Schulz / Forum
Special Issue: Interpretations and Discoveries
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Interpretation is always immoral. Surely, there is someone who knows better and more than us – especially if we are not seeking to know everything.
In Schulz studies, there are "strong" and "masculine" interpretations: those that speak with the Phallus, the Great Integrator of the World. They try to mansplain the world to the reader. These are some interpretations of the work of Schulz, who, according to those same interpreters, had at least an ambiguous and contradictory attitude towards phallogocentrism.
Is it any different in the writing of the weaklings who refrain from answering the questions they pose? Do we betray the literary text by renouncing interpretation – understood as the masculine "desire to merge"? Is the lament over a "graveyard of signs" a functional alternative to interpretation? Or is the necrophilic gloom over text corpora that are, without the gesture of an interpreter, "corpses-to-be"?

The authors of the essays included in this volume present refreshing interpretations of Schulz's works and share their astounding discoveries from the archives. The essays were written in the last decade and were published in the first sixteen issues of Schulz/Forum, a journal published by Schulz Research Lab at the University of Gdańsk.

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Fundacja Terytoria Książki
80-246 Gdańsk, ul. Pniewskiego 4/1
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This publication, *titled Interpretations and Discoveries*, is the second volume of an anthology of articles selected from the first sixteen issues of the journal *Schulz/Forum*, affiliated with the Institute of Polish Language at the University of Gdańsk and created as part of the activities of the Schulz Research Lab. We published the first volume in 2023 as *Special Issue: Identities and Biographies*. It is available on the following platforms:
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Deadlings

Interpretation is always immoral. Surely, there is someone who knows better and more than us – especially if we are not seeking to know everything.

In Schulz studies, there are "strong" and "masculine" interpretations: those that speak with the Phallus, the Great Integrator of the World. They try to mansplain the world to the reader. These are some interpretations of the work of Schulz, who, according to those same interpreters, had at least an ambiguous and contradictory attitude towards phallogocentrism.

Is it any different in the writing of the weaklings who refrain from answering the questions they pose? Do we betray the literary text by renouncing interpretation – understood as the masculine "desire to merge"? Is the lament over a "graveyard of signs" a functional alternative to interpretation? Or is the necrophilic gloom over text corpora that are, without the gesture of an interpreter, "corpses-to-be"?

One of the most serious accusations literary criticism leveled against Schulz during his lifetime concerned not so much his style, but something that could be called, as Jerzy Jarzębski put it, the "worldview of prose". What many critics could not accept in Schulz's work was not even the non-normative eroticism, but the lack of an easily graspable commitment to political ideology – and the fundamental amorality and ontological weakness of the reality presented in Cinnamon Shops *and* The Sanatorium Under the Sign of the Hourglass*, where critics saw a camouflaged nihilism.*

The fiercest critique came from Kazimierz Wyka and Stefan Napierski. In their famous "Dwugłos o Schulzu", they accused Schulz of "anti-humanism and reinforcing chaos". Just like Deleuze did over half a century later in Bartleby, the scrivener – they saw in Schulz "a metaphysical scoundrel". For Wyka and Napierski, there is nothing affirmative in his writing. All is darkness, all is quiet – and only art might save us. Schulz, however, has a "fear of form and law – traits of any decadence; the arbitrariness of pretexts made into dogma". They probably would never have written this if they had read Sontag's Against Interpretation. *Although even that is uncertain, since Tomasz Swoboda convinces us that "plagiarism by anticipation" is so often the case.*

However, there is also a different kind of literature – one that could be understood not as the "land of strong interpretations" or "agonistic heritage", but the kind that sides with dispersed, disrupted writing, never oriented toward "integrating" answers, and, in this sense, i r r e s p o n s i b l e. Let us call it not so much l e s s e r l i t e r a t u r e, but w e a k e r l i t e r a t u r e. Only within this literature could sentences be written that – unrelated to the intention of mighty Freud – seek to breathe life into the dead. Like those written in "Father's Last Escape": "He had been dying a number of times, always with some reservations that forced us to revise our attitude towards the fact of his death. […] The wallpaper began in certain places to imitate his habitual nervous tic; the flower designs arranged themselves into the doleful element of his smile […] as the fossilized imprint of a trilobite".

There is more, too. There would be no interpretation without archival research.

It would be most convenient to establish that archive work on Schulz is a dead or d y i n g field. Almost nothing remains of it. It is easy to overlook it when explaining the world of his work, and there is no experience with his biography or work with documents. This is what researchers and scholars of the material traces of creativity focus on – in their bouts of "archive fever".

The greatest success of archivists is that moment when they find unborn pages restored from the "depths of oblivion". And here it is: pulled out by Łesia Chomycz – as if from posthumous birth – Schulz's earliest story, "Undula". He published it in Świt*, the "publication of oil officials", in 1922, under the pen name Marceli Weron.*

Some interpreters stood in awe, others in discontent. A new story after so many years! They claimed it was kitsch. A Schulzian abject. Some of their work was nullified, while others confirmed their earlier beliefs that they had wasted their time. Poor little deadlings. A non-existent American poet Keanneth Penn[1] *wrote about you/us: "Next to the deadlings / Plenty of livelings". Those poor beings, who cannot live without touch and tenderness. In Weron's story, there is a relevant scene: the nameless narrator begins to give birth to his little deadling. It is unclear whether it is his hallucination or an actual birth:*

"Why do you weep and fuss the whole night through? How can I ease your sufferings, my little son? What am I to do with you? You writhe, sulk, and scowl; you cannot hear or understand human speech; and yet still you fuss and hum your monotonous pain through the night. Now you are like the scroll of an umbilical cord, twisted and pulsating…"

It is a pity that Schulz never got to see Lynch's Eraserhead *– because that is exactly what all of this is about. Or perhaps no one ever tried to make it possible for him to commit plagiarism by anticipation. Surely, he would have watched the film, just as he watched German expressionist cinema, which Paweł Sitkiewicz writes about. "Deadlings" is a right category for describing Schulz's work. We worry about it, and it somehow makes us – researchers – quite dead: immobilized, stiff, and stale.*

And yet it still hurts.

[jo]

Translated by Language Extreme

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1 Translator's note: Keanneth Penn is a fictional poet from Krzysztof Puławski's poetry collection *Martwiątka / Deadlings*, in which Puławski presents fabricated translations of what is claimed to be Penn's poems, and also a short fictional biography of the non-existent poet.

Marceli Weron [Bruno Schulz]: Undula

It must be weeks or months now that I've been locked in this solitude. I keep falling into sleep and then waking again, so that phantoms of wakefulness become tangled with figments of the somnolent darkness. And so time passes. It seems to me that I've lived in this long, crooked room before, in some distant past. Sometimes I recognize the oversized furniture that stretches up to the ceiling, these plain oak wardrobes bristling with dust-covered junk. A large, multi-armed tin lamp hangs from above, swaying gently.

I lie in the corner of a long yellow bed, my body barely filling even a third of its expanse. There are moments in which the room, illumined by the yellow light of the lamp, seems to vanish from my sight. In a heavy lethargy of thought, I feel only the calm, powerful rhythm of my breath, as it raises my chest in a regular beat. In harmony with this rhythm comes the breath of all things.

Time oozes away with the vapid hissing of the oil lamp. The old furniture cracks and creaks in the silence. Shadows lurk and conspire in the depths of the room – jagged, crooked, and broken. They stretch out their long necks and peer at me through their arms. I don't turn over. What for? As soon as I look, they will all be quiet in their places again, and only the floor and the old wardrobe will creak and groan. Everything will be still, unchanged, like before. Once more there will be silence, and the old lamp will sweeten its boredom with a sleepy hiss.

Great, black cockroaches stand motionless, staring vacantly into the light. They seem dead. All of a sudden, those flat, headless bodies take off in an uncanny crablike run, cutting diagonally across the floor.

I sleep, wake, and then doze off again, patiently pushing my way through sickly thickets of phantoms and dreams. They become tangled and intertwined as they wander along with me – soft, milky, luxuriant bushes, like the pale nocturnal sprouts of potatoes in cellars, like monstrous growths of diseased mushrooms.

