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All the Faces of Grochowiak

(J. Łukasiewicz, *Poeta Grochowiak* Wrocław: Warstwy, 2019)

SUMMARY

The hereby reviewed book by Jacek Łukasiewicz entitled *Poeta Grochowiak* has been an impressive and monumental undertaking, yet it fulfils only some of the promises made by its author. According to the reviewer, the fact of its release offers grounds for a discussion of the status of theory and the validity of abandoning it in favour of a reading devoid of methodological regime which elevates the importance of pleasure. The main problem which emerges after reading Łukasiewicz's opus magnum is the issue of selecting the recipient of the monograph (a regular person or a specialist), which in turn conditions the mode of study of the poet's output. Łukasiewicz's monograph amplifies the conviction that Grochowiak's poetic works should be read using new methodologies, which could indicate the poet's innovation in terms of increasing the value of objects and animals as the most important components of his universe. According to the reviewer, what requires justification the most is the need to comment on nearly all poems from the poet's released collections, which is supposed to be facilitated by the researcher's identification of several categories around which his narration centred. The book was divided into two parts. The first part is predominantly chronological, while the second part follows a contextual organisation, which considering the book's size causes problems in the form of repeated discussions of several poems. The reviewer noted the fact that some were subjected to careful reading several times while other, especially those

not released, did not receive a sufficient amount of attention. Additionally, Łukasiewicz did not attempt to define the gravity of the topic of the most recent world war in Grochowiak's output or to reconstruct the poet's polemic with Julian Przyboś during the mature stage of the former's creative life. An in-depth analysis is also demanded for poems discussing the suffering of animals and inter-species community, which Łukasiewicz deemed noteworthy yet his comments to those do not help readers find indications of eco-critical awareness in Grochowiak's works. The new monograph devoted to the output of the author of *Kanon* sheds new light on many problems and biographical contexts as the critic knew the poet, yet some issues require further study. *Poeta Grochowiak* as the crowning of Łukasiewicz's efforts into the study of the poet's output is impressive, yet there is no doubt that a panoramic view does not guarantee noticing every detail, and it is in details that Grochowiak's poetic sensitivity is lodged.

Keywords
Grochowiak, poetry, miserabilism, war, inter-species community.

"to elevate that which is low, to embrace that which
is wretched, to mourn that which is dead"[1]

Jacek Łukasiewicz's latest book *Poeta Grochowiak*[2] may be the major release of 2020. Its significance results from the fact that Łukasiewicz has attempted in it to read Stanisław Grochowiak's poems within a different historical setting, in another period, one which is trademarked by the ever-changing methodological turns and the constantly evolving studies into animals, objects, affects, the Holocaust, remembrance, performativeness, and imagination. Łukasiewicz not only had the task to present the "linguistic beauty" (p. 7) of the artist's poetry or the peculiarity of its poetic persona, but also faced the challenge of reconstructing the major moments which impacted the formal shape and the uniqueness of Grochowiak's idiolect and of uncovering events which constituted the starting points of the author's canonical works (the case of the *Polowanie na cietrzewie*[3] narrative poem or of the *Z porannych gazet* poem).

[1] Beata Mytych-Forajter, *Czułe punkty Grochowiaka. Szkice i interpretacje* (Katowice: The University of Silesia Press, 2010), 134. [Unless indicated otherwise, quotations in English were translated from Polish]

[2] Jacek Łukasiewicz, *Poeta Grochowiak* (Wrocław: Warstwy Publishing House, 2019). Throughout the text I shall reference quotations from this book by providing page numbers directly after the quoted fragments.

[3] Łukasiewicz thus wrote: "In *Polowanie na cietrzewie* there is a first-person narrator. One could assume, then, that it is the author's persona who tells the events from his life. There were even those who assumed that it was a praise of hunting; other, though, thought that the poet acted in defence of animals – the latter were correct. In reality, the first-person narrator was aligned with the author only to some extent; by using him the author has showed how easy it is to succumb to the craze of killing and how easy it is to become infected by it. How easily one can yield to the influence of a higher ranking blood-thirsty officer, a gamekeeper in this case. Actually, the narrative poem is rather an allegory with clear political references to the state-sanctioned killing in Gdynia and other events in the Polish seaside and. It is both

Considering the scale and the argumentation, *Poeta Grochowiak* could be compared to *Twarz Tuwima* by Piotr Matywiecki, as well as the works by Jerzy Kwiatkowski (*Świat poetycki Juliana Przybosia*, *Poezja Jarosława Iwaszkiewicza na tle dwudziestolecia międzywojennego*). Its significance increases even more considering the fact that 2020 marks the 20th anniversary of the publication of *Wybór poezji* [Selected Poetry] in the National Library's series of which Łukasiewicz was the editor. In discussing the details of how the book was developed, the researcher admitted that originally he intended it be smaller and to constitute the form of an introduction to a forthcoming edition of Grochowiak's *Wiersze zebrane*[4] [Selected Poems]:

> When the 40th anniversary of the poet's death was nearing, Jarosław Borowiec, the manager of the Warstwy Publishing House at that time, came to me with a project to publish Grochowiak's *Wiersze zebrane*. I was very pleased. Yet I accepted the task of writing the introduction to the edition with some hesitation. I thought that I would not be able to come up with anything new, that whatever I have ever had to say about his poetry I had already written and published. Yet when I started writing that preface, it started growing and slowly it spread into this hereby book. At this point, I am more than twice as old as Grochowiak was when he died. And throughout those forty years, a new era came. I felt that I was reading those poems somewhat differently, and surely that was the case (490).

Therefore, *Poeta Grochowiak* is a summary of Łukasiewicz's previous studies of Grochowiak's output.[5] Many fragments can be identified and referenced to their original publications, yet once merged into a larger whole they have their special-purpose associated with their original function (i.e. of a critical commentary or a crowning of an edition of works in the form of an afterword). When summarising his decades-long reading of Grochowiak's poems, Łukasiewicz emphasised the evolution of the poetry of one of the representatives of Pokolenie "Współczesności" [the generation of Polish writers who débuted around 1956]. He was interested in an unbiased view of the poet's output as a whole and therefore he divided the study into two complementary parts: in the first one, he offered an overview of all Grochowiak's poems arranged chronologically; while in the second part, he identified four categories (two relational and two autonomous) which focussed the discussion of Grochowiak's imaginative predisposition. That strategy

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a private account, a personal confession of the narrator, and a generalization – that is because it could be, and rightly so, applied to all similar major events in the world. The date inscribed in *Bilard* underneath the poem (Grochowiak rarely placed a date if it was not necessary) is significant. Sadly, though, and I am surprised by that, this was rarely read this was, i.e. it was read incorrectly," (247–248). The narrative poem *Polowanie na cietrzewie* was also discussed by Anita Jarzyna, *Post-koiné. Studia o nieantropocentrycznych językach (poetyckich)* (Łódź: The University of Lodz Press, 2019), 311–329.

