

Magdalena Szczypiorska-Mutor

**“The photographic look has something paradoxical about it which is sometimes to be met with in life.”¹
Literary text and other worlds: the case of photography***

Why does this written doe bound through these
written woods?
For a drink of written water from a spring
whose surface will xerox her soft muzzle?
Why does she lift her head; does she hear
something?
Perched on four slim legs borrowed from the truth,
she pricks up her ears beneath my fingertips.
Silence – this word also rustles across the page
and parts the boughs that have sprouted
from the word “woods”.²

1. *“And yet it this scandalous movement which produces
the rarest quality of an air”³*

Roland Barthes explains the “something paradoxical” about the photographic look as being able to look while being unable to see. This strange, heart-rending, uncanny (in the Freudian sense of the term) characteristic of photography is not only a metaphysical game of presence

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¹ Roland Barthes, *Camera Lucida. Reflections on Photography*, trans. Richard Howard (New York: Hill and Wang, 1981), 111.

² Wisława Szymborska, *The Joy of Writing*, trans. Stanisław Barańczak and Clare Cavanagh, in *Poems New and Collected 1957–1997* (Mariner Books, 2000).

³ Barthes, *Camera*, 111.

/ absence, an echo of Benjamin's aura, but it is also – or it may be – a special feature of photography that is present alongside the literary text. Photography, which is linked in various ways to literature, seems to remain a self-contained, autonomous being, which sends its fleeting looks, but does not enter into dialogue with the text on equal terms; it lets itself be seen, but does not see. As Barthes, who constructs an analogy between photography and life, has observed: "It is because the look, eliding vision, seems held back by something interior."⁴

Photography in a literary text is focused on itself, deeply set in the image, in its own certainty of "what has been", in the immobilisation that sets in motion the language trying to describe photography, to grasp it and hold it. Photography seems to be the firm ground of the text, a proof of its realness, the indisputable attestation. Photography exists within the text, its photoliterary existence sends unseeing looks into the world of words, sentences, into the world of the reader's imagination, or, finally, into the world of conceptualisations made by a scholar of literary theory trying to come to grips with photography's paradoxical existence. For the paradox of the look is not the only one of the conceivable paradoxes that are peculiar to photography in its photoliterary existence. One could outline photography's other paradoxical modes of being – suffice it to mention the paradox of presence / absence or the paradox of truth and fiction – that are essential for photography's travels in the world of literature, and essential, too, for the theory attempting to sketch the maps of these journeys. A photograph deludes the onlooker with a sense of presence of the photographed subject, and, at the same time, with a heart-rending absence. A photograph attests to a "truth" – yet it can also undermine that truth, counter it; it evades its own "evidential" propensities.

Precisely these ambiguous qualities seem to be particularly attractive to the literary uses of photography, its literary existence. In addition, these very qualities are of special interest to the theoretical presentations of the presence of photography in a literary text.

2. *Photography and literature: the framework of coexistence*

The coexistence of photography and text in literature is a phenomenon known for almost as long as photography itself; and the diversity of forms that the communal being of the two arts can take, the shifting and multifaceted nature of that diversity, at times surprisingly revealing

⁴ Barthes, *Camera*, 113.

and original, can be difficult to encapsulate in precise categories. In an outline, one could note the transitions from the photo-image, through the photo as a world model, to photography as metaphor. The simplest (though often very sophisticated) type of photography's presence in literature is the illustration photo, an image built into the text, relating in various ways to the relationship between truth and fiction, endowed with the quality of "attesting to" reality and undermining it at the same time (W.G. Sebald's prose is a particularly interesting example of this kind of play with fiction).

Another mode of photography's existence in the text is the photo as motif: at times repeating the game of truth and fiction already set in the presented world, a times a trope, a trace, a figure of remembering and forgetting, a glimmer of another world, another reality. In its links to literature, photography often serves as a rich repertoire of figures related to the photographic practices (posing, close-up / distance, focusing, developing photos, etc.) and to photographic techniques (positive-negative, solarisation, photographic montage, image multiplication, multiple portrait, etc.). Not infrequently, photography in its various aspects also serves as a model of constructing the image (particularly the poetic image). In another variation, what photography has to offer to literature is a rich repository of formulas related to the "photographic" seeing, with particular models of perceiving the world, of watching and experiencing it. In addition (and on another level), photography enriches language, which is inspired by photographic practices, photographic theories, and various strands of the philosophy of photography.