▪

Perhaps out in the world it's already spring. I don't know how many days and nights have passed since that time… I remember that gray, heavy dawn of a February day, that purple procession of Bacchantes. Through what pale nights of revelry, through what moonlit suburban parks did I not fly after them, like a moth bewitched by Undula's smile. And everywhere I saw her in the shoulders of the dancers: Undula, languid and leaning enticingly in black gauze and

panties; Undula, her eyes afire behind the black lace of a fan. And so I followed her with a sweet, burning frenzy in my heart, until my swooning legs would carry me no further and the carnival spat me out, half-dead, on some empty street in the thick gloom before dawn.

Then came those blind wanderings, with sleep in my eyes, up old staircases climbing through many dark stories, crossings of black attic spaces, aerial ascents through galleries swaying in the dark gusts of wind, until I was swallowed up by a quiet, familiar corridor, and found myself at the entrance to our apartment of my childhood years. I turned the handle, and the door opened inward with a dark sigh. The scent of that forgotten interior enfolded me. Our maidservant Adela emerged from the depths of the apartment, padding noiselessly on the velvet soles of her slippers. How she had blossomed in beauty during my absence, how pearly white her shoulders were under her black, unbuttoned dress. She was not the least bit surprised by my return after all these years. She was sleepy and brusque. I could make out the swan-like curves of her slender legs as she disappeared back into the black depths of the apartment.

I groped my way through the half-light to an unmade bed and, eyes dimming with sleep, plunged my head into the pillows.

Dull sleep rolled over me like a heavy wagon, laden with the dust of darkness, covering me with its gloom.

Then the winter night began to wall itself in with black bricks of nothingness. Infinite expanses condensed into deaf, blind rock: a heavy, impenetrable mass growing into the space between things. The world congealed into nothingness.

▪

How difficult it is to breathe in a room caught in the pincers of a winter night. Through the walls and ceiling one can feel the pressure of a thousand atmospheres of darkness. The air is barren, lacking nourishment for the lungs. The light of the lamp is overgrown with black mushrooms. One's pulse becomes faint and shallow. Boredom, boredom, boredom. Somewhere deep in the solid mass of the night, lone wayfarers walk along the dark corridors of the winter. Their hopeless conversations and monotonous tales seem to reach me. Undula reposes in her fragrant bed in a deep slumber that sucks out of her the memory of the orgies and frenzies. Her limp, soft body – peeled out of the confines of gauze, panties and stockings – has been snatched up by the darkness, which clutches her in four enormous paws, like a great furry bear, gathering her white, velvety limbs into one sweet handful, over which it pants with purple tongue. And she, unresponsive, her eyes in distant dreams, numbly gives herself over to be devoured, while her pink veins pulsate with milky ways of stars, drunk in by her eyes on those vertiginous carnival nights.

Undula, Undula, o sigh of the soul for the land of the happy and perfect! How my soul expanded in that light, when I stood, a humble Lazarus, at your bright threshold. Through you, in a feverish shiver, I came to know my own misery and ugliness in the light of your perfection. How sweet it was to read from a single glance the sentence condemning me forever, and to obey with the deepest humility the gesture of your hand, spurning me from your banqueting tables. I would have doubted your perfection had you done anything else. Now it's time for me to return to the furnace from which I came, botched and misshapen. I go to atone for the error of the Demiurge who created me.

Undula, Undula! Soon I will forget you too, o bright dream of that other land. The final darkness and the hideousness of the furnace draw near.

▪

The lamp filters the boredom, hissing its monotonous song. I seem to have heard it before, long ago, somewhere at the beginning of life, when as a sickly, forlorn infant I fussed and fretted through tearful nights. Who then called out to me and brought me back as I blindly sought the path of return to maternal, primordial nothingness?

How the lamp smokes. The gray arms of the candelabra have sprung out of the ceiling like a polyp. The shadows whisper and plot. Cockroaches scuttle noiselessly across the yellow floor. My bed is so long that I can't see its other end. As always, I am ill, gravely ill. How bitter and filled with abomination is the road to the furnace.

Then it began. These monotonous, futile dialogues with pain have utterly worn me down. Endlessly I argue with it, adamant that it can't reach me as pure intellect. While everything else becomes muddled and clouded, I feel ever more clearly how he – the suffering one – is separated from my watching self. And yet at the same time I feel the delicate tickle of dread.

The flame of the lamp burns ever lower and more darkly. The shadows stretch their giraffes' necks up to the ceiling; they want to see him. I hide him carefully away under the quilt. He is like a small, shapeless embryo without face, eyes or mouth; he was born to suffer. All he knows of life are those forms and monstrosities of suffering that he meets in the depths of the night in which he is plunged. His senses are turned inward, greedily absorbing pain in all its varieties. He has taken my sufferings upon himself. Sometimes it seems he is nothing but a great swim bladder inflated with pain, the hot veins of suffering upon its membranes.

Why do you weep and fuss the whole night through? How can I ease your sufferings, my little son? What am I to do with you? You writhe, sulk, and scowl; you cannot hear or understand human speech; and yet still you fuss and hum your monotonous pain through the night. Now you are like the scroll of an umbilical cord, twisted and pulsating…

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The lamp must have gone out while I dozed. It's dark and quiet now. Nobody weeps. There is no pain. Somewhere deep, deep in the darkness, somewhere beyond the wall, the drainpipes chatter. Lord! It's the thaw!… The attic spaces dully roar like the bodies of enormous musical instruments. The first crack must have formed in the solid rock of that black winter. Great lumps of darkness loosen and crumble in the walls of the night. Darkness pours like ink through those fissures in the winter, muttering in the drainpipes and sewers. Lord, the spring is coming…

Out there in the world, the town slowly releases itself from manacles of darkness. The thaw chisels out house after house from that stone wall of darkness. O, to draw in the dark breath of the thaw with my breast again; o, to feel upon my face the black, moist sheets of wind sweeping down the streets. The little flames of the lamps on the street corners shrink into their wicks, turning blue as those purple sheets of wind fly around them. O, to steal away now and escape, leaving him here alone forever with his eternal pain… What base temptations do you whisper into my ear, o wind of the thaw? But in what neighborhood of the town is that apartment? And where does that window face, knocked by its shutter? I can't remember the street of my childhood home. O, to look out that window and to meet the breath of the thaw…

Translated from Polish by Stanley Bill

Marceli Weron, *"Undula," Świt. Organ urzędników naftowych w Borysławiu,* no. 25-26 (15 January 1922), pp. 2-5. Republished in *Schulz/Forum* 14 (2019), edited by Piotr Sitkiewicz.

Łesia Chomycz: About the Exhibition in Boryslav. Bruno Schulz's Two Debuts

Around 1918, after returning from Vienna to Drohobych, Bruno Schulz became active in the regional intellectual and artistic environment. In 1920, his name was listed among the members of the artistic group "Kalleia"[1]. However, little is known about his life and work during this period. The artist worked on his *The Booke of Idolatry*, tried to improve his artistic skills by establishing contacts with artistic circles in Lviv, and looked for support for his "artistic aspirations"[2]. He exhibited his works publicly for the first time at the 1st Exhibition of Jewish Art[3]. Later, in May 1921, he took part in an exhibition in the building of the Drohobych junior high school[4]. These were group exhibitions. His first

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1 The "Kalleia" Society – a Jewish society of lovers of fine arts and sciences, was established in Drohobych on February 15, 1919. It was then headed by Herman Sandig. The society had its premises in Nappe's tenement house at ul. Mickiewicza (second floor). In the fall of 1921, the society changed its name to "the Scientific and Literary Circle", and its president was Klemens Funkenstein. It probably existed until the end of 1922. See DALO (Derzhavny Archive of the Lviv Region), f. 1, op. 54, p. 426. "Sprawa pro rejestraciju polskoho kulturno-proswitnićkoho towarystwa 'Koło naukowo-literaćke' (Act of registration of the Polish cultural and educational society Koło Naukowo-Literackie), ark. 7. See also: "Bruno Schulz i drohobyćka tworcza spiłka Kalleja", [in:] B. Łazorak, L. Tymoshenko, Ł. Chomycz, I. Czawa, *Widomyj i newidomyj Bruno Schulz* (sociokulturnyj portret Drohobycza), ed. L. Tymoshenko, Drohobych 2016, p. 234–266 (Б. Лазорак, Л. Тимошенко, Л. Хомич, І. Чава, Відомий і невідомий Бруно Шульц (соціокультурний портрет Дро гобича), ed. Л. Тимошенко, Дрогобич 2016), hereinafter: B. Łazorak et al.