[4] Stanisław Grochowiak, *Wiersze zebrane*, vol. 1–2, selected and edited by Beata Symber, introduction by Jacek Łukasiewicz (Wrocław: Warstwy Publishing House, 2017).

[5] Vide also Jacek Łukasiewicz, *Grochowiak i obrazy* (Wrocław: Wroclaw University Press, 2002).

enabled Łukasiewicz to thoroughly discuss almost all Grochowiak's poems and extract the poet's worldview, and to defend the poet's distinct idiolect in which other researchers saw references to, e.g. the Baroque[6], Surrealism,[7] Avant-Garde attitudes stemming directly from Julian Przyboś,[8] and broadly-defined tradition,[9] thus defining Grochowiak's poetry as being "syncretic."[10] The best summary of Grochowiak's poetic strategy was offered by Jan Pieszczachowicz, who juxtaposed his works with the works by Jarosław Marek Rymkiewicz:

> J.M. Rymkiewicz misses the old order and hopes it could be reintroduced today, even at the cost of ironic dissonance and distance. Grochowiak has no such delusions. He remembers that that is only a mythical construct constantly being modelled anew. His works constitute a requiem for paradise. His intention is to strip the fake gold plating of the paradise props by introducing them into a different context, by clashing them with ugliness and brutalising conventional beauty. Kwiatkowski was correct in arguing that the poet enjoyed the effect of surprise, incredibility even, that he loved violent oppositions, and that he married the tragic with the comical and the exalted with the prosaic. As a result, there exists a complex dialectic of oppositions, a disharmonious harmony if you will, and the higher the strength of an opposition, the calmer, paradoxically, the poems seem. Different spheres attract as opposing electrical charges.[11]

The contradictions discussed by Pieszczachowicz were also emphasised by Łukasiewicz: "The contrasts in *Ballada rycerska* are sometimes already there, nestled in culture. That is the juxtaposition of Sancho Panza and Don Quixote (*Don Quixote*). He rejects the exhausting Romantic love hankering. He chose not the gallant dreamer knight-errant but the boorish squire full of coarse realism" (23). In the introduction to *Wybór poezji* the researcher enumerated several series of contrasts which excluded Grochowiak from the

[6] Kazimierz Wyka, "Barok, groteska i inni poeci," in idem, *Rzecz wyobraźni*, 2nd edition extended (Warsaw: State Publishing Institute, 1977).

[7] Jan Pieszczachowicz, "Harmonia i dysharmonia," in idem, *Pegaz na rozdrożu. Szkice o poezji współczesnej* (Łódź: Łódzkie Publishing House, 1991), 390; Jerzy Kwiatkowski, "Ciemne wiersze Grochowiaka," in idem, *Magia poezji (O poetach polskich XX wieku)*, selected by Maria Podraza-Kwiatkowska and Anna Łebkowska, afterword by Marian Stala (Krakow: Literary Publishing House, 1995), 229.

[8] Jacek Łukasiewicz (idem: "Wstęp," in Stanisław Grochowiak, *Wybór poezji*, Jacek Łukasiewicz (Wrocław–Warsaw–Krakow: Ossoliński National Institute, 2000), XXVIII) wrote: "Grochowiak, who thought highly of Przyboś's poetry, wanted to establish a genuine dispute, join a competition. So in *Ikar* he not only responded to the opinion journalistic *Oda do turpistów*, but also, through his poetry, to Przyboś's (entire) poetry. He juxtaposed Przyboś's beauty with his, Przyboś's autonomous vision with his, similarly autonomous and integral, and at the same time, according to himself, better related to the modern emotion." The core of the Przyboś–Grochowiak dispute consisted of a study of the condition of post-WWII poetry and of the ability to translate those experiences into poetry."

[9] Jerzy Kwiatkowski, *Ciemne wiersze Grochowiaka*, 231.

[10] Jan Błoński, "Fetyszysta brzydoty," in idem: *Zmiana warty* (Warsaw: State Publishing Institute, 1961).

[11] Pieszczachowicz, *Harmonia i dysharmonia*, 385–386.

circle of poets suspected of their affinity towards socialist realism: "All of Grochowiak's works feature a poetic persona who is, on the one hand, sick and marked by disability and ugliness, and, on the other, healthy and full of virility and strength. One who is driven by self-destructive forces on the one hand, and who displays extreme vitality on the other. Together both sides form a rebel poetic persona."[12]

One could find many more instances of contrast. Those apply to both the selection of forms (the turn to haiku in the poet's late period) and his intentional selection of extensive narrative poetry. Those contrasts also helped him assume to appropriate position regarding the issue of solidarity with the oppressed (*Wykorzystanie muła*), the role of art (*Ikar*), and, finally, to merge Western and Eastern traditions in *Haiku-images*.

The monograph of Grochowiak's works offers a chance to view him as an engaged poet who supported a vision of the world in which the top position is occupied by miserabilism[13] and everything which is frail, weak or, as a result of the prevailing conviction of human dominance, marginalised. The body and eroticism give way to other topics, though they are not ousted entirely. Grochowiak's almost every poem presents a different vision of corporeality, which lead to musings orbiting the issue of the passage of time, women's changing beauty (*Dwunasty listopad*), absence (*Wdowiec*[14]), or the possibility of art (*Gdy już nic nie zostanie*). Some visions are more persistent than others and they must be studied again (the image of women[15] walking over the poet who were as "beautiful as vases," which opens the poem *Czułość albo Guliwer* from *Kanon* volume). One could venture to define two areas which in Grochowiak's poetry may be interconnected. One applies to the problems of death, mourning, *tempus devorans*, and the failings of the body and its aesthetic potential. The other collects all that applies to the community, history, and the past war. To be able to talk about some completeness one would need to consider the face of Grochowiak the aesthete and Grochowiak the moralist. The latter the poet revealed in *Agresty*:

> Such poems as *Połów*, *Kolęda*, which has received various interpretations, or (bombarded) *Miasto* [City] carry an air of terror; they feature

[12] Jan Łukasiewicz, "Wstęp," in Stanisław Grochowiak, *Wybór poezji*, XIX–XX.

[13] The poet used the term when commenting upon poems by Białoszewski: "How else can you understand the attraction of Białoszewski's initial poems if not because of their special kind of miseralibism, which in this country has always been an experience shared by all?"

[14] He thus remarked on *Wdowiec* by Przemysław Czapliński: "Therefore, man for another man is food, that is why remembrance turns into physical non-satiation, which settles for material substitutes. Longing, pain and suffering have their sources in the corporeal experience of non-satiation and hunger, and all emotions related to the deceased become translated into the language of the body, into somatics." Idem, "Śmierć, albo o znikaniu – Stanisław Grochowiak," in idem, *Mikrologi ze śmiercią. Motywy tanatyczne we współczesnej literaturze polskiej* (Poznań: Poznań Polish Studies, 2001), 54. The poem was also discussed carefully in: Ewelina Suszek, *Figuracje braku i nieobecności. Miłobędzka – Białoszewski – Kozioł* (Krakow: Universitas, 2020), 267–284.