3. *The 1990s*

On the map of literary theory phenomena concerning the coexistence of literature and other arts (fine arts in particular), in the broad understanding of the term "coexistence", the relationship between photography and the literary text has emerged as a more distinct subject in Polish theoretical thought (the few spots of earlier analyses aside) in the early 1990s. Were one to assume – with Paul Edwards, the author of a fundamental study of photoliterature, *Soleil noir. Photographie et littérature des origines au surréalisme*⁵ – that 1992⁶ (the year of the publication

⁵ Paul Edwards, *Soleil noir. Photographie et littérature des origines au surréalisme* (Rennes: Presses Universitaires de Rennes, 2008).

⁶ Edwards characterises the stage preceding this moment of breakthrough by quoting an anecdote about an Oxford professor: when Edwards proposed to write a dissertation on Barthes

of the Lambrechts and Salu bibliography⁷ which comprised a body of texts referencing photography in various ways) had been a particularly significant moment in the study of the relationship between photography and literature – one can note that the heyday of Polish literary theory which poses as its central problem the coexistence of photography and literature, almost exactly coincides with these publications: the emergence of theoretical reflection being only slightly later. This late advent of “photoliterature” as a field of research may be due to the belief, deeply rooted in the early days of photography and its reception, that photography is subordinate to other visual arts, particularly painting, that it takes the ancillary role of recording and documenting, that it is of dubious provenance and has little to do with art. These ways of thinking about photography were changing as new technology developed, as avant-garde movements emerged and flourished across Europe, as a new idea of aesthetics and the theories of perception, visual perception and optics emerged; and, finally, as technology and the media developed, and new social and philosophical contexts began to establish themselves. And yet, it seems that some strands of thought dating back to the first few decades of photography are still present today, if in a transformed and digested guise.

In that respect, Polish photography, whose development and the roles assigned to it were heavily bound up with historical and political circumstances, and with the national and social context, is in a unique position.

4. “An argument in favour of retaining Vilnius and the Vilnius area within the borders of the Second Republic of Poland”⁸

As Lech Lechowicz, who has been following the transformations of Polish photography, has observed, photography in Poland has been clearly bound up with the national and historic context, from the time of the January Rising and the years preceding it (*A Tableau of the Five Fallen* by Karol Beyer, 1861), through the history of the First World War, up until the breakthrough 1918, and later years. Telling examples of Poland’s unique approach to photography include the documentation of the ravages of war and the practical, “utilitarian” use of Jan Bułhak’s photographic records of national heritage. According to Lechowicz,

and photography, the professor dismissed this subject as “unacceptable” at a literary department, as photography was in no way related to the English literary tradition (Edwards, *Soleil*. 9).

⁷ Erich Lambrechts and Luc Salu, *Photography and Literature* (London: Mansell, 1992).

⁸ Lech Lechowicz, *Fotoeseje. Teksty o fotografii polskiej* (Warszawa: Fundacja Archeologia Fotografii, 2010), 20.

Bułhak's Vilnius-themed body of work, completed between 1913 and 1920, played an important role after the end of the First World War, when Poland regained its independence, and the borders of the reborn state were taking shape in complicated political circumstances. In 1922, on the initiative of Ferdynand Ruszczyc, the Polish Foreign Office, seeking to authenticate the bond between the Vilnius Region and the Polish tradition, handed Bułhak's Vilnius picture albums over to the representatives of the League of Nations in Paris. They were regarded as an argument in favour of keeping Vilnius and the Vilnius area within the borders of the Second Republic.⁹

The development of photography in Poland was further influenced by such factors as a longer (compared to the global changes in photography) period of domination of pictorialism, not least in theoretical thought,¹⁰ and only a slight interest in photography on the part of the Polish avant-garde¹¹ (with the exceptions of Mieczysław Szczuka or Stefan and Franciszka Themerson).

As Lechowicz has summed up,

The considerable and lasting impact of political and history-related circumstances on the transformations of Polish photography can be regarded from a variety of angles from today's distant perspective. Both positive and negative outcomes for the history of Poland in later years can be discerned in these transformations. Without a doubt what mattered was the very discovery of photography's capacity for being used in the "national" context. The result had been the discernment of photography's modern (to the degree that one can speak of "modernity" in the nineteenth century) potential, not only as a new form of representing reality, but also as an efficient means of affecting viewers as regards the rather special sphere of national consciousness. Photography was recognised as an instrument of visual persuasions, which not only conveyed an easily decipherable, clear message, but also influenced viewers in their knowledge, attitudes, or their artistic and aesthetic preferences. This had a positive bearing on the process of arriving at specific photographic means related to the image technique

⁹ Lechowicz, *Fotoeseje*, 20.

