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The Left Hand of The Structuralist*

The “right hand, left hand” metaphor used above was devised by Jerome Bruner. The right hand symbolises a rational type of creativeness, subject to harmony and order – an academic type of creativeness. The left hand, however, embodies an intuitive, irregular, and inconclusive creativeness – a poetic (literary) creativeness.¹ Our purpose is to describe the “left-handed” writing of the generally “right-handed” authors – representatives of the formalist and structuralist trend in Polish literary theory in the 20th century.

Jerzy Kwiatkowski, after reading the *Maski Dionizosa* [Masks of Dionysus] by Michał Głowiński, said approvingly that the author of *Powieść młodopolska* [Novel of the Young Poland Period] was “skipping classes”.² This humorous remark was directed to the colleague from the Institute of Literary Research (Polish: Instytut Badań Literackich), who “allowed himself” to depart from his academic character of literary theory inquiry. In the history of Polish literary theory of 20th century there may be found more meaningful examples of such “skipping classes”. In the text *Badacze literatury jako literaci* [Literary Critics as Writers] Henryk Markiewicz listed the names of literary scholars, who, within their literary activity, distanced themselves from their own academic activity. His list included i.a. the pastiches of Stanisław Tarnowski, which were a satire on the history of literature discourse, which was established by Tarnowski

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¹ J. Bruner, *On Knowing. Essays for the Left Hand* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1962).

² Głowiński mentioned this in his autobiography *Kręgi obcości. Opowieść autobiograficzna* (Cracow, 2010), 244.

himself (*Czyściec Słowackiego* [Słowacki's Purgatory], 1904), the obscene epigrams of Edward Porębowicz, translator of the *Divine Comedy* (*Rymy ucieszne* [Droll Rhymes], 1937), the humorous autobiography in verse form of the author of national bibliography of Karol Estreicher (*Autobiografia wierszem* [Autobiography in Verse], 1891), the sentimental novel *Pierwsza miłość* [*First Love*] (1894) by twenty-seven year old linguist Jan Rozwadowski, the impressionistic *Sztychy* [Engravings] (1925) of Juliusz Kleiner, which were sent to Żeromski, or the well-known pastiches of Kazimierz Wyka (*Duchy poetów podstuchane* [Spirits of the Poets Overheard], 1959).

Markiewicz's list may be supplemented by many examples of scholars-authors from the second half of the 20th century and the beginning of the 21st century. It is also worth noting that Markiewicz, while describing his close circle of Cracovian literary critics, paid less attention to the literature created by the scholars associated with the formalist and structuralist leading trend in Polish literary theory. He explained this decision by the fact that the scientific approach, which was characteristic for formalists and structuralists, was not favourable for creating literature.³

The scientisation of discourse stemmed from the desire to break away from nationalist, patriotic, and freedom-oriented ideology before the war, to universalise literary science and history, whereas after the war, from creating an opposition to Marxism in literary studies. Taking an uninvolved, impersonal approach to literature was both a guarantee of objectivity and a reaction to the specific political conditions that favoured the institutionalisation of humanist sciences. What was understood as an academic approach, might go uneasily with literary or essayistic writing, which is characterised by a strong subjectivisation of speech, even if it is taken into consideration that scientism in Polish literary theory was not orthodox (as in French narratology or Tartu semiotics).

However, Polish formalists and structuralists also created literature. The patron of Polish formalists and at the same time one of the authors of modern Polish versology, Kazimierz Wóycicki, began his activity with literature. In 1902 the scholar published the volume of poetic prose *Żeglarze* [Sailors]. This work is interesting for at least two reasons. Firstly, because of the fact that Wóycicki, the future versologist, clearly rhymed the prose, apparently testing in practice what he later analysed

³ *Vide*: "neither supporters of Marxism at that time [with reference to the half of 20th century – AH], nor after structuralists were not strictly literary ambitions [...] The generalisation may be pointed out that scientific tendencies in literary theory are suppressive with regard to this issue." Henryk Markiewicz, "Badacze literatury jako literaci," in *Zabawy literackie dawne i nowe* (Cracow: Universitas, 2003), 238.

as theoretical description. Secondly, because what fascinated the Young Poland movement, symbolic stylistics – explicit in *Żeglarze* – was not contrary to the further academic activity of Wóycicki, that is constituting ground for the modern “revolutionary” theory of literature. (In contrast, it should be remembered that among the Russian formalists, in particular within the Society for the Study of Poetic Language, the grounds for the theory of literature, were rooted in a fascination with extremely different aesthetics – futuristic, revolutionary, and expressly antisymbolic). Here is the fragment of *Żeglarze*:

I was lying on a needle-cover in the pinewood. The book I had brought was put under my head and through the branches of the trees I looked at the sky. The forest was silent; the silence was slowly moving between the high pine trees. A decayed twig fell from the high branch at times and this light rustle even more emphasised the tranquillity of nature. The afternoon sun came up in the sky, the world was frozen in the scorching heat of that July day. It seemed that at that time nothing existed: life, death, fight, desires, but only semiconscious existence in the middle of heat and silence. I was lying with my eyes closed, filled with peace.⁴

It may be assessed that *Żeglarze* is the work of young scholar, searching for his own way. However, Wóycicki was not the only one. There may be found a more representative example of scholar than Roman Ingarden, who presented modern theoretical views with regard to reading material set by schools. However, continuing with the professional literary scholars – the other modern scholar fascinated by “non-modern” literature was the brilliant disciple of Wóycicki, Franciszek Siedlecki. He also, like his master, was fascinated with symbolism, which was not in conflict with the fact that he, together with Stefan Żółkiewski and other members of the Warsaw Students Circle, promoted formalism in literary theory. Siedlecki, who wrote to Roman Jakobson in a letter in 1941 that “the purpose of knowledge is to grasp fitting strands or aspects of reality in smart systems of checkable and factual sentences” and that “rationality must renounce [...] committing idiography in nomographic sciences”⁵ – only four years earlier had published in *Skamander* the fragments of poetic novel about Alexander Blok and Russian symbolists. In this way Siedlecki reconstructed the world view of symbolists like Blok:

⁴ Kazimierz Wóycicki, *Żeglarze* (Warsaw, 1902), 8.

⁵ Franciszek Siedlecki, “List polskiego badacza,” in *Pisma* [Works], ed. Maria Renata Mayenowa and Stefan Żółkiewski (Warsaw: Państwowy Instytut Wydawniczy, 1989), 78.

The thoughts of an artist, a dreamer (who of them dared not to dream?...), poet...: are all of them lost to us? An alien and hostile reality nodded with a gloomy silence. To reject it, turn back from it with contempt, erase the inconceivable, incoherently alien, unapproachable and hated outline of the surrounding, advancing reality, shatter it into a million atoms, and all those shards, atoms and shrapnel – all relics! – of a dying old world, completely different, and in a new fashion, exposed by rays of a spirited glance, to see through it, unmask its delusion, by which it sacrifices something that is no longer a delusion: behind a worldly, nightmarish existence, between the decay and downfall, encounter a different, real existence. To read its mystical signs from rose petals, from the thundering of a waterfall, from the chirping of birds.

Admittedly, this is the free indirect speech and not the voice of the author himself, but it is enough to read his narrative poem for children *Muzykantów było sześciu. Ballada o liskach* [There Were Six Musicians. The Ballade about Fox Cubes] published by him during the occupation period in order to strengthen the belief that Siedlecki was not the one experimenting in aesthetics.

Siedlecki died young in 1942. There is also known one more female representative of his generation, also and primarily – versologist, who was engaged in writing poetry: that is Maria Dłuska. Her first lyric poetry *Dzwony* [Bells] was published in 1916 (the future scholar was sixteen then), and the selection of her poems, written during her whole life was published in 1992.⁶ Among those works there may be found sincere, not excessively concept-based poetry: ****(Śnią mi się wiersze...* [I Dream about Poems...]), *Strofa Tuwimowska* [The Tuwimian Strophe], *Szymon Stupnik* [Simeon Stylites], *Ten, którego nie spotkam* [The One I Will Not Meet] and others.

In the history of Polish literature principally there stood out the younger generations of the formalist and structuralist schools. In the first place Edward Balcerzan is worth mentioning as an author, who throughout his writing career was “two-handed”, and who firstly appeared as a poet in 1955 in *Życie i Kultura* [Life and Culture] (the literary supplement to *Głos Szczeciński* [Voice of Szczecin]). Between 1956–1957 Balcerzan published the poems in the weekly *Ziemia i Morze* [Land and Sea], and in the period 1960–2007 he published in total five volumes of poetry, and is known as a representative of the linguistic trend, the brilliant author of *moskaliki*,⁷ and also an excellent translator (he translated i.a. the poetry of Boris Pasternak and Gennadiy Aygi). It is worth noting that the scholar

⁶ Maria Dłuska, *Wiersze*, ed. Stanisław Dziedzic (Bochnia: Exartim, 1992).