[15] A study of Grochowiak's poems which feature submissive women subject to the will of a director enables one to conclude that the poet was inspired by the Surrealists.

> transformations of the recollections of a child which survived the Warsaw Uprising. There are also moral situations, which can be related to the modern history of the 20th century. Those poems touch upon eschatology: a futile redemptive sacrifice (*Kolęda*) or the deceit of Moses who in the poem did not part the waters of the Red Sea but he allowed Jews to die in its waves saving himself (*Połów*) (107).

If one adds to this listing the poems *Penelopa przyniesie*[16] (remaining in its manuscript form, concluding with a frenetic ending: „Penelopa przyniesie mężulkowi i cukier / Gdy mężulek ma pracę nad zarżnięciem Żydka" [Penelope shall bring her hubby sugar, too / When the hubby has to work to kill the Jew]) and *Płacz Żyda*[17] from *Ballada rycerska volume*, a broad array of topics emerge in which borderline situations and their consequences constituted Grochowiak's *idée fixe*. Łukasiewicz rarely commented upon poems which applied to wartime recollections, though he did indicate the significance of the poem "Mamy tych braci...," the poet's reaction to the events of March 1968, and the keen interest in the manner of the functioning of a Nazi in situations which required complete devotion (the novel *Trismus*). Many poems devoted to the Second World War were based on the mood, e.g. *Ile może człowiek*: "A za nim płonęło stutysięczne miasto / Żołnierze ostrzyli na progach bagnety / Na rozgrzanych dachach tańczyły niedźwiedzie / I dęba stawały gwałcone kobiety"[18] [And behind him a city of 100,000 people burnt / Soldiers sharpened their bayonets on thresholds / Bears danced on the hot roofs / And raped women stood straight]. The *Wiersze nieznane i rozproszone* collection includes a poem *W porządku*, which assumed the form of a faux dialogue between God and people and features a distinct discrepancy between two enumerations depicting humankind and the special concessions and promises concluding in a confirmation of the reason behind giving humans a state susceptible to being harmed ("wasze ciała wystawione są na wiatr, bakterie i automaty" [your bodies are exposed to the wind, bacteria and machine guns]) and the elimination of any delusions regarding the application of any concessions, respectively: "Ale kiedy wam daję jeszcze dziesięć lat życia, / Obiecuję piękne kobiety, piwniczkę z burgundem i Rivierę, / Kiedy każdemu wmawiam duszę, sublimację i marzenie / A kobietom

[16] Stanisław Grochowiak, "Penelopa przyniesie," in idem, *Wiersze nieznane i rozproszone*, selection, introduction, and commentary by J. Łukasiewicz (Wrocław: Society of the Friends of Polish Studies in Wrocław, 1996), 181.

[17] Kazimierz Wyka thus commented on the poem: *Płacz Żyda*, filled with genuine human compassion, is clearly based on the covert structure of a monologue by a Jew delivered in poor and ridiculous Polish, in a language and expressions which could be arguments offered by zoological anti-Semites. This particular contrast makes the reading significantly new and fairly typical for Grochowiak, one which is truly his. Somewhat like Dwojra Zielona in Nałkowska's *Medallions*, translated into poetry." Idem, "Barok, groteska i inni poeci," in idem, *Rzecz wyobraźni*, 193. It could be difficult to avoid the impression that that which for the critic was a clear asset today might be an argument in support of the thesis about a breaking of an ethical line as the "Jewspeak" tainted the Jew's monologue and assigned a particular classification in the eyes of a goy who did not experience his fate.

[18] Stanisław Grochowiak, "Ile może człowiek," in idem, *Menuet z pogrzebaczem* (Krakow: Literary Publishing House, 1958), 30.

czas wolny od gwałtu i rodzenia, / Kiedy maluję obraz ziemi bez waszych zbrodni i cierpień, / Powiedzmy: bez tych większych, sięgających w miliony – / Wtedy / Na pewno nie jestem w porządku. // W porządku / Stworzenia"[19] [But when I give you another ten years, / When I promise you beautiful women, a cellar with Burgundy and the Riviera, / When I convince every one of you of having a soul, sublimation and a dream / And I promise women time free of rape and childbirth, / When I paint an image of the Earth without your crimes and suffering, / Let's say: without those major ones, reaching millions – / Then / Surely I'm not all right // All right / Creatures]. The poem was written in the period 1957–1963, so it could be included in one of the first volumes or it could extend the list of poems in the *Agresty* collection, which focussed on moral dilemmas.

Grochowiak suggested that the fact of the emergence of humans at the final stage of God's creative work in the Book of Genesis should put them in self-wonderment and cause them to use the term "the crown of creation." The poet once again exceeded his time placing animals in the centre of his universe making them susceptible to harm and assigning to them the imperative of care. A fragment of the *Zen* haiku summarises the discussion of the true nature of humans and their inclination to assign human qualities on animals: "Pomówiliśmy zwierzęta o nas samych – a one nas nie odepchnęły"[20] [We accused animals of being like us – and yet they did not reject us].

It is clear, then, that the poet equally diagnosed human physical and moral conditions; he left no illusions to his readers when he wrote his poems *Stary*, *Wykorzystanie muła*,[21] *Lekcja fauny*,[22] and *Ogród malca*,[23] in which animals know more yet they remain under human control, a fact which is best illustrated by the first text: "Mięso jego dadzą psom / Ze skóry zrobią rzemienie / Z włosia wyciory do armat / Z zębów guziki // Tyle ludzie z konia umieli wycisnąć / I tyle tylko dla dobra ojczyzny"[24] [They'll give his meat to the dogs / They'll make straps from his skin / Cannon ramrods from his hair / Buttons from his teeth // That's how much humans could squeeze out of a horse / And just so much for the good of the homeland]. His poems about animals could be divided into two groups: the first consists of all the narratives about "the lives of the martyrs,"[25] while the other consists of all those which emphasised animals' defencelessness (*Elegia oborska*, *Żółw*). *Haiku-images* features actual animals and symbolic ones, wild animals and those which had been tamed, and animals which remained autonomous and those which had been anthropomorphised. It was the poet's final posthumous collection that Łukasiewicz discussed in a comprehensive manner considering references to earlier poems, which has been completely satisfying because of the assumed micrological perspective. In the researcher's interpretation, every

[19] Grochowiak, "W porządku," in idem, *Wiersze nieznane i rozproszone*, 140.
[20] Grochowiak, "Zen," in idem, *Wybór poezji*, 262.
[21] The poem was included in the collection *Menuet z pogrzebaczem*.
[22] Printed: *Nowa Kultura*, issue 13 (1964).
[23] Printed: *Życie Literackie*, issue 16, (1976).
[24] Grochowiak, "Stary," in idem, *Wiersze nieznane i rozproszone*, 127.
[25] Éric Baratay, *Zwierzęta w okopach. Zapomniane historie*, trans. Barbara Brzezicka (Gdańsk: Publishing House in the Courtyard, 2017).

word requires reflection and philological exposition, though he did not avoid the danger of literariness when discussing the word "obracać": "«Obracać kogoś» in the vulgar colloquial vernacular means to have sex with someone, though that may be understood in a much more general manner" (261). It is puzzling why his first association was one which has little to do with wandering instead of an association with the shape of a circle, which is extremely significant in the interpretation of *Wędrowiec*. It is surprising how close to each other in Łukasiewicz's book there appear fragments which indicate his respect for Grochowiak's poetry, based on which one could call the researcher a spokesperson of the poetry, and failed fragments which tell readers more about the interpreter than about the poetry.

