Wrocław: Wydawnictwo Naukowe Dolnośląskiej Szkoły Wyższej, 2008).

always provided. In addition, the volumes are carefully edited. Apart from texts, they also feature photographs of book covers, articles and authors. Not all photographs are of good quality. However, they have extraordinary value. For example, the photograph of Roman Jakobson and Janusz Sławiński illustrates the relation between the two scholars, i.e., Sławiński's admiration for Jakobson (A2, 27). Anyway, one of the chapters discusses the role of photography in Polish theory (Magdalena Szczypiorska-Chrzanowska, *Między znakami* [Between marks]).

The photographs also show something else. For example, in the photographs from the Poetry Meeting in Kłodzko in 1967, we can see that writers, critics and literary scholars are standing together (it seems that there is a mistake in the description; Janusz Maciejewski is the last one from the right) (M, 100). Indeed, the collaboration between scholars, critics and creators is part and parcel of Polish disciplinary tradition.

Photographs of articles, manuscripts, index cards and the like are also reproduced. There is also an unusual, terrifying, document: a letter from students "To the head of the B.U.W. [University of Warsaw Library]" Waclaw Borowy. Students demand that a "bench ghetto" be established in the reading room" (M, 73). These are not just illustrations. The editorial solutions and the interests of the team, and above all the interests of Ulicka, who wrote about the role of the archive in literary research ("«Archiwum» i archiwum" ['Archive' and the Archive]<sup>27</sup>), coincide. And we know that other disciplines also engage with the various aspects of the archive.

*Wiek Teorii* is a significant publication. However, if I were to raise objections, they would relate to certain omissions (specific issues and persons). For example, I would suggest adding modality (perhaps in the next edition of the anthology?). We know that this is one of the most important problems in which literary scholars (and the humanities in general) are interested. Moreover, modality would raise the issue of the history of literature. Indeed, debates on the history of literature took place at key moments in recent Polish history. Theorists, critics and writers all voiced their opinions. Danuta Ulicka is an expert on the modality of literary studies. She discussed this issue in *Literaturoznawcze dyskursy możliwe*.<sup>28</sup> What other authors, then, could be included in the anthology? Zygmunt Łempicki (*W sprawie uzasadnienia poetyki czystej* [On the justification of pure poetics]; 1920), Kazimierz Wyka (*Wyznania uduszonego* [Confessions of the suffocated]; 1962), Maria Janion (*Jak możliwa jest historia literatury* [How is the history of literature possible]; 1974), Tomasz Burek (*Jaka historia literatury jest nam dzisiaj potrzebna?* [What history of literature do we need today?]; 1979), Włodzimierz Bolecki (*Modalność – literaturoznawstwo i kognitywizm* [Modality - literary studies and cognitivism]; 2001), and Ryszard Nycz (*Możliwa historia literatury* [Possible history of literature]; 2010). Indeed, if modality were also discussed in the anthology, more authors (Łempicki and Burek) would be included and the literary world (discussed by Łempicki) and literary criticism (discussed, for example, in *Żadnych marzeń* [No dreams]<sup>29</sup>) would be discussed as well.

<sup>27</sup>Danuta Ulicka, "«Archiwum» i archiwum" ['Archive' and archive], *Teksty Drugie: teoria literatury, krytyka, interpretacja*, no. 4 (2017): 301.

<sup>28</sup>Danuta Ulicka, *Literaturoznawcze dyskursy możliwe. Studia z dziejów nowoczesnej teorii literatury w Europie Środkowo-Wschodniej* [Possible literary discourses: Studies in the history of modern literary theory in Central and Eastern Europe], (Kraków: Towarzystwo Autorów i Wydawców Prac Naukowych Universitas, 2007).

<sup>29</sup>Tomasz Burek, *Żadnych marzeń* [No dreams], (London: Polonia, 1987).

I have mentioned the most important scholars, although the list of researchers who have been interested in the possible history of literature and modality (Teresa Walas, Anna Łebkowska, Katarzyna Kasztenna, Marian Bielecki ...) could be extended.