⁷ A type of short and humorous rhyme.

also dealt in that period with translatology, the theory and criticism of literature, dedicating one of his well-known theses to lyrical strategies in poetry. He is also the author of two novels (*Pobyt* [The Stay] 1964, *Któż by nas, takich pięknych* [Who Would Have Us, Such Beautiful...], 1972), a literary autobiography (*Perehenia i słoneczniki* [Perehenia and Sunflowers], 2003) and the compilation of autobiographical and reminiscent essays and columns (*Zuchwałstwa samoświadomości* [Insolences of Self-Awareness], 2005). A good summary of the long-term, academic and literary activity of Balcerzan may be his own words: “the critic again and again speaks in a language, the so-called, discreetly autobiographical”.⁸

The writing career of Michał Głowiński was directed in a different way. His literary and self-documentary debut was *Czarne sezony* [Black Seasons] (1998), the record of a traumatic experience from the occupation period published as a recognised classic of theory and literature history. However, Głowiński has been creating his literary works since the second half of the seventies – a collection of short forms, including the oneiric descriptions of phantasmal anxiety and dreams, was published in 1998 under the title *Przywidzenia i figury. Małe szkice* [Shapes and Delusions. Small Drafts] 1977–1997. After ten years the scholar published the continuation of this volume: *Fabule przerywane. Małe szkice* [The Plots Interrupted. Small Drafts] 1998–2007. In addition, Głowiński himself encourages us to read his academic and essayistic texts in the autobiographic manner: e.g. by admitting that his motivation to write the essay about the figure of the labyrinth in culture (*Mity przebrane* [Disguised Myths] 1990) was the will to remedy the claustrophobic anxiety acquired during the war. The more inquisitive reader will find more autobiographic inspirations and motivations in the academic literary output of this brilliant scholar. Then, there are also clearly of autobiographical character the works written in the most recent period of creativeness: the novel *Magdalenka z razowego chleba* [The Rye Bread Madeleine] (2001), the narrations *Historia jednej topoli* [The Story of One Poplar] (2003) and *Kładka nad czasem* [The Footbridge over Time] (2006), autobiography *Kręgi obcości* [Circles of Alienation] (2010) or the recently published collection of narrations *Carska filiżanka* [The Tsarist Cup] (2016). There should be added that this pertains to the works appreciated by the various groups, and also noticed by the readers and scholars dealing with i.a. the issue of trauma and representation in literature. This, which Głowiński originally described as “extending his emploi”, may be deemed as the parallel, and quite

⁸ Edward Balcerzan, *Kręgi wtajemniczenia* (Cracow, 1982), 387.

fundamental activity of this author. It is, however, difficult not to perceive that although the author of *Style odbioru* [The Styles of Reception] is currently involved in examining literary works, the language of his analyses no longer resembles the rigorous, impersonal character of academics from the fifties and sixties.

It is worthwhile underlining the role which in the seventies was being played by the periodical *Teksty* edited by numerous supporters of structuralist methodology (Janusz Sławiński, Edward Balcerzan and others). Not only did the abovementioned periodical include articles of informal nature,⁹ but it also established the *Autobiografia* [Autobiography] and *Przechadzki* [Strolls] columns, in which the publication of works of literary nature, most often originating from literary scholars, were admitted. Among others, Danuta Danek enjoyed the hospitality of those columns, at a time before she published the theoretical book *Dzieło literackie jako książka: o tytułach i spisach rzeczy w powieści* [The Literary Work as a Book: On Titles and Indexes in Novels] (1981). Let me present a fragment from one of a few pieces of poetic prose from the seventies published by Danek. The scholar describes her impressions regarding the visit to the Louvre, in the wing in which the Renaissance sculptures were stored:

[...] our sight turns to [...] the front, flat sculpture of the sarcophagus wall. How come! We still do not believe and we take another half a step. Horror!... In the deadly sheet there lies the outstretched and limp, naked, and dead body. We can count its every bone. Every tendon. Every fold of the destroyed face. Every suffering. Hardly seen, dry, old breast and loose hair make us think that it is a woman. Here is the body in its naked truth. Here is death without any cover.¹⁰

Zofia Mitosek should also be included in the group of scholars, who attempted to create literature (although that was at a later stage of an academic career in comparison to Danek). The author of *Teorie badań literackich* [The Theories of Literature] published in 2006 the self-referential ironic prose quasi-reminiscent *Pelargonie*, and in 2015 she published the fragment of her fiction journal *Dziecię PRL-u* [Child of the Polish People's Republic].¹¹ Both works, it is worth noting, may be interpreted with conceptual and methodological instruments, which

⁹ Vide e.g. the article of an employee of the Institute of Literary Research, Roman Zimand, "Siuzet – co to za zwierzę?," (*Teksty* 6, 1972), in which the academic issues are described in language far from the formal rigor.