2 Letter from Bruno Schulz to Ostap Ortwin from May 1921, [in:] B. Schulz, *Dzieła zebrane*, t. 5: *Księga listów*, zebrał i przygotował do druku J. Ficowski, uzupełnił S. Danecki, Gdańsk: słowo/obraz terytoria 2016, p. 33.

3 U. Makowska, *"Dziwna awersja". O wystawach Schulza*, "Schulz/Forum" 13, 2019, p. 14. English translation available in this issue.

4 On May 22, 1921, in the auditorium of the King Władysław Jagiełło State Junior High School in Drohobycz, the opening of a collective exhibition of seven artists took place: of Włodzimierz Błocki, Ludwik Misky, Antoni Markowski, Kazimierz Łotocki, Adolf Bienenstock, Bruno Schulz and Estera Bienenstockowa (de domo Weingarten). The paintings could be viewed and purchased for two weeks, every day from 11.30 a.m. to 6 p.m. The exhibition included nearly eighty works, including a dozen by Schulz. Compared to the exhibition in Boryslav, the reviewer distinguishes two works by Schulz – the pencil drawing "Omfale" and the painting "Dziewczęta" [Girls]: (fr), *Zbiorowa wystawa obrazów*, "Świt", April 15, 1921, no. 8, p. 7; Wystawa obrazów, "Świt", May 15, 1921, no. 10, p. 7; *Wystawa obrazów w Drohobyczu*, "Chwila", May 29, 1921, no. 849, p. 10; Al. Stewe, *Z wystawy obrazów*, "Świt", June 1, 1921, no. 11, p. 6–7.

individual exhibition, as it recently turned out, took place in the second half of March 1921 in Boryslav[5].

Most scholars agree that Schulz worked on *The Booke of Idolatry* before he started to concentrate on literature; it is generally believed that his literary talent was revealed quite late[6]. Jerzy Ficowski admits that Schulz made attempts at writing in an earlier period, but the earliest specific information he offers is for the period of 1925 to 1926[7]. The only test of "mastery of words", according to Ficowski, must have been correspondence with confidants and friends, but the lack of epistolary proof from this period in the writer's archive does not allow us to determine if that was indeed the case. Jerzy Jarzębski assumes that Schulz's literary work began suddenly, and immediately became fully mature and perfect[8]. Władysław Panas draws attention to the masterful literary debut Schulz made in his early forties. Panas, the author of the concept of the "infinite intrigue" in the life and work of Bruno Schulz, also writes about "the Schulz phenomenon", "which is characterized, among other things, by an almost infinite ability to generate ever new and new and new stories"[9]. Today, another new story, a new biographical thread appears before us.

This essay will discuss the individual debut of Schulz, the visual artist, as well as the hypothetical literary debut related to it[10]. The issue of Schulz's participation in exhibitions in Boryslav has been partially discussed before[11]. The hypothesis about the artist's literary attempts in the early 1920s, though, is put forward here for the first time.

The collection of the Lviv Vasyl Stefanyk National Scientific Library includes incomplete annuals of the Boryslav-Drohobych biweekly "Świt"[12]. The uncut pages of the newspaper showed that it was being read for the first time[13]. There

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5 *Kultura i oświata. Urządzona staraniem Sekcji Oświatowej Z.U.N. wystawa obrazów i grafiki oryginalnej Brunona Schulza*, "Świt", March 15, 1921, no. 6, p. 6.

6 "Debiut literacki", [in:] *Słownik schulzowski*, oprac. W. Bolecki, J. Jarzębski, S. Rosiek, Gdańsk: słowo/obraz terytoria 2006, p. 80.

7 J. Ficowski, *Regions of the Great Heresy. Bruno Schulz: A Biographical Portrait*, translated and edited by Theodosia Robertson, New York and London: W. W. Norton and Company 2003, chapter "The Prehistory and Origin of *Cinnamon Shops*".

8 J. Jarzębski, *Schulz*, Wrocław: Ossolineum 1999, p. 6.

9 W. Panas, *Willa Bianki. Mały przewodnik drohobycki dla przyjaciół (fragmenty)*, Lublin 2006, p. 16.

10 This was the first publication in the press.

11 B. Łazorak et al., op. cit., p. 374; Ł. Chomycz, "Do charakterystyky tworczosti Bruno Schulza u perszij połowyni 20-ch rokiw (za materiałamy borisławśko-drohobyćkoji hazety *Świt*)", w: *Drohobyćkyj krajeznawczyj zbirnyk*, ed. L. Tymoshenko, W. Aleksandrowycz, Ł. Winar, Ł. Wojtowycz, vol. XIX–XX, Drohobycz–Koło 2017, p. 307–315; U. Makowska, op. cit., p. 5–34.

12 "Świt. Organ urzędników naftowych w Borysławiu", R. 1: 1921, no, 1–24; R. 2: 1922, no. 25–36; R. 31923, no. 49–53, 66–71; vol. 4: 1924, no. 73–83 (Lviv Vasyl Stefanyk National Scientific Library of Ukraine, Marian and Ivanna Koc Scientific Department of Periodical Editions).

13 The research visit was conducted at the beginning of 2016 while I was working on the collective monograph *Widomyj i newidomyj Bruno Schulz (sociokulturnyj portret Drohobycza)*.

Dnes potvrdil.
IV
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ŚWIT

ORGAN URZĘDNIKÓW NAFTOWYCH w BORYSŁAWIU.

Wychodzi co 1. i 15. każdego miesiąca.

REDAKCJA I [illegible]MINISTRACJA: DROHOBYCZ, DELIKARNIA LOEWENKOPFA.

REDAKCJA PRZYJMUJE W KAŻDĄ NIEDZIELĘ OD 11.—12. PRZEDPOŁ. — RĘKOPISÓW NIE ZWRACA SIĘ.

Ceny ogłoszeń: Całe strony: Mp. 5000.—, ½ str. Mp. 2500.—, ¼ str. Mp. 1400.—, ⅛ str. Mp. 700.—, 1/16 str. Mp. 400.—. Drobne w[illegible]ania po Mp. 30.— za słowo zwyczajnym drukiem; za druk tłusty podwójnie.

Cena egzemplarza podwójnego 60 Mk.

Nr. 25-26 Borysław-Drohobycz, dnia 15. stycznia 1922. Rok II.

Roczny bilans naszej pracy.

Dnia 1. stycznia 1921. opuścił prasę pierwszy numer „Świtu". Rozpoczęła się mozolna ciężka praca, wśród piętrzących się ustawicznie przeszkód, które zwalczać musieliśmy na każdym kroku. Któż z nas nie pamięta onczasów, jakie na nas miotano po wyjściu pierwszego numeru? Mimo wszystko wytrwaliśmy.

I dziś, bacząc na całoroczną pracę, z dumą możemy skonstatować, że spełniliśmy należycie nasze obowiązki. W konsekwencji tego obowiązku, dla dobra kolegów, nie szczędziliśmy poświęceń. Hasłem naszem było „wspólnie pracować i wspólnie walczyć o poprawę naszego bytu i o wywyższenie naszego ducha" (Nr. 1). W programowym artykule tego numeru czytamy dalej: „Jako pracownicy umysłowi widzimy w robotnikach naszych braci. Jemy ten sam gorzki chleb i tę samą manę dążmy do godności ludzkiej. Z wspólnej niedoli do wspólnych ideałów naprzód tam, gdzie świt". W imię tych ideałów rozpoczęliśmy wydawnictwo naszego organu. W innem miejscu pisze jeden z kolegów: „Przyszła nasza walka nie będzie targiem o drobne ustępstwa dnia, ale będzie walką o inne jutro".