I emphasize the question of modality, because this concept in modern literary studies is connected with perhaps the most recognizable Polish school, namely the Lviv-Warsaw school. The representatives of this school commented on modality. And as we know, literary scholars were influenced by philosophers. Moreover, philosophers are considered to be members of this influential Polish school (and we know it from articles and books by Ulicka). Besides, Jan Woleński in his monograph mentions the representatives of this school, including: Ryszard Gansiniec, Manfred Kridel, Zygmunt Łempicki.<sup>30</sup>

From today's perspective, however, what the monograph and the anthology is missing is the role played by culture, which has been intensively studied in recent decades in Polish faculties and has influenced major institutional changes. Research units and departments of literary anthropology were established at many universities. Alternative schools and literary anthropology models exist. Warsaw and Kraków are important centers of cultural research. Cultural anthropology is discussed in books that have been published in recent decades, e.g., Andrzej Mencwel's *Wyobraźnia antropologiczna* [Anthropological Imagination]<sup>31</sup> and Ryszard Nycz's *Kultura jako czasownik* [Culture as a verb]<sup>32</sup>. Cultural studies and cultural theory of literature are indebted to Polish humanities and social studies.

One of the most important chapters in the monograph addresses the question of the genre. Przemysław Pietrzak brilliantly discusses various concepts of genology and shows different historical phases of research on various genres. He demonstrates how textual understanding of the genre has been replaced with communicative understanding (in Edward Balcerzan's book *Przez znaki* [Through signs], Michał Głowiński's study *Świadectwa i style odbioru* [Testimonies and Reception Styles]). He explains how writers' ideas influenced the reformulation of genology. If something is missing, it is the last link, namely the discussion of how domestic theories of the genre were modified under the influence of the category of performativity (including Magdalena Popiel's texts<sup>33</sup>) and how theoretical concepts have changed under the influence of the digital revolution.

In the anthology, Pietrzak discusses four texts which are representative of the changes in genre studies: Stefania Skwarczyńska's *Pojęcia genologiczne* [Genological Concepts], Kazimierz Bartoszyński's *O amorfizmie gawędy. Uwagi na marginesie „Pamiętek Soplicy”* [The amorphisms of the *gawęda*: Comments on the margin of *Pamiętki Soplicy*], Jerzy Ziomek's *Genera scribendi*, and Andrzej Hejmej's *Peryferyjne znaczenia muzyki ("Aria: Awaria" S. Barańczaka)*

<sup>30</sup>Jan Woleński, *Filozoficzna Szkoła lwowsko-warszawska* [The Lviv-Warsaw Philosophical School], (Warsaw: PWN, 1985)

<sup>31</sup>Andrzej Mencwel, *Wyobraźnia antropologiczna. Próby i studia* [Anthropological imagination: Sketches and studies], (Warsaw: Wydawnictwa Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego, 2006).

<sup>32</sup>Ryszard Nycz, *Kultura jako czasownik* [Culture as a verb], (Warsaw: Wydawnictwo IBL PAN, 2018).

<sup>33</sup>Magdalena Popiel, *List artysty jako gatunek narracji epistolograficznej. O listach Stanisława Wyspiańskiego* [The artist's letter as a genre of epistolographic narration: The letters of Stanisław Wyspiański], *Teksty Drugie: teoria literatury, krytyka, interpretacja* no. 4 (2004): 115-124.



[Peripheral meanings of music (“Aria: Awaria” by S. Barańczak)]. These are all obvious choices. Skwarczyńska is the author of the theory of the letter. Bartoszyński comments on the history of the *gawęda* in our literature. Ziomek studies the relationship between literature and rhetoric. Hejmy analyzes the relationship between literature and other arts. And yet something is missing. One could propose an alternative set of generic categories: “generic replacement” (Wyka), “contemporary *silva rerum*” (Nycz), “textual hybrid” (Grochowski). This would give rise to a clear sequence of original terms that have gained universal recognition and illuminated various historical and literary phenomena (including the poetics of Różewicz, the new prose of the 1960s and the 1970s and the post-structural breakthrough of the 1990s).

