
Abstracts

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ABSTRACTS

Katarzyna Bielewicz

***Mała Zagłada* as a spatial aspect of postmemory**

This article analyses the latest book by Anna Janko – *Mała Zagłada* (Small Destruction) – through the prism of two basic concepts: *postmemory* as defined by Marianne Hirsch and *non-places of memory*, which draws on the notion of places of memory postulated by Pierre Nora. In *Mała Zagłada*, Anna Janko – one of the so-called second generation – attempts to work through inherited trauma. She also tries to ensure that the tragedy of the children of Sochy – both the children murdered when the village was burned to the ground by Nazis in 1943, and those who miraculously survived the Destruction – will not disappear from memory.

Keywords: Anna Janko, Teresa Ferenc, trauma, postmemory, non-places of memory.

Magdalena Juźwik

„Corporeal or disembodied? Body memory in physical theater”

This article explores body memory in physical theatre. It considers how the human body in its plasticity becomes a vehicle for material, remembered subject matter. Human memory is characterized by “re-feeling”, the process of recalling past events, remaining in the past. It turns out that the human body may also be a “storage unit” for all that a person has remembered throughout his or her entire experience of reality. Social and political events also (in a sense) determine body memory. Key figures of physical theatre such as Jerzy Grotowski and Pina Bausch are referred to in order to aid a better understanding of the concept of “body memory”.

Keywords: Other, Body memory, authenticity, archive.

Arkadiusz Kalin

Researching the ‘Wild West’

The article considers a monograph by Beata Halicka, entitled “The Polish Wild West: Forced Migrations and Cultural Moderating in the Odra Region 1945–1948”, published at the end of 2015. The book examines the social, historical and cultural situation in the first years after World War II in former German lands attached to Poland, referred to in post-war propaganda as “the Recovered Territories” or “the Western Lands”. Halicka draws on German specialist literature, and the book is a rare attempt to combine so-called German Eastern studies (“Ostforschung”) with Polish “Western thought”. Halicka uses “Wild West” and “Odra Region”

as substitutes for the former ideologically-inflected names. This article considers whether these names can be legitimated in academic discourse. The article also draws attention to important topics absent from the book. **Keywords:** Beata Halicka, Recovered Territories, Polish Wild West, Odra Region.

Anna Mach

“In the beginning was the war”. Postmemory in the works of Eva Hoffman, Bożena Keff, Ewa Kuryluk, and Agata Tuszyńska

This article considers works created by the second generation of Holocaust survivors: Eva Hoffman, Ewa Kuryluk, Agata Tuszyńska and Bożena Keff. These authors, who either grew up in Polish culture or identify with it, discovered their Jewish ancestry years later. They confront inherited memories of the Holocaust and journey in the footsteps of their ancestors in order to collect missing elements of their families’ stories. The autobiographical prose of the second generation also expresses the drama of silence and manifestations of posttraumatic symptoms, which Shoah victims were doomed to experience in post-war Europe. The paper also looks at the poetics of these literary works, in which postmemory is often based on creative repetition. In the prose of Ewa Kuryluk, the family idiom concealing the taboo theme of Jewishness serves as the linguistic body of the novel. In Eva Hoffman’s book, the grief resulting from the loss of language and the slow learning of English, leads to the conclusion that the inner voice of the narrator shall always meet obstacles. The author identifies them with wartime beginnings: i.e. her parents’ experience of the Holocaust, the loss of the shtetl – the place where the other members of her family were rooted and died. The article examines the witness-listener relationship and points to those aspects of second-generation writers’ works, in which – as a result of the creative processing and retelling the witnesses’ words by the “generation after” – the obscure voice of the trauma may serve as testimony (as the *sine qua non* condition of its existence is the engagement of the listener-addressee). It has been underlined that the studied literary works of second-generation authors also pose a challenge to readers, who (along with the narrator of the text) have to become responsible recipients of the survivors’ testimonies.

Keywords: postmemory, collective memory, Shoah (Holocaust), trauma, second generation of the Holocaust survivors.

Robert Mielhorski

Herbert’s anamneses

The article analyses Zbigniew Herbert’s poetry through the general anthropological category of anamnesis („recollection”). The myth of childhood is discussed. The article considers meta-anamnesis (poems concentrated on the very act of remembering) and anti-anamnesis (works on the inability to remember). A typical meta-anamnestic genre includes an elegy. The analysis is informed by Barthes’ category of punctum (in the present-past relation), the notions of “open privacy” poetry and anamnestic object. The article also considers Herbert’s mythopoesis (poetic prose).