¹⁰ Lechowicz, *Fotoeseje*, 41. "However, the moderately modern activities taking place during this decade [the 1930s – MS] were not consistent, and did not result in the emergence of a sizeable group of photographers who would represent an unambiguously modern approach ... Paradoxically, the manifestations of modern attitudes appeared alongside a culmination of pictorialism, which found expression in ... new pictorial techniques as well as theoretical reflection."

¹¹ Lechowicz, *Fotoeseje*, 42. "In avant-garde circles, photography did not constitute a separate or distinct field of interest. It seems that the most prominent representatives of the avant-garde failed to see it as an artistic issue, whose analysis might yield conclusions with some bearing on art. In the avant-garde practice, too, instances of referencing the photographic image were few and far between, and did not entail an in-depth consideration of photography itself."

and shaping the form of the image. However, such a heavy burden of national themes and nation-related obligations on creative activity slowed the dynamics of the transformations taking place in art (including photography) at the turn of the nineteenth century, and especially during the inter-war decades.¹²

It is difficult to say unambiguously to what extent the peculiar way in which photography in Poland developed, and the special political and historical contexts at work in the field, have influenced the forms of photography's presence in Polish literature, and Polish reflection in the field of literary theory - one can, however, make a cautious guess that these factors had had some bearing on the fact that nostalgic-elegiac themes appear quite frequently in Polish literature. If such an influence had indeed existed, it was unlikely to have been particularly significant: after all, Polish writers and theoreticians have had their consciousness shaped in equal measure by photography developing by leaps and bounds in its more modern, global guise, and by meta-photographic reflections offered by other scholars.

5. Between painting and film

Among the presentations, in the field of literary theory, of the mutual relations of literature and other arts photography has, for a long time, been situated between painting / drawing / graphic arts and film. Categories of the image and imaging, the recreation and transformation of reality, the issues of mimesis, copy and creation; or questions related to the portrait and self-portrait – were what photography had in common with the former three. With the latter, film, photography shared its way of recording reality and staging it: issues connected with registering events and the structuring of plot, the capabilities of the narrative, the game between movement and keeping still. It was quite late in the day that photography acquired a certain autonomy, and the status of a partner (though not necessarily an equal partner) in the co-operation between literature and photography.

What might be the reason that, as far as the field of literary theory in Poland is concerned, a perceptibly broader scope of texts analysing the relationship between photography and literature, has only emerged in the second half of the 1990s and in later years? It would seem to be due to the presence, more prominent than before, of the motif of photography in literary texts published in the final decade of the twentieth century. The concepts of the (image-related, visual) “iconic turn”, and an interest

¹² Lechowicz, *Fotoeseje*, 23.

in the problems of visibility (W.J.T Mitchell, *The Pictorial Turn*, 1992) have also played a role, as has the publication of Polish translations of the classic works reflecting on the philosophy of the photographic image, in the broad understanding of the term (Roland Barthes *Światło obrazu. Uwagi o fotografii*, 1995; Villem Flusser *Ku filozofii fotografii*, 2004; Edouard Pontremoli *Nadmiar widzialnego. Fenomenologiczna interpretacja fotogeniczności*, 2006; François Soulages, *Estetyka fotografii. Strata i zysk*, 2007; André Rouillé *Fotografia. Między dokumentem a sztuką współczesną*, 2007; Hans Belting *Antropologia obrazu. Szkice do nauki o obrazie*, 2007).

Roland Barthes has remained (and often still remains) the philosophical patron of Polish texts on the relationship between literature and photography. His multifaceted approaches to photography, with the universally applicable concept of the *studium / punctum*, have inspired attempts to utilise the meta-photographic reflection in the analyses of literary texts – even though Barthes hardly elaborates on the relationship between literature and photography.