Grochowiak's output also includes two poems about human-animal friendship between a dog and a human.[26] Łukasiewicz treated them with restraint. He has not assigned them the status of texts focussed on ethological details defining the trajectory of post-humanistic imagination, one which is hospitable and centred on figures which usually remain outside the frame.

Both came from the mature period of the poet's creative life and they remained in their manuscript form. Also, both are associated with the aspect of human corporeality, which was probably the most important for Grochowiak, i.e. the smell (the poems *Czyści* and *Tęsknota za świeżością*). In *Suka*, the lyrical narration is conducted in third person singular; the title 'suka' [a bitch] "nie opuści żadnej z przewin ani grzechów"[27] [shall not omit any trespass or sin] even though "prosi o parol" [she asks for password/ word of honour] (dictionaries indicate at least two meanings of the word: a secret password or a word of honour). She is touching, disciplined, and devoted. Grochowiak drew a portrait of a silent friend for whom the olfactory domain is the most important since smell is a special kind of identification, and the sense of smell enables one to study who leans towards naturalness and who towards artificiality, and the poet did not evaluate sweat (and other smells) negatively. Grochowiak was also the author of one of the most poignant poems written from a dog's perspective:

Przychodzę do Tego Dużego –
Co jest TAJEMNE –
Czym dziwniej tym bardziej
Ma nakazów wiele:
  DAJ ŁAPĘ DAJ GŁOS NIE DOTYKAJ
  [PROSZĘ
pan

(…)

I come up to the Big One –
Which is SECRET –
The stranger it is, the more
Commands there are:
  PAW, BARK, PLEASE DON'T TOUCH
master

(…)

[26] Grochowiak, "Pies z tarasu nad jeziorem," in idem, *Nie było lata* (Warsaw: Czytelnik Publishing House, 1969), 55–56.

[27] Grochowiak, "Suka," in idem, *Wiersze nieznane i rozproszone*, 325.

A teraz usiadł
Przygarnął mnie bokiem
Bierze w dwa dotyki moją dolną szczękę

Ach jak wybornie znalazł CIEPŁE
[GNIAZDKO
MIĘDZY FAŁDĄ GARDŁA i mrowiskiem
[pcheł
Jakże tam wsunął
Swój pękaty palec
pan

Lekki podmuch potu Przewaga
[– i mięśnie
Których się boję
Bo gdyby TAK ścisnął
Byłoby WSZYSTKO czego nie rozumiem

On zaś – że samotny – długo krąży dłonią
(Tym pięciomięsem
które lubi psisko)

(...)[28]

And now he sat down
He pulled me to his side
Takes in two touches my lower jaw

Oh, how perfectly he found A WARM
[NEST
BETWEEN THE THROAT FOLD and
[a nest of fleas
Oh, how he slid there
His bulging finger
master

A slight whiff of sweat Dominance – and
[muscles
That I'm afraid of
Because if he decides to squeeze
There would be EVERYTHING I don't
[understand

And he – being lonely – circles his palm
[long
(That five meater
that the dog likes)

(...)

The dog watches its master attentively and carefully smells him. It is devoted and selfless. The result Grochowiak achieved is a mirror image of all the narratives in which humans try to guess animals' thoughts and intentions, yet the poet used a special measure of a dog's engagement, i.e. smell. The attempt to assume the perspective of another being is credible and touching; especially the fragment about the strength residing in human hands which can be released at any moment makes one think about the narrow cognition of the animal, which places in humans all its love and yet it is afraid of death at the hand of its master. For the animal, death would be everything there would be, yet it cannot imagine the complete experience of the transition. The word "wszystko" connotes brutality, i.e. the act of attacking a friend, with which the animal is not familiar. For Grochowiak, the dog was the embodiment of goodness and truth while the possible consequences of actions, remorse and suffering inscribed in agony were suggestively indicated in that "wszystko," which exceeds a dog's perception, and in the case of humans it appears too little too late.

The one who was the defender of animals and the spokesman of all frail beings said about himself: "Ja – który ptakom paznokcia nie złamię" [I, who

[28] Grochowiak, „Pies i Mozart," in idem, *Wiersze nieznane i rozproszone*, 221–222.

would not crack a bird's nail] (396). That is one of the major self-depictions of the poetic persona of Grochowiak's poetry, someone who is strong and certain of their merit on the one hand, yet who is lost and who wished for all the sources of evil to be eradicated, on the other. Animals in Grochowiak's poetry constitute a fascinating topic and still demand a separate study[29], yet Łukasiewicz made the issue more familiar and assigned it the proper status despite not having the appropriate bibliography or coherence (the topic of animals appears in several fragments and is clearly dispersed). The most important discussion of the animal element in Grochowiak's poetry is included in the final chapter of the first part, which was supplemented in the second part with a separate commentary on animals and angels. The small part devoted to *Haiku-images* offers a complete view of the phenomenon and enables one to trace the affiliations between individual poetic volumes, and it offers other researchers and essayists a starting point for further supplements and commentary.

Haiku-images includes a different view of animals, which are particularly valuable participants of the metaphorised world of the poetry (vide 270); Łukasiewicz thus explained the phrase "Nie mam nic lepszego do usprawiedliwienia" [There is nothing better to excuse] which appears in *Biżuteria*, *Chrabąszcze*, *Ptaki* and *Pisarstwo*:

> Initially, it may seem that that is an instance of grammatical incorrectness, that it should read "na usprawiedliwienie" [for an excuse]. Yet later you realise that one needs to justify "driving oxen" in a harness or locking beetles in cages, otherwise those actions of mine would remain unrighteous. But you could also read it like this: "rustling boxes" are not cages in which beetles are tormented, but rather they are favourable and tender to them short yet capacious *haiku-images* and their cycles (270).

His limitless imagination (both in aesthetic and moral terms) made Grochowiak one of the most original poets of Pokolenie Współczesności, as well as ensured for him a place in the canon of 20th-century poetry. When browsing the poems collected in his initial poetic volumes one could venture a statement that Grochowiak was always interested in modern times even though he often used poetic costumes and stylisation, which generated for him both supporters and opponents.[30] According to Grochowiak poetry is not a simple act of giving an account of emotions and moods but it is often a masterful act of constructing equivalent images which are more effective than if framed *expressis verbis*.