Pierwszy numer wywołał ogólną sensację. Koledzy z entuzjazmem witali własny organ, który tak energicznie podjął obronę ich interesów. Rozpoczęły się w każdem biurze dyskusje na temat zadań kulturalnych naszej gazety, dzięki której ogłoszono cykl wykładów i odczytów. Nowy prąd zelektryzował Zagłębie. Zobojętniała szeregi towarzystw poczęły cenić wartości duchowe. Z drugiej strony pracodawcy nie ustawali w usiłowaniu ostatecznie, chcąc nas w ten sposób zniszczyć. W artykule „Z naszej trybuny" (nr. 2.) pisaliśmy: „Odczuwamy dobrze skutki ostrych onczasów, przeciw nam skierowanych. Przypadkowa identyczność nazwy niezmiernie nam szkodzi zagranicznego pisemka o ruchomo więcej niż radykalnych tendencjach, była między innemi wygodną bronią w rękach naszych przeciwników [illegible]

[illegible] numerze sekcja kulturalna zaznacza dalszy postęp przez ogłoszenie szeregu kursów i wykładów. Zastanowiono pewnego rodzaju uniwersytet, który cieszył się liczną frekwencją.

Zawarta w grudniu 1920 umowa, skutkiem ciągle wzrastającej drożyzny, nie zaspokoiła w całości żądań kolegów. Wskutek nowy memorjał, którego niestety (nie) do dnia dzisiejszego nie zrealizowano. Memorjał ten starannie opracowany zawierał postulaty natury ekonomicznej i socjalnej.

Trzeba również zwrócić uwagę, że wśród wielu kolegów skonstatowaliśmy zatrutą własnej godności. Temu numer w artykule „Dookoła własnej godności", wzywał kolegów do zrozumienia własnego „ja", osobistej godności. Naturalnie, że elektorzy dyrektorowie, dla których biedna nie świętego, próca mamony, który wogóle w bogatem borysławskiem zatruli wszelkie poczucie sprawiedliwości, srodze pomścili się na autorze artykułu.

Dnia 9. lutego 1921. odbyło się Walne Zgromadzenie Z. U. N. Mowy, składające sprawozdanie z działalności sekcji redakcyjnej, omówili znaczenie organu i zapewniali, że „Świt" będzie stał na straży wspólnych interesów, próca tego chce być także wybitnym czynnikiem kulturalnym i rzecznikiem najszczytniejszych ideałów.

W łonie Związku rozpoczęły się jednakowoż tarcia, co do jego charakteru i kierunku. Obrońca brzeszczaków, których większość nigdy nie pracowała dla Związku, idąc na lep szumnej, ale bez treści, frazeologji, bez głębszego ujęcia naszego problemu ekonomicznego, bez ustosunkowania się nad naszemi stosunkami, poczuwała narzucić nam swoje przekonania. Redakcja, która stała na stanowisku wolności przekonań, nie chciała się pisać na takie stanowisko.

Zwołane w tej sprawie porze wióry Nadzwyczajne Walne Zgromadzenie, *po referacie przedstawiciela Rady*[illegible], uchwaliło, że Z. U. N., mając na celu poprawę [illegible] ekonomicznych i kulturalnych urzędników

Title page of the bi-weekly magazine *Świt* [Dawn] (1922, issue 25–26). Vasyl Stefanyk National Scientific Library in Lviv

on the next page excerpt from Marceli Weron's short story Undula **Undula**

odwlekała się za uzależnieniem i bezpartyjnością Związku. Zamiast szumnych haseł, ułożono program pracy pozytywnej, codziennej, by z niej wyłonić cel jutra.

Rozpoczęła się praca może niezbyt gorliwa, ale spokojna, któraby mogła sprowadzić nasze życie zawodowe na normalne tory. Niestety, wypadki nieprzewidziane stanęły na przeszkodzie. Długotrwające pertraktacje z robotnikami zerwano. Pracodawcy nie chcieli uznać naszów zaufania, ani też zgodzić się na dotychczasowy faktyczny stan rzeczy. W artykule wstępnym pisaliśmy wtedy: „Nie mając oparcia w silnej organizacji, jaką stworzyć moglibyśmy, lecz nie chcieliśmy, znajdujemy się teraz między młotem a kowadłem". Wybuchł strajk majowy. Pracodawcy, wykorzystując nasze ciężkie położenie, wydali okólnik, by urzędników, którzy przystąpią do strajku, natychmiast wydalić. Równocześnie zarządy firm wezwały urzędników do jasnej deklaracji, że poddają się ich dyspozycjom. Sytuacja była w najwyższym stopniu przykra. Okólnik Izby Pracodawców przekonał nas dobitnie o sposobach postępowania naszych panów. Wydział Związku, stojąc przed faktem dokonanym, pomny długu, zaciągniętego wobec robotników, zezwolił jedynie na funkcję dozorowania, celem ochrony warsztatów pracy przed ewentualną szkodą elementarną. Wydział chciał też zapobiec możliwej interwencji wojskowej. Z ręką na sercu możemy jeszcze raz zapewnić — cośmy wyjaśnili na zjeździe lwowskim — że nam nawet przez myśl nie przeszło, szkodzić robotnikom. Tymczasem niektórzy nieczesalni mowcy, w sposób demagogiczny wykorzystując tę okoliczność, burzyli ich przeciwko nam, a niektóre z dzienników interesowanych pozwoliły sobie zamieścić notatki o takiej treści, że reagować na nie byłoby poniżej naszej godności.

Przed wprowadzeniem wolnego handlu, „Świt" zwracał się parę razy do kolegów, zwoływał zgromadzenia celem naradzenia się nad założeniem własnej kooperatywy. Temu zadaniu poświęcono specjalnie dwa artykuły: „Sklepy społeczne" i „Idea kooperatyzmu". W nich podano cel i znaczenie kooperatywy, przyczem wskazano na pierwsze związki brytyjskie, które — małe z początku — z biegiem czasu zamieniły się w olbrzymie stowarzyszenia społeczne, zatrudniające tysiące robotników i urzędników.

W sierpniu postanowił Związek Urzędników we Lwowie rozpocząć kroki, mające na celu scentralizowanie wszystkich związków urzędniczych Małopolski. Dnia 4. września odbyła się we Lwowie konferencja naftowców ze wschodniej i zachodniej części kraju naszego. Na konferencji tej, w której wzięli udział prawie wszyscy członkowie Redakcji, padło hasło ustawowego uregulowania norm pracy i płacy drogą Izb Urzędniczych. Tu nawiązaliśmy kontakt z kolegami krośnieńskimi.

Dnia 29. września odbył się Zjazd wszystkich urzędników kraju. Redakcja i Związek wysłały swoich przedstawicieli. Zażądano od kolegów, by każdy był członkiem organizacji. Druga część rezolucji domaga się legalnego zastępstwa urzędników na zewnątrz, oraz ustawowego uregulowania norm pracy i płacy. Zjazd był wypadkiem o doniosłem znaczeniu. Wszędzie w kraju powstały nowe zrzeszenia; zorganizowali się urzędnicy drzewni, chemiczni etc., tylko u nas lenistwo i apatja nadal święciły triumfy.

FELJETON.

H. H.

ŻAL.

Pogrzebane w grzechach sny
— — — — — — — — — —
Wiatr rozwiewa smętku łzy
W dali głucho huczy dzwon...

Z ziemi święta wstaje mgła,
Taka smętna, jak ta łza,
Tak rozpaczna, jak jęk wron...

I przez myśl przejrzaną cień
Dawnych marzeń, dawnych chceń
I podniebny orła lot.

Dziś — nie wolno — cicho — cyt —
Choć pogodny błysnął świt
— — — — — — — —
Jak przyziemny orła lot.

MARCELI WERON.

(Przedruk i przekład bez zezwolenia Redakcji wzbroniony).

UNDULA.