On the other hand, conceptualisations of this kind can be found in Soulages's writings. Soulages identifies three models of combining texts and photographs: a) texts and photographs produced independently are combined by a person who is not the author of either of those, b) one artist (a writer or a photographer) works on his or her conception drawing on the already existing work of the other, c) the photographer and the writer work together and the result of their co-operation is a union of photography and literature.¹³ In some cases, one author combines photographs and texts in his or her artistic practice (D. Michals, D. Roche, C. Maillard, the Photolangage Group of C. Gattinoni). Soulages describes three practices of co-creating photography and literature: combining texts and photographs, presenting texts and photographs as exhibitions, and a book as a space for co-creating photo-literature.¹⁴ Although this author makes an explicit reference to the co-presence of literature and photography, outlining the potential of this relationship as it were from the outside, his approach seems to have less of an impact on Polish reflections on photoliterature than the philosophical approaches of Barthes or Pontremoli. The latter's considerations, shaped into the form of an essay, have likewise inspired – and continue to inspire – Polish scholars.

¹³ François Soulages, *Esthétique de la photographie: la perte et le reste*. (Paris: Nathan 1998), 311-312.

¹⁴ Soulages, *Esthétique*, 314.

6. *Art, system, specimen*

One can hardly speak of a coherent methodology or theory of the study of the relationship between photography and literature – small wonder, since this subject of study is approached from many different angles: from exploring the relationship between various arts, materials, systems, codes, structures, and signs, through the relation of different media – to analyses of hybrid texts. Mutual influences and interferences have been studied: in the intersemiotic, intertextual, inter- and transmedial approach; in multifaceted analyses concerning both the contexts of photography that have to do with issues of memory, transience, constructing and reconstructing memories, and those related to image anthropology, visuality, and visual perception. Works by Marek Zaleski analysed the relations between photography and literature as seen from the perspective of the mechanisms of memory and recollecting the past (“Jak na fotografii,” in: *Formy pamięci. O przedstawieniu przeszłości w polskiej literaturze współczesnej*, 1996) deserve a mention in this context, and by Bożena Witosz (*Opis a fotografia*, 1998), Antonina Lubaszewska (*W daguerotyp raczej pióro zamieniam*, 1999), Anna Łebkowska (*Fotografia jako empatyczna mediacja*, 2004), Ryszard Przybylski (*Jak fotografia zahacza o rzeczywistość? A jak literatura wiąże się z fotografią?*, 2004) and Maryla Hopfinger who discussed the relation of words and photographic images in various contexts (*Doświadczenia audiowizualne. O mediach w kulturze współczesnej*, 2003; *Literatura i media po 1989 roku*, 2010). The above examples of conceptualising the relations between photography and literature present an inspiring repertory of theoretical and analytical approaches (from Norwid to Szewc) and illustrate the development of literary studies in Poland regarding their photo-literary contexts.

7. *“Desire, cognition, transience”*

Cezary Zalewski’s monograph on literature and photography – the first book of its kind in Polish literary studies – was published in 2010, although individual texts comprising it had been appearing slightly earlier: from 2002 to 2010. As regards theory, the “Introduction” to Zalewski’s book references the following names: Marshall McLuhan (*Zrozumieć media: przedłużenie człowieka*, 2004), Susan Sontag (*O fotografii*, 1986), Dorota Różycka (*Autorzy i ich maski. O fotografiach pisarzy współczesnych*, w: *Teatr wielki, mniejszy i codzienny*, 2002), Adam Dziadek (*Obrazy i wiersze: z zagadnień interferencji sztuk w polskiej poezji współczesnej*, 2004), Marian Stala (“Przeciw fotografii. O jednym wierszu Zbigniewa

Herberta,” in *Poznawanie Herberta 2*, 2000), Erazm Kuźma (“Granice porównywalności poezji z malarstwem i filmem (Na przykładzie wczesnej fazy polskiej poezji awangardowej),” in *Pogranicza i korespondencje sztuk: studia*, 1980), Ulrich Weisstein (“Literatura i sztuki wizualne,” in *Antologia zagranicznej komparatystyki literackiej*, 1997), Michał Paweł Markowski (“Ēkphrasis. Uwagi bibliograficzne z dołączeniem krótkiego komentarza,” *Pamiętnik Literacki 2*, 1999) and Marek Zaleski, Bożena Witosz, Anna Łebkowska, François Soulages and André Rouillé.

This set of names and issues appears symptomatic for the presentations of the relationship between literature and photography rooted in the field of literary theory: the subject matter of the referenced works touches upon such issues as the media, photography-memory-literature, the analogy between photography and poetry, the description-photography-arrangement relationship, the discontinuity between literature and photography, the difference between drawing inspiration from photography and from painting, between the subject and ekphrasis.