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[29] Beata Mytych-Forajter, *Czułe punkty Grochowiaka*, 87–108, 119–135.

[30] His poetry became the focus of various attacks, e.g. in 1974 by Julian Kornhauser and Adam Zagajewski in *Świat nie przedstawiony*. Łukasiewicz defends Grochowiak's independent imagination: "At the turn of the 1970s new-wave critics often interpreted those intermediations as acts of avoidance, instances of conformism, and a shift of ethics to the background to highlight poetics, which could not have been true as in the years of the "thaw" each instance of choosing patterns other than those of socialist realism became an act of political rebellion (obvious for readers). In fact, the very fact of creating such a role each time had a moral character. It was associated with a moral and political strategy within a totalitarian system," (508).

It was sometimes intimate and restrained, while in other instances it was exuberant and it exceeded the limits defined in the poems from the collections *Ballada rycerska*, *Menuet z pogrzebaczem* or *Kanon*.[31] Despite everything it was always sensory, focussed on details, and it hailed the intimate parts of the human body which regardless of the context were always intriguing or even beautiful, e.g. the back as an erogenous zone, yet also physically burdened and strained; they appeared in the poem *Oda – plecy*: "Maleńki, ogłupiały – z ogarkiem drżącej świecy / Przekradam się przez plecy"[32] [Tiny, bewildered – with a stub of a trembling candle / I sneak over the back], in *Ikar*: "Kobieta czuje kręgosłup jak łunę"[33] [The woman feel her spine like a glow], and in *Elegia oborska*: "Więc niech będą błogosławione plecy: rozległe plantacje nerwów"[34] [So may the back be blessed: an extensive plantation of nerves].

Therefore, one could consider Grochowiak as the originator of the apologia of the beauty of the human body which despite including some defects, being tired and exhausted (as in the poem *Bellini 'Pieta'*), retains its undeniable charm (the poet usually indicated the details of a woman's face within a macro scale, as in the poem *Pocałunek – Krajobraz*).

Łukasiewicz devoted a separate chapter to the notion of somaticity of Grochowiak's poetry (*Człowiek – zewnętrzne obrazy ciała*); in the manner of an overview, he discussed in it the quantitative and qualitative advantage of specific elements of human physiognomy in individual poetic volumes. One could, of course, inquire about the legitimacy of comparing the images of the human body, yet the intuition that it is that particular item that holds the whole of human morality, that through the medium of the body it is possible to apply solidarity with the weaker and the rejected, and, finally, that it is necessary to come to terms with the inevitability of one's fate and the process of decay after their death, legitimises the researcher's stock taking. The act of tracing the images of the body (with particular focus on the face, the back, nostrils, and lips) is usually accompanied by a commentary which considers the significance of a specific part of the body. An undeniable advantage of Łukasiewicz's monograph is its appreciation of touch, which in Grochowiak's poetry dethrones sight:

> It is not sight, or hearing, or smell, but rather touch that appears most important in this poetry; it decides about its tension, dynamics, and, in combination with the experiences from other senses, it adds to its originality proving its value. The touch of lips, while remaining intimate, somewhat verifies bonds between others. It applies to all relations in this poetic world: with people, animals, and objects – everything that a tender (sensitive) touch can experience and reciprocate in such a tender touch (320).

[31] Jacek Łukasiewicz, "Allende – czyli o umieraniu," in idem, *Oko poematu* (Wrocław: Lower Silesian Publishing House, 1991).

[32] Grochowiak, "Oda – plecy," in idem, *Menuet z pogrzebaczem*, 38.

[33] Grochowiak, "Ikar," in idem, *Agresty* (Warsaw: Czytelnik Publishing House, 1963), 8.

[34] Grochowiak, "Elegia oborska," in idem, *Wybór poezji*, 185.

It is around touch that Grochowiak's main category of tenderness is centred, having the traits of an ethical imperative:[35] "Dignity requiring distance and tenderness striving for intimacy are Grochowiak's major two virtues, two human needs, two conditions of humanity – which demand a source confirmation in Transcendence," (429).

Łukasiewicz has argued that Grochowiak's poetry could be read through the prism of proxemics, a fact he indicated several times, yet the poet's works are also open to post-humanistic readings and readings with the application of *non-violent civil resistance studies* (Łukasiewicz only signalled that posibility). The release of the new monograph on Grochowiak's poetry is a pretext to pose a question about the validity of the selection of one of two narrations: one (hermetic) would focus only on literary output, while the other would discuss contexts and utilise the latest methodologies. It is also worth indicating that many of the problems which pestered Grochowiak's time have remained valid, and that his works emerged at a special time when the memories of a past war existed side by side with the oppressive nature of socialist realism and the so-called March events. Additionally, many poems which have been considered canonical still require micrological readings and embedding them within the context of the works of Grochowiak's peers and philosophy, while Łukasiewicz' study constitutes in this respect "an invitation to the topic." An author who decides to take a position regarding such an extensive and already commented upon output has to make the decision whether to downsize the material and the selection criterion should be the degree of its study in previous compendia or approach the entire output (which would require the author to consider all research positions). Łukasiewicz made meticulous references to studies by Anna R. Burzyńska[36], Beata Mytych-Forajter[37], Michał Nawrocki[38], and Piotr Łuszczykiewicz[39], yet he did not hide the fact that his readings would be a kind of a recapitulation of his previous studies of Grochowiak's poetry and that it would be "tainted" due to his long-term familiarity with the poet. Therefore, the researcher made the following conclusion in the initial sections of his book:

> We were eleven when I met him. I read many of his poems before they were published. I have discussed Grochowiak's poetry, also in print, many times, both while he was still alive, and after his death. In terms of my date of birth, and certainly in mental terms, I belong to his era. That is why I cannot identify with today's young readers who start at a different

[35] The category of tenderness was discussed by B. Mytych-Forajter, *Czułe punty Grochowiaka*, 27–42.

[36] Anna Róża Burzyńska, *Małe dramaty. Teatralność liryki Stanisława Grochowiaka* (Krakow: Academic Bookshop, 2012). See also idem, *Maska twarzy. Twórczość dramatyczna Stanisława Grochowiaka* (Krakow: Academic Bookshop, 2011).

[37] Beata Mytych-Forajter, *Czułe punkty Grochowiaka*.

[38] Michał Nawrocki, "*Tego się naucz każdy, kto dotykasz próżni*." *Rzecz o poezji Stanisława Grochowiaka* (Krakow: Arcana Publshing House, 2007).

[39] Piotr Łuszczykiewicz, *Książę erotyku. O poezji miłosnej Stanisława Grochowiaka* (Warsaw: Latona Press, 1995).

time, with their generational experiences, their education, formation, internal problems, and mostly with the types of their sensitivity and with the reception of poetry (6).