Musiały już upłynąć tygodnie, miesiące, od kiedy zamknięty jestem w tej samotni. Zapadam wciąż na nowo w sen i znów się budzę i majaki jawy plączą się z wytworami omroczy sennej. Tak upływa — czas. Zdaje mi się, że w tym długim krzywym pokoju już kiedyś dawno mieszkałem. Czasem odpoczywają te nad miarę wielkie meble sięgające do sufitu, te szafy z prostego dębu, najeżone zakurzonymi gratami. Wielka, wieloramienna lampa z szarej cyny zwiesza się ze stropu, kołysząc się z lekka.

Leżę w rogu długiego żółtego łóżka, wypełniając zaledwie trzecią jego część mem ciałem. Są chwile, w których pokój oświetlony żółtem światłem lampy ginie mi gdzieś z oczu i czuję tylko w ciężkim bezwładzie myśli potężny spokojny rytm oddechu, którym moja pierś się miarowo podnosi. I w zgodzie z tym rytmem idzie oddech wszystkich rzeczy.

Sączy się czas miłłem syczeniem lampy naftowej. Stare sprzęty trzeszczą i trzeszczą w ciszy. Poza mną w głębi pokoju czają się i spiskują cienie, śpiczaste, krzywe, połamane. Wyciągają długie szyje i zaglądają mi poprzez ramiona. Nie odwracam się. I pocóżby?

is an interesting notice on one of the columns: "Exhibition of graphic works by the young artist Mr. Bruno Schulz"[14]. It might seem like just a small press release, but it aroused a lot of interest as a testimony to Schulz's first personal exhibition, about which nothing was known before.

Let us offer some detail about the source. The biweekly "Świt" was the official paper of the oil industry in Boryslav[15]. It was published from January 1, 1921 to June 1924. The position of responsible editor was held by: Konstanty Jaworski (January 1, 1921 – March 1, 1921), Wiktor Koreywo (March 15, 1921 – October 15, 1921) and Klemens Funkenstein (November 15, 1921 – June 1924). The periodical was created on the initiative of the latter[16]. The editorial office and administration were initially located in Boryslav, and from September 15, 1921 in Drohobych. The newspaper was printed in Józef Loewenkopf's printing house in Drohobych. As the editorial office reported, "Świt" was the only press organ in the oil basin. The newspaper was published biweekly – on the first and fifteenth day of each month – and the circulation in 1921–1924 ranged from 900 to 1,000 copies. The issues consisted of 8–12 pages of small format. In the first issue, the editors presented their goals to the readers, emphasizing that as free citizens of a free country, they want to follow the slogan of cultural development and progress[17]. "Świt" discussed issues of the oil industry, published current news from the Drohobych-Boryslav oil basin, and addressed subjects related to education, culture, literature and artistic life in the region. Poems and literary sketches appeared frequently. Many of the publishing authors were members of the Drohobych group "Kalleia", including, among others, Dr. Ludwik Alter, Dr. Michał Friedländer, Maks Propper, Zygmunt Sternbach, Juliusz Witkower, and Marek Dörfler. In June 1924, the newspaper changed its name to "Dwutygodnik Naftowy" [Oil Weekly] and was published under this title from August 1, 1924 to December 15, 1926[18].

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14 *Kultura i oświata*, "Świt", March 1, 1921, no. 5, p. 7.

15 "Świt", initially addressed only to administrative officials in Boryslav, soon also gathered representatives of other organizations of white-collar workers in the Boryslav oil area, especially the Association of Petroleum Technicians. As early as in 1923, it became the governing body of the Team of Unions of Intellectual Workers in the Oil Industry in Boryslav. See *Nowy rok – nowa praca*, "Dwutygodnik Naftowy", January 1, 1926, No. 1 (119), p. 1.

16 B. Łazorak et al., op. cit., p. 244.

17 *Nasze cele*, "Świt", January 1, 1921, no. 1, p. 1

18 "Dwutygodnik Naftowy. Organ Zespołu Związków Pracowników Umysłowych Przemysłu Naftowego w Borysławiu" [Dwutygodnik Naftowy. Organ of the Association of White-collar Employees of the Oil Industry in Boryslav]. The decision to change the title and format of "Świt" was made on January 14, 1924, during the extraordinary general meeting of the Association of White-Collar Workers of the Oil Industry in Boryslav. The process of establishing a new editorial board lasted over half a year. Finally, on August 1, 1924, the first issue of "Dwutygodnik Naftowy" was published. Until April 15, 1925, the newspaper was the organ of the Union of White-collar Employees

It is not known exactly why Schulz chose Boryslav as the venue for his first individual exhibition. In the interwar period, it was a city full of contrasts. According to Stanisław Nicieja, it offered a combination of American panache with eastern backwardness. Despite the abundance of natural resources in the region, it was strikingly poor. Among the modern buildings, there were crooked cottages and poor shop windows next to rich ones. The widespread filth made a particularly off-putting impression. The streets were drowning in mud, from which only unusual wooden sidewalks on high stilts saved them[19]. The intelligentsia stood out among the oil officials; apart from them, most of the sixteen thousand inhabitants of the city were workers, some of them – people of low moral culture, louts and rowdies[20]. Most likely, the location of the exhibition in Boryslav was chosen by its organizer – the Educational Section of the Boryslav branch of the Association of Oil Officials (Związek Urzędników Naftowych, hereinafter referred to as ZUN). The events organized by it were mostly held in Boryslav and then repeated in Drohobych.

The Association of Administrative Oil and Wax Officials in Galicia, based in Boryslav, was established in 1920–21[21]. The idea of creating a cultural centre was

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of the Oil Industry in Boryslav; from May 1, 1925 to December 15, 1926 – a body of the Trade Union of White-Collar Workers of the Petroleum Industry in Poland. Until January 1, 1926, Klemens Funkenstein was the editor-in-chief; in the last year of publication (1926) – Benedykt Klimek took the role. The editors intended to combine the values of the work of administrative officials in "Świt" with the former work of technicians in the "Ropa" magazine – "Dwutygodnik Naftowy", unlike its predecessor, limited the section of fiction and art criticism to a minimum. Most of the attention was paid to the issues of the oil industry not only in the region, but also throughout Poland. Regular columns included Professional Affairs; Zagłębie Chronicle; National Oil Chronicle; Foreign Chronicle; Legislative Chronicle; Oil Values; Culture and Education; From the Concert Hall; From Books and Magazines Sent. Column headings had their own vignettes; the vignettes, including the title one, were designed by Władysław Kara. Among literary publications, the largest group were poems by Juliusz Witkower. Among his collaborators from the times of "Świt", Schulz's friend, Emanuel Pilpel, continued to publish in the paper. He was probably a member of the editorial staff, too. His area of interest was the oil industry in Poland and abroad. Pilpel's texts, especially in the years 1925–1926, appeared in virtually every issue, sometimes even several at a time. The most extensive and different from the other texts is the psychological sketch "Tłum". Cf. Emanuel Pilpel, *Chińskie cienie. Sylweta redakcyjna*, "Świt", June 15, 1921, no. 12, p. 2–3; idem, *Chińskie cienie. Migawki z Truskawca*, "Świt", August 15, 1921, No. 16, p. 2–3; idem, *Targi Wschodnie* "Świt", October 15, 1921, no. 19–20, pp. 2–3; idem, *Światowy problem gospodarczej odbudowy*, "Świt", April 15, 1922, no. 31–32, p. 1–3; idem, *Tłum*, "Dwutygodnik Naftowy", July 1, 1926, No. 13 (131), p. 5–7; and individual publications: July 15, 1926, No. 14 (132), p. 5–7; August 1, 1926, No. 15 (133), p. 7–9; August 15, 1926, No. 16 (134), p. 4–6; December 1, 1926, No. 23 (141), p. 5–8; December 15, 1926, No. 24 (142), p. 3–5.