The interests of the team led by Ulicka are obvious. And so are the themes that are not mentioned in the study. It is known that *Wiek Teorii* does not address Polish literary studies through various trends. It is not written from this perspective. But the methodological pluralism in Polish literary studies cannot be ignored. Thus, both the monograph and the anthology refer to structuralism, post-structuralism, feminism, deconstruction, geo-poetics, and post-colonialism (in various forms).

Respectively, since I have already commented on how the study may be expanded, I will mention two other cross-sectional issues as well. For one, it is not difficult to notice that the theory constructed by Ulicka’s team is developed primarily in reference to modern (and contemporary) critical texts. And yet, we also know that specialists in ancient, medieval, renaissance, baroque, enlightenment, and Romantic literature also made major contributions to theory at the beginning of the 20th century and later. Some issues raised by them could be included in the monograph and the anthology. In my opinion, Old Polish literature could be included in the monograph by showing the evolution of poetics: from phenomenological poetics, through historical poetics, to cultural poetics. The following issues should be addressed: spoken – written text, technology – text, as well as various versions of mythography, which were, in part, adopted under the influence of Western literary studies.

The question of rhetoric could also be discussed in more detail, for example, by commenting on Jerzy Ziomek’s “rhetorical” theory of literature (Ziomek worked with examples from various historical and literary eras). I refer, in particular, to the texts in the volume *Powinowactwa literatury* [Affinities of Literature] (including *Powinowactwa przez fabułę* [Affinities through the plot]; *Parodia jako problem retoryki* [Parody as a rhetorical problem]).<sup>34</sup> Ziomek actually created a theory of literature by reinterpreting classical rhetoric.

Respectively, the anthology (in two volumes) could be read as an autonomous study in the history of knowledge. The anthology opens with an extensive introduction by Ulicka. This is certainly the most valuable study of its kind in Poland. Ulicka explains why she decided to publish a collection of Polish theoretical and literary texts and describes the methodology behind the project. Ulicka emphasizes the tropological perspective. Various tropes are a com-

<sup>34</sup>Jerzy Ziomek, *Powinowactwa literatury. Studia i szkice* [Affinities of Literature: Analyses and sketches], (Warsaw: PWN, 1980).

mentary on the unique nature of the study. Allegory is discussed because the anthology is a conventional product which symbolizes the most valuable texts of a given genre (A1, 11). Moreover, the fragmentary nature of the anthology is reflected in the synecdoche, because it represents the whole (unlike the encyclopedia) (A1, 12). Finally, the anthology may be read like a metonymy because it is built from what already exists and what can be replaced with a different set of “quotations” (A1, 13).

The format of the anthology is indeed thought-provoking. Let me add that it is also one of the most extensive studies in Poland using tropology to comment on scientific and academic discourse. I would also like to emphasize that explaining the idea behind the monograph in the critical text on the anthology is motivated by contemporary cognitive relativism. Tropology itself is a form of scientific and cultural relativism. The introduction to the monograph refers more to a positivist and cumulative understanding of knowledge. Ulicka interprets history writing by referring to Stefan Świeżawski’s concepts and argues that the reconstruction of the past should be reliable: “Thinking in the long-term perspective usually allows one to verify and correct fragmented proclamations ...” (M, 129).

Finally, the text is persuasive in nature. It, in a way, “protects” the authors of the study from writing alternative histories of Polish literary studies. Accepting the arguments of Ulicka, I allow myself to make one marginal comment. *Wiek Teorii* is a monograph and an anthology. An index of literary terms is a good supplement to the study. Comprehensive and extensive, it is thirteen-pages long (with entries in three columns) in the monograph itself. As we know, the index is also a form of ordering knowledge. And it actually makes it easier to use the book. And yet, if the authors emphasize the achievements of Polish literary studies, an index of the most important terms in Polish literary theory would be useful. It would help the reader better understand the entire study. It would also be the first step in the preparation of a dictionary, which could be a supplement to the study edited by Ulicka. This new index could comprise the terms that are already included in the index but also other terms that actually have the status of eponyms because they are associated with names of different critics, for example: “quasi-judgment,” “formal mimesis,” “small narratives,” “dis-automatization,” “personal document (literary genre),” “poetic model of prose,” “autobiographical attitude,” “contemporary silva rerum,” “an interview with ...,” “genera scribendi,” “textual hybrid,” “autobiographical triangle,” “interactive theory of the historical and literary process,” “micrology,” “the culture of the self,” “somatic criticism,” and “theo-linguistics.”