¹⁰ Danuta Danek, "Ciała (poemat semiologiczny)," *Teksty* 6 (1973): 190.

¹¹ Zofia Mitosek, "Dziecię PRL-u," *Przegląd Filozoficzno-Literacki* 41 (2015).

Mitosek implements as a scholar (fiction and reference, types of narrative, and irony).

It is an open question as to how the academic achievement of another known scholar Anna Sobolewska, dealing with issues of internal experience, contributed to creation of her autobiographical book *Cela. Odpowiedź na zespół Downa* [Cecilia. The Answer to the Down's Syndrome] (2002). The author describes there the development and upbringing of a daughter with Down's syndrome. It should be also pointed out that the book of an essayistic and academic character published a year after *Cela...* (*Maski Pana Boga* [The Masks of God] 2003) is distinguished by a less rigorous formality in comparison with the previous scholarly creativity of Sobolewska.

Stanisław Balbus, the disciple of Maria Dłuska, decided to publish literary work at a later stage in his academic career. In 2015 there came out his reminiscent book dedicated to his deceased partner (*Zosia* [Sophie]). The work has a *silva rerum* character: the author includes there his intimate memoirs, portraits of the title heroine, and poems. Balbus was earlier known as a poet: his limericks may be found in a book dedicated to Teresa Walas (*Liber limericorum* 1997). The author of *Między stylami* [Among Styles] is also deemed – together with Jacek Baluch, another great literary scholar and the author of a humorous poetic trifle¹² – to have written a series of humorous and obscene limericks (“dick limericks”).

Stanisław Barańczak, the disciple of Jerzy Ziomek and Edward Balcerzan, was less known as an academic, (PhD: *Język poetycki Mirona Białoszewskiego* [The Poetic Language of Miron Białoszewski], 1973), who until 1981 had been working at the University of Adam Mickiewicz in Poznań, and later gave lectures at i.a. Harvard. His poetic works are widely known not only in Poland, starting with his poetic debut (*Korekta twarzy* [Facial Corrections] 1968), and ending with the last published book of poems (*Chirurgiczna precyzja* [Surgical Precision] 1998). As a translator, he became most famous for his translations of Shakespeare's plays. Barańczak, what is more, was also an important translato-logist (*Ocalone w tłumaczeniu. Szkice o warsztacie tłumaczenia poezji* [Saved in Translation: Sketches on the Craft of Translating Poetry] 1992).

The disciple of Balcerzan was also another poet Piotr Michałowski. The achievements of this undoubtedly “two-handed” author may be illustrated by the numbers: between 1984 and 2014 he published eight volumes of his poems (since 2014 he has been writing poems in Spanish),

¹² Baluch also published the satirical handbook of writing limericks, vide his *Jak układać limeryki? Poradnik praktyczny wraz z ćwiczeniami dla początkujących i zaawansowanych* (Cracow, 2013).

and between 1999–2014 – five books of an academic character mostly pertaining to the theory of poetry.

Among the scholars of the younger generation there are many poets and prose writers, however, it is difficult to summarise their achievements now. Nevertheless, it is worth mentioning an author representing the unnoticeable and unappreciated field: the theory of comics – Wojciech Birek. The examination of comics art requires the structural concept, resembling the concept of belles-lettres and literariness in the first decades of the 20th century. Birek combines the theory with the broad practice: not only is he the author of original comics, but also he is the translator and a member of the jury appraising the best comics. He might have been inspired – like his older writing colleagues – by the maxim of Victor Shklovsky, that every scholar of novels should know how to write a novel, even of bad quality, otherwise he is a loser.