19 S. Nicieja, *Kresowe Trójmiasto. Truskawiec–Drohobycz–Borysław*, Opole 2009, p. 168–172.

20 In 1921, Boryslav had 16,400 inhabitants, including almost 2,000 intellectuals. See W. Pawłowski, *Borysław – stolica Polskiego Zagłębia Naftowego (do 1939 roku)*, "Biuletyn Stowarzyszenia Przyjaciół Ziemi Drohobyckiej" 2017, no. 20, p. 41, 43; Al. Stewe, *Oświata w Zagłębiu Borysławskiem*, "Świt", May 15, 1922, no. 33–34, p. 5.

21 Jews predominated there – 90% of the administrative staff were people of Jewish origin. Cf. W. Pawłowski, op. cit., p. 48.

born in the community, and gained support in the region. For this purpose, the ZUN Education Committee was established. It was divided into four sections devoted to educational, play and drama, music, and propaganda[22]. The educational section was particularly active. It occupied a premises in ul. Pańska in the building of Bloch's Warsaw Café[23]. Its activities included Saturday discussion evenings, public readings and lectures, exhibitions, concerts and other events. Meetings with famous writers were popular[24], including Józef Wittlin, Jan Lechoń, Antoni Słonimski, Julian Tuwim[25], Juliusz Kaden Bandrowski[26], Wacław Sieroszewski[27], and reciter Kazimiera Rychterówna[28]. Incidentally, Schulz probably had one of these meetings in mind when, years later, he mentioned it in an exalted letter to Julian Tuwim, in which he informed the addressee of the "despair of helpless admiration" he experienced during his performance[29]. The educational section also organized foreign language courses and established a library. The main places of activity in Boryslav were the People's House, the "Sokół" building, the ZUN headquarters, and the House of the Technicians' Union[30].

We can only guess how the exhibition was organised. Some work must have been done by Izydor Schulz, who had just been appointed director of the representative office of the joint-stock company "Galicja" in Warsaw[31] and was a member of the National Petroleum Society[32]. Similarly, Schulz's cousin Henryk Kuhmärker must have helped, too; in the 1920s, he became the director of the

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22 fr., *Kultura i oświata*, "Świt", January 1, 1921, no. 1, p. 9.

23 *Kultura i oświata*, "Świt", January 15, 1921, no. 2, p. 6

24 On December 19 and 20, 1921, Józef Wittlin's author evenings were held in Boryslav and Drohobycz: Al. St., Odczyty Józefa Wittlina, "Świt", January 15, 1922, no. 25–26, p. 10.

25 At the end of October 1923, an "evening of three authors: Lechoń, Słonimski and Tuwim" took place in Drohobycz. It gained considerable publicity: the evening "was the scene of vulgar scenes and wild brawls, bordering on scandal. When Julian Tuwim appeared on the stage, a dozen or so school-age students, for unknown reasons, began to howl terribly and threw a hail of rotten apples at the famous poet. Panic broke out in Sokół's room, and Mr. Tuwim, under the pressure of such arguments, had to withdraw from the stage" – *Wieczór 3 autorów*, "Świt", November 15–December 1, 1923, no. 70–71, p. 9–10.

26 Juliusz Kaden-Bandrowski gave a lecture on the role of the book in contemporary Polish literature – (st), *Odczyty*, "Świt", April 1–April 15, 1924, no. 79-80, p. 9.

27 Wacław Sieroszewski gave a lecture titled *Na wulkanach Japonji* [On the Volcanoes of Japan] on May 16, 1924: St. St., *Odczyty*, "Świt", June 1924, No. 83, p. 9.

28 In October 1923, Kazimiera Rychterowna recited poems on stages in Boryslav and Drohobycz. It was then that Bruno Schulz became acquainted with her. *Z teatru. Kazimiera Rychterówna*, "Świt", September 15–October 1, 1923, no. 66–67, p. 11; (Elgot), *Kazimiera Rychterówna*, "Świt", October 15–November 1, 1923, no. 68–69, p. 10.

29 B. Schulz, *Księga listów*, op. cit., p. 49.

30 (m.), *Z pracy oświatowej w Borysławiu*, "Świt", April 1, 1921, no. 7, p. 6.

31 B. Łazorak, *Wpływowy brat Izydor (Baruch, Izrael) Schulz*, "Schulz/Forum" 3, 2014, p. 99.

32 Izydor, elected as a member of the society's branch in the early 1920s, remained a member until his death. Cf. *Krajowe Towarzystwo Naftowe "Świt"*, February 15, 1922, no. 27–28, p. 6. DALO, f. 1, op. 54, sp. 1185: National oil company in Lviv, ark. 116; B. Łazorak, op. cit., p. 100.

Drohobych refinery "Galicja"[33]. Both had influence and relationships among oil officials.

However, most likely, Schulz's relationship with the "Kalleia" group played a key role. Its members were the promoters of the exhibition: the president of "Kalleia" and editor of "Świt", Klemens Funkenstein. It likely that Schulz met him in Vienna, where Funkenstein lived for some time as a correspondent of "Gazeta Warszawska"[34]; Stanisław Weingarten – oil company official, admirer of Schulz's art works[35]; Dr. Michał Friedländer – member of the board of the "Kalleia" society, and most importantly, chairman of the Educational Section of ZUN[36].

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33 A. Kaszuba-Dębska, *Kobiety i Schulz*, Gdańsk: słowo/obraz terytoria 2016, p. 307.

34 Klemens Funkenstein (1875–January 26, 1939) was known as an activist of professional organizations of white-collar workers. He attended schools in Lviv, then started law studies in Vienna, where he gained popularity with his first literary texts published, among others, in "Arbeiter-Zeitung" and "Oesterreichische Monatshefte", he was also a correspondent of "Gazeta Warszawska". He interrupted his studies and started working on the state railways. At the end of 1918 or at the beginning of 1919, he moved to Drohobych. He took a job at the Silva Plana oil company, where he actively tried to organize white-collar workers in the oil industry, and over time he expanded his activities to all employees. In 1922, he moved to Lviv. He founded the Union of Oil Workers, and also organized the General Trade Union, which he headed for many years, and the Lviv District Council of the Union of Intellectual Workers. He was the co-founder and editor-in-chief of the newspapers "Świt" (1921–1924) and "Dwutygodnik Naftowy" (1924–1925), in the years 1921–1922 he was the chairman of the Scientific and Literary Society (formerly "Kalleia"), a member of the Union of Oil Officials in Boryslav. See BP, *Klemens Funkenstein*, "Chwila", January 27, 1939, no. 7129, p. 6; B. Łazorak et al., op. cit., p. 244.

35 Stanisław Weingarten (ca. 1890–1943) was born in Kamionka Strumiłowa (now Kamionka Bużańska), and attended schools in Lviv. However, it is known that on September 7, 1914, he left Drohobycz for Vienna. Apparently, he moved to Drohobych earlier and returned after the war. For many years, he was employed as a clerk at the "Galicja" Oil Company. Because of his duties, he moved to Lviv and then to Łódź. In 1939, looking for salvation, he returned to Drohobych. In 1943, together with the last group of Drohobych Jews, he was murdered in the Bronicki Forest. Weingarten was a lover of art and music. In the 1920s, he was a member of the Drohobych creative group "Kalleia". He had a lasting friendship with Schulz. He collected the artist's works. It was thanks to Weingarten that Schulz's works were transported to Łódź and were saved from destruction. The only surviving oil painting by Bruno Schulz, "Spotkanie" [Meeting] (1920), comes from this collection. See *Słownik schulzowski*, p. 408–409; *Księga pamiątkowa i adresowa wygnańców wojennych z Galicyi i Bukowiny 1914–1915* and Album pamiątkowy, cz. III: Prowincya i Bukowina, Wiedeń 1915, p. 39

36 Michał Friedländer (1894–1942/1943?) was born in Skole. In 1912, he graduated from high school in Drohobych. He began his studies in Vienna. In the early 1920s, he was a member of the Drohobych group "Kalleia". In 1921–1922, he worked as an oil official in Boryslav. From January to April 1921, he headed the Educational Section of ZUN. Perhaps he resigned on his own initiative due to criticism of his activities. However, he apparently returned to his position, since the following year he was again mentioned as Section Chairman. In 1923, he began working as a teacher at the Private Junior High School and Co-educational Secondary School of the Private Polish Real Junior High School Society for Boryslav and Tustani. Therefore, he resigned from active membership in ZUN. For his services in creating the trade union library (opened on July 1, 1922), on March 10, 1924, he received the title of honorary member of ZUN. He was a collaborator of the ZUN organ – the biweekly "Świt", later renamed "Dwutygodnik Naftowy". At that time, he published under pseudonyms and codenames (M.Fr., fr, Al. Steve, Al. Steve, Al. St., al. st., st.). On May 15, 1921,

Friedländer was an exceptional figure – he published a lot, also under a pseudonym and codenames. He was interested in education and culture, he worked as a teacher, he gave public lectures, published several brochures on literary topics[37]. He was the author of most of the notes related to the Schulz exhibition. He also personally opened the exhibition on behalf of the Educational Section.