That confession is key as it explains why Łukasiewicz decided in the first part to discuss Grochowiak's works volume by volume, while in the second part he applied a different model of reading (clearly a more fortunate one).

A re-reading of Grochowiak's poems should consider both the principle of close reading, and the opportunities offered by modern humanities.[40] Łukasiewicz has stressed many times that he is interested in a comprehensive grasp of Grochowiak's poetry, which is why in various instances he returned to poems which had already received excellent studies only to compare them and global conclusions. For instance, that applies to parts devoted to the categories of homeland, which for Grochowiak was significant both in personal and community terms, as well as to the categories of mise en abyme, and meta-literariness.[41] Even though neither of the monograph's parts departs from the standards of academic writing, the problem-focussed part which abandons the chronological order may not be more important but it certainly is more ingeniously developed; that sense may be triggered by the array of topics raised in it, and the realisation that a story must come to an end as its protagonist gradually departs.

Łukasiewicz has a genuine talent for narration. The second part is not modelled on the principles of classical hagiography; it includes details regarding the poet's alcohol abuse and his painful experience of losing his child and his sister, coming to terms with the events which occurred in his lifetime, and the recollections of his childhood. Grochowiak was a person who conveyed the tumultuous nature of his life in his poems. Writing was actually in his case an act of 'życiopisanie' [writing equalling the writer's life] and Łukasiewicz emphasised that quality of the complementing nature of biography and output. In the *Poeta Grochowiak* monograph, it would be difficult to find some emotional shallows, easy evaluations, or unjust opinions. Everything is settled with philological precision, thanks to which the book adds many valuable details to the existing bibliographies on Grochowiak's works. The value of Łukasiewicz's book should be measured in the layers which he keeps uncovering within the process of micrological readings of Grochowiak's poems. The more he uncovers, the greater the surprise is in the image of Grochowiak that emerges. One cannot avoid the temptation to term it as a valuable journey to the source of Grochowiak's poetry.

[40] Ryszard Nycz, *Kultura jako czasownik. Sondowanie nowej humanistyki* (Krakow: The Institute of Literary Research of the Polish Academy of Sciences, 2017).

[41] The category of meta-poeticness in Grochowiak's output was the focus of a doctoral dissertation by Patrycja Kaleta-Łuczynowicz entitled *Metapoezja. O świadomości twórczej Stanisława Grochowiaka*. Many of her findings and acute readings of meta-poetic forms supplements to Łukasiewicz's discussion. The analytical and interpretative sections devoted to the *Haiku-images* collection are particularly significant and excellently documented. They extract the uniqueness of Grochowiak's creative strategy in the context of other authors who utilised the genre of haiku.

In *Poeta Grochowiak,* the interpreter's passion is combined with the stipulation to remember the poet as a superior organiser of cultural life who suffered more than most and who died prematurely. As Łukasiewicz knew Grochowiak personally,[42] he seems the best candidate to write a book about the life and works of one of the most diligent Polish writers of the 20th century (his writing was not limited to poetry: he was also the author of plays,[43] short stories,[44] novels,[45] and an apocrypha micro-novel[46]; his works surviving in manuscript and those published in journals total several hundred poems[47]). The poems surviving only in manuscripts are in no ways inferior to the poems included in poetic collections. The extent of Grochowiak's imagination was impressive as each collection brought formal, genological and thematic changes, deviations from the début volume, new self-thematic forms, and new ways of supporting moral order. Łukasiewicz's division, which he proposed in the introduction to Grochowiak's *Wybór poezji,* still holds:

> Grochowiak's works could be divided into several periods: the early period, which concluded in the 1956 collection *Ballada rycerska*; the second period – a period of mature grotesque or "turpist" period, covering *Menuet z pogrzebaczem*, *Rozbieranie do snu* and the first part of *Agresty*; the third period – a period of classicisation, which began with the second part of *Agresty* (sonnets and narrative poems), covering the *Kanon* volume and finding its fulfilment in *Nie było lata*, and, finally, the fourth period, the final one, which began with *Polowanie na cietrzewie* and which lasted until his death.[48]

Yet those periods function only as waypoints within his artistic biography; the poet often made references in new stages to his works from his previous stages (the recurring theme of Burns and several images of Virgin Mary, e.g. in *Modlitwa*, *Madonna obrażona*, *Antyfona* and in the poem *Bellini 'Pieta'*, and poems which applied conversations with God). Przemysław Czapliński offered a similarly apt opinion about the periodisation of Grochowiak's poetry:

> (…) in *Kanon* and in the *Nie było lata* collection the New Poet was born – not only meaning a poet who wrote differently, who practised poetry differently, but also meaning someone who was aware of his distinctness and

[42] Grochowiak dedicated the poem *Ogród* from the *Rozbieranie do snu* collection to Łukasiewicz.

[43] Stanisław Grochowiak, *Rzeczy na głosy* (Poznań: Poznań Publishing House, 1966); idem, *Dialogi* (Warsaw: State Publishing Institute, 1975).

[44] Grochowiak, *Lamentnice*, afterword by Stanisław Rembek (Warsaw: PAX Publishing Institute, 1958). Vide also idem, *Prozy*, edited by Jacek Łukasiewicz (Warsaw: Atena Publishing House, 1996).

[45] Grochowiak, *Plebania z magnoliami* (Warsaw: PAX Publishing Institute, 1956); idem, *Karabiny* (Warsaw: MON Publishing House, 1965).

[46] Grochowiak, *Trismus* (Warsaw: Iskry Publishing House, 1963). This apocryphan was discussed by, e.g. Edward Balcerzan, "Przygoda trzecia: apokryfy niemieckie," in idem, *Przygody człowieka książkowego (ogólne i szczególne)* (Warsaw: PEN Publishing House, 1990).

[47] Jacek Łukasiewicz, "Wstęp," in S. Grochowiak, *Wiersze nieznane i rozproszone*.

[48] Łukasiewicz, "Wstęp," in S. Grochowiak, *Wybór poezji*, XVIII.

> who wanted that change to be read from his poems. That change, within the dimension of worldview – which is most interesting for me – applied mainly to his attitude to death: death became the source of new wisdom impelling him to seek values which exceed life. Transcendence, previously excluded or negated by Grochowiak, returned under various guises and in various areas. In aesthetic terms, *natura devorans* gave way to *natura docta*, and also the truth of meat, ugliness and blood flow, i.e. a special manner of understanding realism, lost its dominance, and the place of acute aesthetic categories, included within the realm of turpism (or anti--aestheticism), was taken by gravity and loftiness. Grochowiak strived to retrieve absolute meaning.[49]

The change identified by the author of *Poruszona mapa* also applied to other topics, e.g. attitude towards women (poems from his mature period are dignified, the women are subject to self-nominisation, and they no longer act as per the instructions of the director), poet's obligations, his place in the world and the society, and his lost childhood. All those topics did appear, of course, with different intensities in his earlier creative periods yet in his mature works the change applied to the tone even if the props and the scenery did not always change.