Such an approach would problematize literary studies further and offer us even more insight into the history of knowledge.

translated by Małgorzata Olsza

## References

- Bolecki, Włodzimierz. "Pytania o przedmiot literaturoznawstwa". In *Polonistyka w przebudowie. Literaturoznawstwo – wiedza o języku – wiedza o kulturze – edukacja*. Polish Studies Conference, Kraków 22-25 September 2004. Edited by Małgorzata Czerwińska, Stanisław Gajda, Krzysztof Kłosiński, Anna Legeżyńska, Andrzej Z. Makowiecki, Ryszard Nycz, 3-14. Kraków: Towarzystwo Autorów i Wydawców Prac Naukowych Universitas 2005, vol. I.
- Burek, Tomasz, "Żadnych marzeń". London: Polonia, 1987.
- Burke, Peter, Peter Burke, *Social History of Knowledge: From Gutenberg to Diderot*. Cambridge: Polity Press, 2000.
- Burzyńska, Anna, Markowski, Michał Paweł. "Teorie literatury XX wieku". Kraków: Wydawnictwo Znak, 2006.
- Fadiman, Anne. *At Large and At Small: Familiar Essays*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2008.
- Kulturowa teoria literatury. Główne pojęcia i problemy*. Edited by Michał Paweł Markowski, Ryszard Nycz. Kraków: Towarzystwo Autorów i Wydawców Prac Naukowych Universitas, 2006.
- Kulturowa teoria literatury 2. Poetyki, problematyki, interpretacje*. Edited by Teresa Walas, Ryszard Nycz. Kraków: Towarzystwo Autorów i Wydawców Prac Naukowych Universitas, 2012.
- Kulturologia polska XX wieku*. Edited by Andrzej Mencwel i inni. Warsaw: Wydawnictwa Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego, 2013.
- Kleiner, Juliusz, "Rola podmiotu mówiącego w epice, w liryce i w poezji dramatycznej". In *W kręgu historii i teorii literatury*. Edited by Artur Hutnikiewicz. Warsaw: Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN, 1981.
- Kruszelnicki, Michał, "Drogi francuskiej heterologii". Wrocław: Wydawnictwo Naukowe Dolnośląskiej Szkoły Wyższej, 2008.
- Mencwel, Andrzej. "Wyobraźnia antropologiczna. Próby i studia". Warsaw: Wydawnictwa Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego, 2006.
- Nawarecki, Aleksander, "On the Silesian Micrological School (1999-2005). A Sprinkling of Reminiscences," *Forum of Poetics* no. 7 (2017): 6-15.
- Nycz, Ryszard, "Kultura jako czasownik". Warsaw: Instytut Badań Literackich PAN Wydawnictwo, 2018.
- Mochnacki, Maurycy, "O literaturze polskiej w wieku dziewiętnastym". Łódź: Wydawnictwo Łódzkie, 1985.
- Popiel, Magdalena. "List artysty jako gatunek narracji epistolograficznej. O listach Stanisława Wyspiańskiego". *Teksty Drugie: teoria literatury, krytyka, interpretacja* no. 4 (2004): 115-124.
- Przewodnik po literaturze filozoficznej XX wieku* vol. 1-5. Edited by Barbara Skarga, Stanisław Borzym, Halina Floryńska-Lalewicz. Warsaw: Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN, 1994-1997.
- Regionalizm literacki w Polsce. Zarys historyczny i wybór źródeł*. Edited by Zbigniew Chojnowski, Małgorzata Mikołajczak. Kraków: Towarzystwo Autorów i Wydawców Prac Naukowych Universitas, 2016).
- Sendyka, Roma, "Od kultury «ja» do kultury «siebie»: o zwrotnych formach w projektach tożsamościowych", Kraków: Towarzystwo Autorów i Wydawców Prac Naukowych Universitas, 2015.
- Showalter, Elaine, *Faculty Towers: The Academic Novel and Its Discontents*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005.
- Socjologia. Lektury*. Edited by Piotr Sztompka, Marek Kucia. Kraków: Wydawnictwo Znak, 2007).
- Sztompka, Piotr. "Socjologia". Kraków: Wydawnictwo Znak, 2006.
- "Słownik socjologiczny. 1000 pojęć", Kraków: Znak Horyzont, 2020.
- Tarnogórska, Maria. "Genus ludens. Limeryk w polskiej kulturze literackiej. Wrocław: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Wrocławskiego, 2012).