Keywords: anamnesis, anti-anamnesis, meta-anamnesis, punctum, anamnestic object, “open privacy” lyric, mythopoesis.

Magdalena Mikiewicz

Photographic journey through time - Jacek Dehnel’s *Fotoplastikon*

The article considers Jack Dehnel’s book *Fotoplastikon* published in 2009. Three issues are discussed. First, the past seen through photography; second, the transition of memorabilia from the private to the public area and third, the importance of cultural memory for remembering and creating memories. In addition, the relationship between photography and family memory is examined. The main purpose of the article is to assess whether photographs allow us to remember or to interpret the past.

Keywords: modern literature, Jacek Dehnel, photography, memory, ekphrasis.

Joanna Nazimek

Jorge Semprún's prose and witness literature: narrative, memory, identity

This article focuses on Jorge Semprún's prose. Two books based on his experience as a prisoner of a Nazi concentration camp are analyzed: *The Long Voyage* (*Le Grand voyage*, 1963) and *The Fainting Fit* (*L'Évanouissement*, 1967). The main challenges of witness literature are discussed. First, the formal structure of the chosen texts is examined. Second, with reference to Semprún's memories, the relationships between narrative, memory, and identity are investigated.

Keywords: Jorge Semprún, witness literature, narrative, memory, identity

Agnieszka Szurek

The history of Western Mazovia in social media users' fantasies

This article examines 'group fantasies' about local history shared by social media users. The research focuses on narratives about Western Mazovia, especially so-called 'Little London' (Podkowa Leśna, Milanówek, Grodzisk Mazowiecki). Ernest Bormann's concepts of 'group fantasies' and 'rhetorical vision' are used to analyze these stories. Themes that start 'chain reactions', that is, those issues which are widely commented on and shared, are highlighted. Examples of such themes are the 'citygarden' motif, a story about a haunted house and a tale about Turkish prisoners. An attempt is made to reconstruct the rhetorical vision behind these stories. It is also postulated that 'fantasy', as understood by Coleridge, Barfield and Tolkien, can be useful for the analysis of narratives articulated in social media.

Keywords: fantasy, rhetorical vision, social media, Western Mazovia.

Anna Szwarc-Zajac

Liana Millu's *Ponti di Schwerin* and *Tagebuch* read as autobiographical works

This paper discusses two autobiographical books written by the Italian writer Liana Millu. The article is divided into two parts. The first considers the theory of autobiographical writing, and the second shows how Millu described her life in two of her books: *I Ponti di Schwerin* and *Tagebuch*.

Keywords: autobiography, autobiographical pact, retrospective, memory, concentration camp, the Second World War.

Małgorzata Wicher

Writers of Old Polish on the passage of time, preservation of tradition and creating their own image for posterity.

From Gallus Anonymus to Benedict Chmielowski

This article examines the significance of memory and reputation within Old Polish literature. The notion of good reputation held a high position within the hierarchy of ethical values during the Renaissance. First, it is shown how writers of Old Polish believed that living a virtuous, wise and noble life would ensure that their memory would be preserved more effectively than the building of statues or other physical monuments. Second, it is demonstrated how references to the downfall, as well as the greatness, of ancient empires formed the basis for reflection on the passage of time and the need to protect memory. Third, it is argued that by delving into the past and exploring the memory of the First Polish Republic, the historian of Old Polish literature raises questions relevant to a variety of humanistic disciplines: cultural history, historical anthropology, philosophy. He or she reconstructs the principles, priorities and values that constituted the worldview of people centuries ago, and their understanding of the role played by memory of the past in their everyday lives.

Keywords: memory, history, axiology of history, time, Old Polish literature.

Anna Zalewska

When extremes combine: Memory and history in *The Return of Odysseus* by Stanisław Wyspiański

This article considers the divide between individual memory and historiosophical thought in 19th century thinking about the past through an analysis of Stanisław Wyspiański's *The Return of Odysseus*. Wyspiański's text makes use of romantic melancholy and affirms cultural continuity with reference to European history. The article demonstrates that *The Return of Odysseus* synthesizes the two contradictory ideas of the past.

Keywords: memory, history, Odysseus, memory studies, embodiment.