The poet remained in a constant dialogue with Przyboś. In *Kanon* he referred to the poem *Jesień 1942* as the second poem of the collection, which is absent from the 2000 *Wybór poezji*. The avant-garde artist's version reads: "Oto / trzymam w dłoni jabłko tak prawdziwie, / że władam, / rzeczy tknięte moim wzruszeniem przytaczają się słownie –"[50] [Here / I hold in my hand an apple so true, / that I wield, / things touched by my emotion cite themselves in words –]. During the Second World War, Przyboś did not change his poetics. His poems were dominated by optimism, which was a trademark of the poet in a period which was marked by moderation and extinguishing egocentric attitudes. The poem begins with an introduction, which located the poet in the centre of fateful events: "Nadciąga zagłada! – / a ja kłonię gałąź jabłoni: / ukrywam się w podziwie..." [Extermination is coming! – / and I'm bowing an apple tree's branch: / I'm hiding in admiration...]. Grochowiak's apple did not connote royalty, but it rather referred to the category of tenderness: "Tylko jabłko wstydliwie czeka przy mej twarzy / Struchlała główka / Tej przyszłej staruszki"[51] [Only the apple waits shyly by my face / Blenched head / Of the future old timer]. The poem is an amalgam of several images and two portraits: a dreamed one and a real one, searching for bodily "sensitive points." Grochowiak did not follow Przyboś's victorious path – when facing war all you can do is protect that which is frail and tiny and turn towards everydayness. They both found ways for coping with war, though one of them turned to the macro scale (see Przyboś's poem *Niosąc ziemię* on the sense of titanicness), while the other turned to the micro

[49] Przemysław Czapliński, *Śmierć, albo o znikaniu*, 41.

[50] Julian Przyboś, "Jesień 1942," in idem, *Rzut pionowy. Wybór wierszy* (Krakow: Czytelnik Publishing House, 1952), 158.

[51] Grochowiak, "Jabłko," in idem, *Kanon* (Warsaw: State Publishing Institute, 1965), 7.

scale. Przyboś took control in unfavourable conditions while Grochowiak enacted an apologia with a different scope. Such polemics revealed not only the differences in the modes of talking about that which was painful but also the differences resulting from the characters of both poets, the time, and the place from where they watched the outcomes of war. Optimism was confronted with despair. It is worth noting Marian Kisiel's remark who when discussing the canonical *Modlitwa* from Grochowiak's début collection stressed its entreating character:

> *Modlitwa* is an invitation to read, *Ballada rycerska*, Stanisław Grochowiak's first poetic collection, something of the *artis poeticae* sort (that phrase, which later became famous, about "ciemne wiersze" [dark poems]), and, at the same time, a natural prayer for "even the slightest glare" in poems which emerged from the tempest of despair. That final trait, though not always a fundamental element of critical studies, is extremely important. It refers to the beginning of Grochowiak's writing and to his generation, the beginnings so strongly marked by political pressure. "Dark poems" emerged then as a natural counterbalance for "wiersze świetlane" [luminous poems] (in the socialist realism style); they contained the potential of unrest which could not be expressed in any other way.[52]

The juxtaposition of the two worldviews revealed two completely different modes of perception of art. According to Przyboś, art could not be deprived of its proper entourage (hence, the attitude of an archpoet uncertain of the near future yet domineering and, at the same time, liberated, unburdened by the crimes of humans against other humans), while according to Grochowiak "an artist is obliged (...) to keep his feet on the ground, which is why poetry should always be the act of learning to walk."[53]

Despite the fact that the new monograph on Grochowiak's poetry restores his proper place in literary history and defines the trajectories of possible new interpretations of his poetic output, a few fragments raise some doubts, though not considering their underlying concepts or the accuracy of the readings of individual poems, but considering the attempt to decrease the value of the poet's words. After quoting Grochowiak's words from the text *Za każdym razem prawo do rozumu*, in which the poet discussed the events from April 1943 outside the context of the nationalities of those who died and those who were observed, which should not be surprising as that is a manner which offers more benefit when trying to come closer to the experiences of the victims than categorisation.

By choosing universalistic narration, Grochowiak avoided polarisation, which normally triggers stereotypes (ungrateful Jews, indifferent/hostile Poles) explaining that he stood among people who watched the deaths of people being killed by other people, a fact on which Łukasiewicz thus

[52] Marian Kisiel, "Ciemność i blask. O Modlitwie Stanisława Grochowiaka," in idem, *Między wierszami. Jedenaście miniatur krytycznych* (Katowice: The University of Silesia Press, 2015), 91.

[53] Czapliński, *Śmierć, albo o znikaniu*, 53.

commented: "So that way of thinking of a child (devoid of any national labels – comment by A. J.) had to be verbalised by the adult author of the article. It was he who thus remarked on that recollection, he recalled that impression of a child watching horrible events," (507). The final sentence/paragraph, which summarises the discussion of the recollections of the ghetto uprising, reads: "He was already drinking a lot at that time, he had vodka-induced delusions," (507). One can only assume whether that was an editorial error or an intentional tagline of the fragment; regardless, some unpleasant taste after reading it remains. The combination of the uprising and a remark about delusions could be explained as a result of abbreviation since the final part of the book assumed the form of a chronological reconstruction of the poet's biography, yet in further parts Łukasiewicz juxtaposed Grochowiak with other poets who débuted in 1956, and he also noted Grochowiak's reaction to the events of March 1968. Grochowiak's discussed text was published in 1960, i.e. sixteen years prior to his death, so anyone would be hard-pressed to consider it an outcome of his sickness.

Another surprising element is the attempt to juxtapose Grochowiak's prose and poetry based on the criterion of inspiration: "To put things simply, one could talk about two different Grochowiaks' approaches to the literary genres practised by him: about the «inspired» poet and prose writer, playwright and commentator who cherished craftsmanship more. (...) The act of developing stories mainly belonged to the technique, it was on the part of work, but also play. Commissioned work for a radio show or a script were also aspects of craftsmanship," (439). A bit further the researcher continued: "Here (in poetry – A. J.) the starting point is not an idea – thus understood as craftsmanship – but a special internal need to express oneself. The poet himself realised that late in his life. What is «inspired» is the poetic «self», violently uneasy in itself, and that is moral, aesthetic, and emotional unrest. That unrest has two inseparable emotions: fear and love" (441). It would be difficult to consider the division proposed by the researcher as a fortunate one. Suffice to note that many of the poems collection in the *Wiersze nieznane i rozproszone* volume, which Łukasiewicz prepared, had not been previously released as Grochowiak was not satisfied with them. The commentary to that edition explains that the ingenious quality of Grochowiak's texts was an outcome of the interplay between inspiration and craftsmanship:

> He appreciated craft, clarity, convention, and appropriate stylisation. Yet dark images and unclear visions kept flooding in. One could accept them, as Rimbaud, Norwid, and Gajcy did. But even sentences, arranged properly, grammatically – they ruffled. The words in them, verbs in particular, changed their functions and shifted their meanings. Nowhere is it visible as clearly as in his abandoned manuscripts.[54]

The fact of abandoning their release enables one to conclude that poetry is subject to the same writing procedures as prose. One could term

[54] Łukasiewicz, "Wstęp," in S. Grochowiak, *Wiersze nieznane i rozproszone*, 7.