*Teoria wiedzy o przeszłości na tle współczesnej humanistyki. Antologia.* Edited by Ewa Domańska. Poznań: Wydawnictwo Poznańskie, 2010.

Ulicka, Danuta. "«Archiwum» i archiwum", *Teksty Drugie: teoria literatury, krytyka, interpretacja*, no. 4 (2017): 301.

----- "Literaturoznawcze dyskursy możliwe. Studia z dziejów nowoczesnej teorii literatury w Europie Środkowo-Wschodniej". Kraków: Towarzystwo Autorów i Wydawców Prac Naukowych Universitas, 2007.

*Wiek teorii. Sto lat nowoczesnego literaturoznawstwa polskiego.* Edited by Danuta Ulicka. Warsaw: Instytut Badań Literackich PAN Wydawnictwo, 2020.

*Wiek teorii. Antologia 1.* Edited by Danuta Ulicka. Warsaw: Instytut Badań Literackich PAN Wydawnictwo, 2020.

*Wiek teorii. Antologia 2.* Edited by Danuta Ulicka. Warsaw: Instytut Badań Literackich PAN Wydawnictwo, 2020.

Woleński, Jan. "Filozoficzna szkoła lwowsko-warszawska". Warsaw: Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN, 1985.

*Współczesne teorie socjologiczne.* Edited by Aleksandra Jasińska-Kania, Lech M. Nijakowski, Jerzy Szacki, Marek Ziółkowski. Warsaw: Wydawnictwo Naukowe Scholar, 2006.

Ziomek, Jerzy, "Powinowactwa literatury. Studia i szkice". Warsaw: Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN, 1980.

# KEYWORDS

THEORY

methodology

**ABSTRACT:**

The article discusses *Wiek Teorii* [The Age of Theory] (a monograph and an anthology) as a unique comprehensive look at Polish literary studies. The author points out that the book edited by Danuta Ulicka is a major contribution to the humanities and social sciences. The team of literary scholars not only structures twentieth-century literary studies but also problematizes the notion of constructing knowledge. The monograph and the two-volume anthology present the history of Polish literary studies in a critical manner and both volumes complement one another. Interestingly, the monograph and the anthology refer to two different cognitive paradigms. The monograph refers to positivist science and the anthology refers to the relativistic concept of knowledge.

## anthology

## tropology

### NOTE ON THE AUTHORS:

Jerzy Madejski – literary scholar, critic. He works at the Institute of Literature and the New Media at the University of Szczecin. He is the editor of the journal *Autobiografia* [Autobiography]. He is the author of: *Praktykowanie autobiografii. Przyczyńki do literatury dokumentu osobistego i biografistyki* [Practicing Autobiography: Contributions to the literature of the personal document and biography] (Wydawnictwo Naukowe Uniwersytetu Szczecińskiego, Szczecin 2017); *Poetologie postrukturalne. Szkice krytyczne* [Post-structural poetics: Critical sketches] (Wydawnictwo Naukowe Uniwersytetu Szczecińskiego, Szczecin 2018); and *Poetyka ekstremalna oraz inne noty o liryce i krytyce współczesnej* [Extreme Poetics and Other Notes on Contemporary Lyric and Criticism] (Wydawnictwo Pasaż, Kraków 2021). He is the editor and co-editor of collective volumes, including: *Geoliteratura. Przewodnik, bedeker, poradnik* [Geoliterature: Guide, Baedeker, handbook]; co-editor Sławomir Iwasiów (Wydawnictwo Naukowe Uniwersytetu Szczecińskiego; Universitas, Szczecin-Kraków 2019).