Zalewski characterises the essential assumptions underlying his work as follows:

Therefore the issues introduced by means of functional analogies retain their foremost, prominent position. This is because the theme of photography in Polish literature has at least three implications. [...] The first of these is related to desire, and hence it can be realised within emotional relationships to do with recorded representations of [a character’s] loved ones. The second concerns the epistemological facet of a photograph, which, when perceived or visualised, brings the characters specific knowledge (or self-knowledge). The third strand focuses on temporal, thanatological and eschatological questions, demonstrating the ways in which photography records the passing away of human existence. Thus the triple context of desire, cognition and transience, in which the photographic theme is often placed, becomes the final criterion for selection.¹⁵

The issue of representation, which is essential for, and recurrent in, Zalewski’s work, is developed and summarised in the concluding chapter, where the author argues that “by entering the field of literature, photography becomes subject to the representation strategies which dominate that field at that particular time.”¹⁶ As Zalewski explains, “this is because, when presented as a subject, photography uses the autonomy

¹⁵ Cezary Zalewski, *Pragnienie, poznanie, przemijanie. Fotograficzne reprezentacje w literaturze polskiej* (Kraków: Universitas, 2010), 10.

¹⁶ Zalewski, *Pragnienie*, 291–292.

it usually enjoys outside the field of literature.”¹⁷ Referencing the four models of representation proposed by Michał Paweł Markowski¹⁸ – the epistemological, the ontological, the apophatic, and the aesthetic – Zalewski approaches them from a photographic-literary angle, supplementing his interpretation with text analyses, and cultural and literary-history context.

Subject bibliography, listing not only the writings analysed in the book, but also other works which take photography as a major theme, is an essential feature of Zalewski’s monograph. Another interesting cognitive aspect of the bibliography has to do with dividing texts into epochs: the frequency of photographic motifs in Polish literature in individual periods of literary history is thus presented deliberately (if not particularly methodically). Zalewski lists 24 items for positivism, 17 for turn-of-the-century modernism known as the “Young Poland” movement, 40 for the two inter-war period and 303 in the post-war years; with pieces published in the last decade of the twentieth century and later comprising almost half of this last group.

It seems that Zalewski’s book, being the first Polish monograph to offer a broader presentation of the relationship between photography and literature, is endowed with many of the characteristics of Polish reflection in the field of literary theory as it attempts to describe photoliterature (in the broad understanding of the term): a broad analytical spectrum and diversity of subject matter combined with a casual methodology, which makes no attempts to impose strict, clear-cut categories.

8. “*In search of reality*”

Like Zalewski, Marta Koszowy, the author of the second monograph of photography in Polish literature (*In Search of Reality. The Mediating Role of Photography in Polish Literature*, 2013) recognises as essential the problem of representation; unlike him, however, she emphasises somewhat different aspects of the relationship between literature and photography: those that are the result of understanding photography as a figure which offers a way of experiencing reality. Koszowy stresses the role of a photograph as mediator between the text and the world, and distinguishes between three models of that mediation: the referential model (“conveying the proximity of the world and its plenitude, rooting

¹⁷ Zalewski, *Pragnienie*, 292.

¹⁸ Michał Paweł Markowski, “O reprezentacji,” in *Kulturowa teoria literatury. Główne pojęcia i problemy*, ed. M.P. Markowski and R. Nycz (Kraków: Universitas, 2006).

the subject in reality”¹⁹, analysed on [various] examples: Paweł Huelle, *Mercedes-Benz*, Marek Zagańczyk, *Droga do Sieny*, Janusz Anderman, *Fotografie*, Jacek Dehnel, *Fotoplastikon*, Wojciech Nowicki, *Dno oka*, Wojciech Bruszewski, *Fotograf*), the fragmentary model (“partial, placing the subject at a remove from the world”²⁰ – on an example of Stefan Chwin, *Hanemann* and *Esther*, Jarosław Marek Rymkiewicz, *Umschlagplatz*, Andrzej Stasiuk, *Jadąc do Babadag*) and the apophatic model (“through a photograph, the world is experienced in negative terms, it is a sphere of longing for presence”²¹ – on an example of Piotr Szewc, *Zagłada* and Magdalena Tulli, *Sny i kamienie*, *W czerwieni*, *Tryby*, *Skaza*).