Grochowiak a visionary; so did Łukasiewicz, without forgetting the fact that through texts the talent of craftsman was also revealed. The core of the division is the identification by the researcher of the autobiographical nature of poetry and the act of intimate dissection, which is every instance of writing a poem, and the fact of emphasising the extroverted epic nature of prose (see 443). This division is excessively simple and simplistic, and it follows two principles: the equalling of the poetic persona and the poet, and the splitting of the author from the characters of their prose. To indicate how unfounded Łukasiewicz's assumptions were, it is enough to quote one passage:

> In *Komendantowa* a former prostitute, now a partisan sutler, becomes Fury and Egeria spurring boys to fight, and embracing them tenderly when the fight is over. The release of the short story in 1956 in issue no. 7 of the *Twórczość* journal was major event. *Lamentnice*, and later *Czarna żona*, a story of the love between a young husband and his "black wife," a Jew, who lived on a headland, also mainly depicted the emotions of the characters: his love and her fear. In those short stories (least in *Mord*, styled to resemble a Russian realist classic) the characters are subjective, emotional, and yet allegorical. He controls them like a true poetic persona (179).

Two elements appeared which establish a poetic situation – love and fear – its source is inspiration. So, would prose be devoid of the element of writer's labour and toil? Quite the opposite. The fragment is an indication of a processing of an "inherited" memory of the Holocaust[55]. One could assume that it is *Czarna żona*, the story of a relationship between a Jewish woman and a man in love with her, which illustrated Grochowiak's fears by using the war theme and continued the line of settling the score with broken human morality during the trying period of the Holocaust. For the sake of clarity, one could add that the artist followed a false vision of Sonderkommando when reconstructing the fortunes of Kasia: "My wife is Jewish. During the war she was in a Sonderkommando. They gassed Jews. So, one Dutch woman hid underneath a pile of clothes of her compatriots being gassed. Other Jews in the Sonderkommando found her there. And they stuck a pitchfork into that naked girl while she was still alive. And they tossed her onto a bonfire of clothes from another transport. And my wife attended that."[56] Jews in Sonderkommandos were sadists. That image might have resulted from the attempts to throw all the responsibility on Jews for killing their confreres.

An intrepid reader might decide to search for the inspiration of the title of Łukasiewicz's monograph. It would be hardly satisfactory to simply conclude that poetry was Grochowiak's area and that it constituted the best part of his output. Yet if one recalls the beginning of Grochowiak's self-themed poem *Recenzja*: "Stworzenie świata było procesem poetyckim / We

[55] Sławomir Buryła, *Rozrachunki z wojną* (Warsaw: The Institute of Literary Research of the Polish Academy of Sciences, 2017).

[56] Grochowiak, "Czarna żona," in idem, *Prozy*, 30.

wszystkich błędach / blaskach / I ornitologii"[57] [The creation of the world was a poetic process / In all its mistakes / brilliance / And ornithology], Łukasiewicz's decision becomes sound.

One should also note the researcher's terminological inventiveness as he wrote about the label assigned to Grochowiak:

> Two divergent meanings of Grochowiakian "turpism" become apparent. Turpism as social criticism: it is a landfill replacing a garden. From the side of **constructivist** optimistic **turpism**, it is an installation or a sculpture. In the case of the former, the poetic persona exists outside the image presented in the poem, while in the latter he belongs to that world as part of the installation representing its originator. That work of art is all creation. It is a constructed garden, which is a sharp objection, surely involuntary for the author, a protest of art against the triviality of life severing its ties to it, destroying the relationship of subordination. I create art – from scratch. There are no attempts at mediation here between art and life as forks, knives, a saw with hardened gypsum, and a broken deck chair – that's just material which once transformed, becomes something else in an installation. At any moment, though, the context of the wretched country may be evoked. Then one will not be defenceless against it, as they will have achieved in their work, in their art strength and power (480–481, emphasis – A. J.).

Some still favour the lingering conviction that Grochowiak praised ugliness, and his success was based on aesthetic scandal. It would be difficult to agree with that considering such poems as *Rozbieranie do snu*,[58] *Płonąca żyrafa*, *Wstępowanie*, and *Mikroliryka*. The term "constructivist turpism" indicates the poet's awareness in terms of the utilisation of objects commonly considered as unpoetic. Finally, it indicates the richness of his imagination and the validity of a search for intersections between Grochowiak's poetry and the achievements of avant-garde artists.

The study of Grochowiak's output impresses not only considering the scale of the project (*Poeta Grochowiak* is five-hundred and thirty pages long!), but also considering Łukasiewicz's attempt to embed the poetry in the context of the events which surrounded the development of consecutive collections. *Poeta Grochowiak* as an attempt to organise all the topics which emerged throughout the nearly two decades between the 1956 *Ballada rycerska* and the 1975 *Bilard* is intriguing and aspires to be considered as one of the most important syntheses devoted to Grochowiak's output. The fact that Łukasiewicz's monograph was released at a time of increased interest in Grochowiak's works proves that his poetry has survived the test of time and that it still welcomes new interpretations. With great satisfaction, one notes the polemic potential of the monograph by the Wrocław-based researcher, a fact which makes it more attractive. In trying to fill the gaps in the

[57] Grochowiak, "Recenzja," in idem, *Wiersze nieznane i rozproszone*, 139.

[58] Stanisław Grochowiak, "Turpizm – realizm – mistycyzm." In *Debiuty poetyckie 1944-1960. Wiersze, autointerpretacje, opinie krytyczne*, edited by Jacek Kajtoch, Jerzy Skórnicki (Warsaw: Iskry Publishing House, 1972), 366–372.

reception of Grochowiak's poetry Łukasiewicz often evaluated the quality of the poems Grochowiak published, which only proves that his engagement was genuine and it carried the trademarks of a true passion. One objection which could be formulated upon the reading of *Poeta Grochowiak* is the fact of limiting the poetic material in the poet's surviving manuscripts to the minimum, which is a clear signal that Łukasiewicz mainly appreciates Grochowiak's released poetry. It would be difficult to agree with the statement that "If the poet left religious poems (of various kinds) in non-released collections, then his meta-poetic poems could be found mainly in his released collections" (452). That can be easily verified considering such works as *Dwie poezje*, *Rozchylenie*, *Sowa*, and *Hymn*.

There are things of which Łukasiewicz could be accused, e.g. that his narration is anthropocentric or that he often omitted significant details, yet he equally often uncovered previously unrealised analogies, and he fulfilled the promise of uncovering the mystery of the craft of Grochowiak the poet, included explicitly in the title.

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