Schulz's opening took place on Sunday, March 13, 1921 at 11:00 a.m. at the House of the Technicians' Union[38] at ul. Kościuszki 82, near the city hall. The building was owned by the Folk School Society, and the Association of Drilling Technicians also had its premises there[39]. On the ground floor, the veranda of

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he withdrew from the editorial office for personal reasons, but until the end of 1924, in addition to official statements as the chairman of the ZUN Educational Section, he continued to publish his own texts under a pseudonym. At the end of 1924, he moved to Cracow, where he continued his educational activities. According to the testimony of Leopold Held, Friedländer was murdered by the Nazis in Brody. The exact date of his death is unknown (approximately 1942 or 1943). Cf. *Sprawozdanie Dyrekcyi C. K. Gimnazyum im. Franciszka Józefa w Drohobyczu za rok szkolny 1912*, p. 92; DALO, f. 1., op. 54, pp. 426: *Sprawa pro rejestraciju polskoho kulturno-proswitnićkoho towarystwa "Koło naukowo-literaćke"*, sheet 6; Dr. MF, *List do Redakcji*, "Świt", April 15, 1921, No. 8, p. 6–7; *Kronika*, "Świt", May 15, 1921, no. 10, p. 5; *Jedna z młodszych, Głos młodej koleżanki*, "Świt", April 15, 1922, no. 31–32, p. 7; *Walne Zgromadzenie Z.U.N.*, "Świt", February 1, 1923, no. 51, p. 2–4; *Z ruchu zawodowego*, "Świt", March 1–15, 1924, no. 77–78, p. 6; Z. Zagórowski, *Spis nauczycieli szkół wyższych, średnich, zawodowych, seminarjów nauczycielskich oraz wykaz zakładów naukowych i władz szkolnych*, vol. 2, 1926, p. 130; W. Pawlowski, op. cit., p. 44; I. Michalska, *Nauczyciel dla nauczycieli i wychowawców. Michał Friedländer jako popularyzator wiedzy o wychowaniu w latach międzywojennych*, "Studia Edukacyjne" 2018, no. 48, p. 133–149; *Słownik pseudonimów i kryptonimów pisarzy polskich oraz Polski dotyczących*, vol. 3: *Wykaz nazwisk pisarzy*, Kraków 1938, p. 31; *Słownik pseudonimów pisarzy polskich*, vol. 3, edited by E. Jankowski et al., Wrocław 1996, p. 251; ibidem, vol. 2, p. 623; L. Held, *A Tyśmienica nadal płynie*, https://www.jewishgen.org/Yizkor/Borislav/ Borislav.html Accessed: December 29, 2019.

37 Al. Stewe, *Romain Rolland i jego "Jean Christophe", Drohobych 1921*, "Biblioteka Epoki", no. 1) As far as we know, a pamphlet titled *Walt Whitman, the Apostle Poet* was being prepared for printing. "Świt" published a review of Al Stewe's first brochure: *M. Propper,* "Biblioteka Epoki", "Świt", August 1, 1921, no. 14–15, p. 10; M. Pr., *Z książek nadesłanych*, "Świt", November 15, 1921, no. 21–22, p. 10.

38 *Kultura i oświata. Urządzona staraniem Sekcji Oświatowej Z.U.N. wystawa obrazów i grafiki oryginalnej Brunona Schulza*, "Świt".

39 In November 1904, a group of representatives of the management staff of oil mines established an association called the Association of Drilling Technicians in Boryslav. Its aim was to defend the rights and interests of the management staff of oil mines. Initially, the union had 76 members. After the war, it changed its name to the Association of Polish Drilling and Oil Technicians in Boryslav. In 1911–1914, the Association published the union magazine "Ropa" [Oil], later – in 1937–1939 – "Biuletyn Związku Polskich Techników Wiertniczych i Naftowych" [Bulletin of the Association of Polish Drilling and Oil Technicians]. The headquarters of the Association was a building at ul. Pańska (later ul. Kościuszki), opposite the Carpathian Gate. The presidents of the Association were, among others, Julian Bittner, Józef Lewicki, Tadeusz Łaszcz, Leopold Słotwiński and, most recently, Wiktor Bobrowski. Various trade unions in the oil basin initially competed with each other, but due to the lack of available premises in Boryslav, they were forced to establish relations. In 1922–1923, the unions merged into the Complex of the Unions of White-Collar Workers of the Oil Industry in Boryslav. See *Sprawa wspólnej organizacji*, "Świt", January 15, 1923, no. 49–50, p. 6; *Z ruchu zawodowego*, "Świt", September 15–October 1, 1923, no. 66–67, p. 3–4; W. Pawłowski, op. cit., p. 47–48; T. Porembalski, *Wspomnienia nafciarza*, Warszawa 1978, p. 83–88.

Mizerski's restaurant ran along the entire building. Inside, there were a hall, an office, management board room, billiard room and Bazylewicz's buffet. On the first floor – living rooms and a casino[40]. Schulz's exhibition in this building took one room[41], in which the artist himself hung several dozen works[42], including his drawings[43].

Dr. Michał Friedländer opened the exhibition with a public lecture on behalf of the Educational Section. Stanisław Weingarten then introduced the audience to Schulz's "world of artistic creation". The speaker "in a beautiful and profound talk" contrasted Schulz with the masters, whose school he originated from and showed the differences between eroticism in the works of Goya, Rops and Klinger and the form that Schulz gave to this intimate aspect of life in his works[44].

The author of the review from the exhibition emphasized the theme of the works: "Everywhere and always, one main idea: tame a man, throw him at your feet"[45]. Based on the reviews, at least eight works can be mentioned:

1) a "big city corso"[46], with a woman waling; around her there are the faces of men,

2) a painting with a woman in one stocking, with a shoe next to her,

3) a portrait of a woman – above her, there are naked bodies with guitars or harps in their hands,

4) "two portraits" – one introduces us to the artist's studio furnished with great luxury, the author does not describe the other;

5) "Spring Awakening", a painting that differed from the other items in its Art Nouveau technique and showed several boyish figures,

6) pastel portrait of a woman,

7) portrait of a woman with an elegant shoe; thoughts hover above her like birds,

8) Circe – a watercolour with subtle tones: "two women, one dressed in a short skirt, with her hand on her hips, with the conscious shamelessness of a street girl, and the other – a nude – with perfect harmony in the lines of the whole body, sitting, with her hand hanging limp in of silent delight, with a face full of longing, contemplation and pious prayer. At the feet of these women crawl men,

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40 W. Pawłowski, op. cit., p. 47.

41 Unfortunately, the building has not survived to this day. According to some locals, it stood in the city centre at ul. Kościuszki (currently Taras Shevchenko Street).

42 S. N-owa, *Wrażenia z wystawy. (Wystawa obrazów Schulza)*, "Świt", March 15, 1921, no. 6, p. 2.

43 This was emphasized in the first announcement of the exhibition, and then in the text by E. Menar, *Kultura i oświata*, "Świt", March 1, 1921, no. 5, p. 7; E. Menar, *Sztuki graficzne (Z okazji odbyć się mającej wystawy grafiki oryginalnej w Borysławiu)*, "Świt", March 1, 1921, no. 5, p. 2–4.