Analysing the attractiveness – and the vivid presence – of the photographic motif in Polish literature of the last three decades, Koszowy points out that the popularity of this motif is due to

the special way of understanding photography. In a text, the photograph is more than simply illustration or theme; instead it penetrates the structure and message of the text, changing its shape and its meaning. Photography becomes a metaphor for a writer’s strategy, attempting to add more depth to the image-related aspect of the text; in addition, it points [the reader] in the direction of the world. The aim of these efforts is to bring the text closer to the photographic image; they try to persuade readers that the story is based on the photograph (even though the picture per se might be absent from the book), and that photographs make the world accessible. Such uses of photography in literature may testify to the role photography plays in the shaping of a literary reference to reality.²²

In her “Prolegomena”, the author cites the following names of esteemed theoreticians: Ulrich Weisstein, Anna Zeidler-Janiszewska, Maryla Hopfinger, W.J.T. Mitchell, Roland Barthes, Jane Rabb, François Brunet, Bernd Stiegler, William Fox Talbot, François Soulages, Cezary Zalewski, Marek Zaleski, Anna Łebkowska, Walter Benjamin, Susan Sontag, Georges Didi-Huberman, Edouard Pontremoli, and Rosalind Krauss.

Names of scholars associated with the iconic turn (W.J.T. Mitchell, Anna Zeidler-Janiszewska), and scholars whose interests encompass theory and history of art (Georges Didi-Huberman, Rosalind Krauss), are a significant novelty in comparison to Zalewski’s book.

¹⁹ Marta Koszowy, *W poszukiwaniu rzeczywistości. Mediacyjna rola fotografii w literaturze polskiej* (Kraków: Universitas, 2013), 17.

²⁰ Koszowy, *W poszukiwaniu rzeczywistości*, 17.

²¹ Koszowy, *W poszukiwaniu rzeczywistości*, 17.

²² Koszowy, *W poszukiwaniu rzeczywistości*, 17.

9. "Photolanguages"

The third vital moment in the development of Polish reflection, in the field of literary theory, on the relationship between photography and literature, was the publication of a thematic issue of the *Teksty Drugie* journal, subtitled "Fotojęzyki" ["Photolanguages"]. "What is it that sets photography apart from other images?" asks Katarzyna Bojarska in her article "A Word on Photography":

And what is it about its relationship to reality – both textual and extratextual – that is still so fascinating and disturbing to us today? What would be conclusive for determining the photographic nature of photography, what would distinguish it from the visual field of the present? Why would we reflect, today of all times, on the position of the photographic image in relation to the literary, critical and theoretical text?²³

The contents of the issue, mosaic-like in its choice of themes and problems, aptly capture the variety of presentations of, and approaches to, "photolanguages": issues related to the metaphysical and technical contexts of photographic language in its early days²⁴, maps and map metaphors²⁵, issues of affective violence, ethics, and aesthetics on the example of Strzeмиński's collages²⁶, American photographer-writer pairs²⁷, artistic practices concerning memory and the Shoah, community and co-memory²⁸, women in the modernist public sphere²⁹, the poetry of Paul

²³ Bojarska, "Słowo o fotografii," *Teksty Drugie* 4 (2013):6.

²⁴ Małgorzata Maria Grąbczewska, "Miscellanea photographica. Narodziny języka fotografii," *Teksty Drugie* 4 (2013).

²⁵ Elżbieta Rybicka, "Mapy. Od metafory do kartografii krytycznej," *Teksty Drugie* 4 (2013).

²⁶ Luiza Nader, "Afektywna przemoc. *Moim przyjaciółom Żydom* Władysława Strzeмиńskiego," *Teksty Drugie* 4 (2013).

²⁷ Paweł Mościcki, "Migawki z bliskich spotkań. Fotografia, literatura i historia," *Teksty Drugie* 4 (2013).

²⁸ Dorota Głowacka, "Sztuka i wspólnota. Artystyczna refleksja nad Shoah jako otwarcie się na inność," *Teksty Drugie* 4 (2013).

²⁹ Agnieszka Dauksza, "Klientki pierwszych domów towarowych. O potencjale emancypacyjnym kobiecego konsumeryzmu," *Teksty Drugie* 4 (2013).