The abovementioned necessarily short list of authors is aimed at realising the scale of this phenomenon. The list of representatives of the broadly defined formalist and structuralist formation more or less dealing with literature may be supplemented, taking into account examples such as: a) rare literary attempts (e.g. the scenario drafted by Manfred Kridl on the basis of the *Faraon* [Pharaoh] of Bolesław Prus and his Chekhov-like drama *Wielki szyderca* [The Great Scoffer]¹³, or Włodzimierz Bolecki's fragment of the novel *Chack*¹⁴ authorship and coauthorship of documentary film scenarios and the feature film *Ostatni dzwonek* [The Last Ring] (1989) directed by Magdalena Łazarkiewicz); b) translation activity including texts in the scope of belles-lettres (e.g. Bogumiła Kaniewska's translations of *The Secret Garden*, *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, and *Through the Looking-Glass, and What Alice Found There*, the cycle on *Emily of New Moon*, Colin Meloy's *Wildwood* and *The Wizard of Oz*); c) occasional activity of an autobiographical character (e.g. the essays *Esprit d'escalier, czyli rzecz o prywatnej metodologii* [Esprit d'Escalier, Or a Draft on Private Methodology]¹⁵ and *Moje drogi na Kresy* [My Roads to the Eastern Borderlands]¹⁶ of Kazimierz Bartoszyński).

¹³ Manfred Kridl Papers, Bakhtmeteff Archive (Columbia University Rare Books and Manuscripts Library), No. 0215, Box 15. This information was included thanks to Danuta Ulicka.

¹⁴ Włodzimierz Bolecki, "Chack", in *Maski współczesności. O literaturze i kulturze XX wieku*, ed. L. Burska and M. Zaleski (Warsaw: Wydawnictwo IBL PAN, 2001).

¹⁵ Kazimierz Bartoszyński, "Esprit d'escalier, czyli rzecz o prywatnej metodologii," *Teksty Drugie* 16 (1992).

¹⁶ Kazimierz Bartoszyński, "Moje drogi na Kresy," in *Dialog – komparatystyka – literatura*, ed. E. Kasperski and D. Ulicka (Warsaw: ASPRA, 2002).

Also worthy of note, last but not least, is the scholar mostly unequivocally associated, with scientism and the professionalisation of the discourse of literary theory, Janusz Sławiński. Although the achievements of this author include a lot of texts written in academic language, Sławiński certainly could be deemed a wordsmith. The author of work *Dzielo-język-tradycja* [Work–Language–Tradition] was, what is important, a scholar from the very beginning interested in the issue of language and its poetic, philosophical and literary theory conceptualisations. He was also the scholar dealing with meta and auto reflection within his own academic activity: the ending of his PhD thesis is the type of the non-common at that time (in 1965), self-conscious and introspective recapitulation.¹⁷ The consideration of differences between philosophical and literary discourse,¹⁸ doubtful as to of academic speech, influenced the later period of Sławiński's writing. In the seventies, the scholar published the columnist and essayistic “editorials” in the periodical *Teksty*, published collectively in 1990 in the volume *Teksty i teksty* [Texts and Texts]. Generally speaking, these texts are typologically and logically justified arguments, specified by a thesis, but also stressing the social, cultural, historical, or political situation of the writing scholar. It is worth noting that Sławiński, the leading representative of Polish school of structuralism of the second half of 20th century, who could be associated with the explicit, neopositivist divisions in the subjective sphere of art and the objective sphere of science, in the works from the seventies and eighties, clearly avoided this type of dualists. That is how he described the stereotype of “bookworm”:

We know that the dramatised stereotype of the philologist [...] is irrelevant in the sense that it doesn't give the slightest possibility of movement in between cultural texts other than language-oriented ones. [...] our philologist doesn't know how to move in the area of sports, handiwork, or as a head of the family. It is impossible for him to reach their texts with his skills. And I think that that's why they represent the side of naked life. Since we are prone to always allocate in a space where it would be hard for us to do anything associated with the ruling standards, where we are incapable of understanding or producing our own texts. These are areas of singular or group indolence, sometimes also of phantasmagorical aspirations and longings. For a city dweller, real life will be associated with field work and days, for the henpecked husband – the life work

¹⁷ Vide for instance the remark that free indirect speech was one of the techniques motivating his work. His *Koncepcja języka poetyckiego awangardy krakowskiej* (Cracow, 1998), 284–285. Thanks to Łukasz Żurek for pointing out this issue.