Celan and the figure of language and silence³⁰, practising postmemory³¹, the interpretation of Gadamer's "The Relevance of the Beautiful"³², Mieke Bal's concept of "reading" paintings³³ and the critical approach to her arguments³⁴, the analyses of photographic motifs in Turgenev's "Clara Militch"³⁵ and in "Annihilation" by Piotr Szewc.³⁶ The issue also included translations of essays.³⁷ This diversity of subject matter demonstrates not only the wealth of themes and motifs derived from photography, but also the potential of the strands which had been barely hinted at. It seems that the "Photolanguages" issue is an apt representation of what remains an open question-problem: how to write on photography and literature, on photography and its contexts which are set in other arts and artistic practices. The content of "Photolanguages" could, moreover, be regarded as symptomatic for the Polish way of thinking about photography, which relies heavily on the concepts and problem-based approaches arrived at by French, American and British scholars – although the Polish take on these is often highly original.

10. "Something paradoxical"

Set against the background of other arts, interacting in various ways with literature – painting, drawing, graphic art, typography, film,

³⁰ Paweł Piszczatowski, "Poza krąg mowy. Poetologiczne funkcje milczenia w wierszach Paula Celana z tomu *Sprachgitter*," *Teksty Drugie* 4 (2013).

³¹ Aleksandra Ubertowska, "Praktykowanie *postpamięci*. Marianne Hirsch i fotograficzne widma z Czernowitza," *Teksty Drugie* 4 (2013).

³² Paweł Dybel, "Sztuka jako święto w hermeneutyce Hansa-Georga Gadamera," *Teksty Drugie* 4 (2013).

³³ Łukasz Zaremba, "Pocztówki z podróży? Obrazy wizualne w lekturze Mieke Bal," *Teksty Drugie* 4 (2013).

³⁴ Maciej Maryl, "Sztuka czytania? Mieke Bal w teorii i w praktyce," *Teksty Drugie* 4 (2013).

³⁵ Magdalena Szczypiorska-Mutor, "'Ta sama szara lalka patrząca w bok'. Fotografia, tożsamość i różnica w *Klarze Milicz* Iwana Turgieniewa," *Teksty Drugie* 4 (2013).

³⁶ Marta Koszowy, "Zdjęcie jako figura powtórzenia i nieobecności w *Zagładzie* Piotra Szewca," *Teksty Drugie* 4 (2013).

³⁷ Jonathan J. Long, "Paratextual profusion: Photography and text in Bertolt Brecht's *War Primer*," *Poetics Today* 29 (2008), 197–224, ["Paratekstualna obfitość. Fotografia i tekst w *Elementarzu wojennym* Bertolta Brechta," trans. Adam Lipszyc, *Teksty Drugie* 4 (2013), 121–145]; Michael W. Jennings, "Do Not Fade Away: Face of German history in Michael Schmidt's *Ein-Heit*," *October* 106 (2003), 137–150, ["Nie blaknij. Oblicza niemieckiej historii w *Ein-Heit* Michaela Schmidta," trans. Krzysztof Pijarski, *Teksty Drugie* 4 (2013), 146–158]; Ulrich Baer, "Photography and hysteria: Toward a poetics of the flash," in Baer, *Spectral evidence: The photography of trauma* (Cambridge (Mass): MIT Press, 2002), 25–60, ["Fotografia i histeria. Ku poetyce flesza," trans. Katarzyna Bojarska, *Teksty Drugie* 4 (2013), 159–187].

choreography, architecture, and others – photography paired with literature occupies a somewhat paradoxical position: evident almost from its earliest days in photoliterary co-operation, and yet hardly present at all in the reflections proposed by literary theory (not just literary theory in Poland: an absence of well-developed reflection on photography in the work of Russian formalists, whose interests extended to almost every field of art, is notable).

Paraphrasing Barthes, one could note that there is something paradoxical not just in the photographic look, but also in looking at photography; in the theoretical look on its multidimensional, profound and fascinating relations with literature. If by “something paradoxical” about the photographic look Barthes understands being able to look while being unable to see, the “something paradoxical” about looking at photography would describe photography’s ability to look, while being barely visible in the studies conducted in the field of literary theory.

Abstract

The subject of this article is an aspect of relations between literature and photography, analysed from the perspective of Polish literary theory. The most important aspects of this depiction are the confines of the coexistence of literature and photography, characteristics of Polish photography, literature-photography relations on the background of other kinships ‘between the signs’, review of the most important Polish researches, possible fields of research and paradoxes of their chronology.

Key words: photography, literature, theory, image, text, presence, absence, memory