¹⁸ Vide e.g. *Wypowiedź literacka a wypowiedź filozoficzna*, ed. M. Głowiński and J. Sławiński, (Wrocław, 1982).

of Casanova, for a bored office worker – the typical life of the western cowboy. Real life is other people's works, inaccessible to me as texts.¹⁹

Admittedly, the abovementioned fragment may be classified as a column or essay, but, it is difficult to do so with the notes published from 1998 in *Teksty Drugie* from the cycle *Bez przydziału* [Without Assignment]. Formally, they should be defined as a type of intellectual journal (this cycle includes the phrase, which seems to have become commonly known: "Speaking is unconcerned language dreaming, writing – its tiresome daydreaming"²⁰). We may risk the ascertainment that although Sławiński did not publish the literary text in principle, he was the scholar who successively blurred the lines between the literary and academic discourse.

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The presentation, even if cursory, of literary and literary-related creativity in Poland in the twentieth century of formalist and structuralist scholars has, of course, value per se. It is also a ground for tentative hypotheses. The important fact is that the list of scholars-literates includes many leading Polish formalists and structuralists. With regard to them, the literature and examination of literature remain, it seems, in obverse versus reverse relations: theoretical considerations of literature are supplemented by independent literary practices, and these have to obtain confirmation in theory.

It is worthwhile mentioning the statement of Krzysztof Rutkowski, the disciple of the structuralist school, who rejected the career of academic and focused on the way of essayist and writer:

Firstly, I was supposed to be a "scholar". I was graduating in Polish Philology at the University of Warsaw and I was offered the chance to stay at the University in the Chair of Literature Theory and Poetics. I did my best [...] to explore the "mystery of literature", good and great literature, to get to know how it is done, composed, and how does it happen that sometimes, some manage to write in such a wise and beautiful way. [...] Several years went by before I realised with a great clearness that there is no way to find out how it happens, that some literary works live and never die, and they are more than excellent, and the others are not – although they may be sophisticated and may fulfil the expectations of poetics and literature studies. [...] When I understood that writing literature cannot be learned or "taught", then I started writing.

¹⁹ Janusz Sławiński, "Teksty i teksty," *Teksty* 1 (1972): 7.

²⁰ Janusz Sławiński, "Bez przydziału," *Teksty Drugie* 80–81 (2003): 182.

I distanced myself from the knowledge that I acquired. I distanced myself – but I did not forget about it.²¹

Rutkowski in these words tackles the belief associated (correctly?) with formalism, that the knowledge of literature means the ability to write literature, therefore, the whole of poetics is at the same time a “recipe” for the creation of similar work. The author also referred to the important issue for these considerations: the belief in the opposition (binary) in formalist and structuralist discourse of the literary theory between literature and literature theory. This belief that those two may be opposed has its phenomenological basis: it arises from the faith in the possibility of the separation of noetic and noematic spheres. In Polish literary studies this opposition was not exposed, although structuralism had not occurred in its orthodox form: narratology as conceived by Propp – as well as Jung’s psychoanalysis – was not widespread in Poland, although Jung, and more so Frye, were of course well known. A lack of interest in popular literature – which is a playground for narratology research – was compensated for studies carried out on the “bourgeois” high modernist creations, such as the French *nouveau roman* or Young Poland prose. In addition, the art of interpretation was not neglected and the opposition between structuralism and hermeneutics – instead of being emphasised – was being blurred. Undoubtedly, it influenced the fact that the Polish structuralists were focusing on the aesthetics of literary works, primarily their language structure, and the “grammar of literature” was examined to a lesser extent. The obvious fulfillment of efforts to learn the aesthetics of literary works from the academic side, was the self-reliant artistic creativity. In this regard “skipping literary classes” had in the case of formalists and structuralists a more important meaning than may be thought *prima facie*: it was the integral part of their reflexion on literature.

Abstract

The article describes the literary works of theoreticians associated with the leading formalist and structuralist trend in Polish literary theory. The author argues that scientific tendencies in literary theory had not been imposing constraints on the literary activity of researchers. The nature and subject matter of their work indicates that the obvious fulfillment

²¹ “Pisanie jest polowaniem, czyhaniem, tropieniem,” discussion with Krzysztof Rutkowski, retrieved from <http://www.literaturajestsexy.pl/pisanie-jest-polowaniem-czyhaniem-tropieniem-rozmowa-z-krzysztofem-rutkowskim/>.

of efforts to learn the aesthetics of literary works from the academic side, was the self-reliant artistic creativity.

Key words: scientific discourse; literary activity; formalists and structuralists; aesthetics