44 *Kultura i oświata. Urządzona staraniem Sekcji oświatowej Z. U. N. wystawa obrazów i grafiki oryginalnej Brunona Schulza*, op. cit., p. 6.

45 S. N-owa, op. cit., p. 2–3

46 *Corso* – this was the name of the former ul. Mickiewicza(now Shevchenko Street) in Drohobych.

Boryslav, Kościuszki Street, after 1915, postcard,
9×13 cm. Polish National Library.

whose contorted faces radiate all the ugliness and destruction of the world of the senses"[47]. We provide this detailed description of the last painting to emphasize that in content and technique – according to the reviewer – it differed from the work "Mademoiselle Circe and her troupe" that Schulz scholars have paid some attention to. Apparently, there was another "Circe".

Apart from the fact that, thanks to a thorough analysis, Stanisław Weingarten "managed to completely solve the apparent mystery that immediately strikes the unprepared viewer"[48], it is not known what the average viewer's reaction to Schulz's works was. If we believe the few notes from "Świt", the exhibition was a success and "became a nice attraction in the monotony of the dullness of Boryslav"[49]. Moreover, the subjectivity of the source should be taken into account, as the biweekly was an organ of the ZUN, whose Educational Section organized the exhibition.

The newspaper advertised Schulz's exhibition on every occasion: emphasizing that the audience in Boryslav was given the opportunity "to become acquainted with such an outstanding talent as Bruno Schulz undoubtedly is"[50] as well as that Schulz's exhibition completed the first stage of the Educational Section's work; further, it was stressed that "one exhibition of paintings and graphics at the House of Polish Technicians" was an important cultural undertaking of the Section[51]; the announcement of the exhibition in Drohobych notes great interest in Schulz's works presented in Boryslav[52], and once again a year later the exhibition is remembered as an example of a successful revival of cultural life in the region[53]. In total, she was mentioned nine times, always in a positive sense[54]. The fact that from the income from the exhibition the Educational Section donated 150 marks to the newspaper's fund was probably of no small importance here[55]. Izydor Schulz might have also provided financing for the newspaper.

In addition to minor notes about the opening of the exhibition, three extensive articles related to it were published. It is worth analysing them in more detail.

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47 S. N-owa, op. cit., p. 2–3.

48 *Kultura i oświata. Urządzona staraniem Sekcji oświatowej Z. U. N. wystawa obrazów i grafiki oryginalnej Brunona Schulza*, op. cit., p. 6.

49 Ibidem.

50 Ibidem.

51 (m.), *Z pracy oświatowej w Borysławiu*, op. cit., p. 6.

52 (fr), *Zbiorowa wystawa obrazów*, op. cit., p. 7.

53 Al. St., *Wystawy*, "Świt", April 15, 1922, no. 31–32, p. 10–11.

54 *Kultura i oświata*, "Świt", February 15, 1921, no. 4, p. 7; *Kultura i oświata*, "Świt", March 1, 1921, no. 5, p. 7; S. N-owa, op. cit., p. 2–3; *Kultura i oświata. Urządzona staraniem Sekcji oświatowej Z.U.N. wystawa obrazów i grafiki oryginalnej Brunona Schulza*, "Świt", p. 6; twice in: (m.), op. cit., p. 6; (fr), op. cit., p. 7; Al. St., *Wystawy*, "Świt", April 15, 1922, no. 31–32, pp. 10–11; E. Menar, *Sztuki graficzne*, p. 2–4.

55 *Na fundusz prasowy ofiarowali*, "Świt", March 15, 1921, no. 6, p. 6.

On March 1, 1921, "on the occasion of the exhibition of original drawings", a text by E. Menar was published. Titled "Graphic arts[56], the article was a brief outline of the history of the development of drawing as an artistic form. The author discusses some techniques (copperplate engraving, etching, etching), emphasizing the importance of the original cliché-verre technique. I quote: "Here we must pay attention to the technique indicated by Corot, called cliché-verre. It involves drawing with a needle on a glass plate coated with a type of varnish that does not transmit light, and this transparent drawing burns sunlight onto paper coated with silver bromide, thus creating a faithful print. We will have the opportunity to see this type of technique at the announced exhibition"[57]. We can conclude from this that Schulz included at the exhibition works from *The Booke of Idolatry* because in it he mainly (apart from bookplates) used the cliché-verre technique[58]. Then, E. Menar, briefly presenting the history of etching, listed the masters of this technique. He considers Rembrandt, unrivalled in his professionalism, to be the father of *peintres graveurs*. He also mentioned Rubens and Callot, who loved street scenes. He considered Goya to be the only graphic genius at the turn of the 18th and 19th centuries, whose influence had reached contemporary draftsmen. Discussing the latest masters, the author highlighted the eroticism in the works of Félicien Rops and the wonderful "poetry" of Max Klinger[59].

It is worth emphasizing the detail and professionalism of this description of visual arts in the paper published by oil officials. It is impossible to determine who E. Menar, the author of the text, really was. We do not know if it is a real name or a pseudonym[60]. It never appeared in the newspaper again. The authenticity of the first edition is evidenced by the lack of a cross-reference, which was regularly used in the case of reprints. As I mentioned above, a lecture on a similar topic was given by Stanisław Weingarten at Schulz's opening. It was most likely prepared on the basis of the artist's own reflections.

Perhaps it was the text of that lecture that was published as Menar's article. This kind of publication practice was nothing exceptional. On the eve of the exhibition in Drohobych in May 1921, for example, the text of a lecture by Adolf

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56 The text appeared two weeks before the opening, in the same issue of the newspaper as the announcement. The author did not mention the name of Bruno Schulz, but it is obvious that we are talking about his exhibition, as there was simply no other exhibition at that time, much less an exhibition of original cliché-verre graphics. See E. Menar, *Sztuki graficzne*, p. 2–4.

57 Ibidem, p. 4.

58 M. Kitowska-Łysiak, "Cliché-verre", [in:] *Słownik schulzowski*, p. 59.

59 E. Menar, *Sztuki graficzne*, p. 4.

60 I wonder if it is a coincidence that the signature "E. Menar" reminds one of the name of the painter René Emile Ménard (1862–1930) or with that of René Joseph Ménard (1827–1887) – a French painter, writer and critic. One of the most famous books of the latter is *La Mythologie: Dans l'Art Ancien Et Moderne*.

Bienenstock intended to be delivered at the exhibition was published[61]. Either way, the connection between Menar's text and Schulz is obvious. The cliché-verre technique that Menar so aptly discusses was little known and rarely used. It is not even known how Schulz himself mastered it. Authors of the Schulz dictionary conclude that he must have learnt about cliché-verre from professional literature and was the only draftsman in Poland who used this technique[62]. In "Świt", we find texts and announcements of lectures on art by Adolf Bienenstock[63] and Mark Doerfler[64]; however, there is no reason to suspect they published this particular article under a pseudonym.

The second text, the only attempt at a review from the exhibition – "Wrażenia z wystawy (Wystawa obrazów Schulza)" [Impressions from the exhibition (Exhibition of Schulz's paintings)] – was signed with the code name "S. N-owa". The review is vague. The author writes: "Bruno Schulz is a talent with deep intuition and rich imagination. The one-sidedness of the themes, which is striking at first glance and carries the danger of mannerisms, indicates that the painter has not yet reached the depths of his soul and spread it. The Creator has within himself rocky thresholds which require a fight with himself to overcome. In order to extract from life what is its essential content and find new paths, a struggle is necessary"[65]. The author emphasizes the influence that Goya, Rops, Klinger, Klimt and, interestingly, the writer Frank Wedekind had on Schulz's work[66]. From this review, as already mentioned, we learn about the content and theme of the exhibition. Nothing is known about the author of the text. In a review of Schulz's exhibition in Drohobych, signed as "Al. Stewe" (Michał Friedländer), the following sentence appears: "On the occasion of the exhibition of Schulz's works

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61 On the eve of the opening of the exhibition of seven artists on May 22, 1921, Adolf Bienenstock published a text on contemporary painting in "Świt". He then hosted the vernissage, and on May 29, while the exhibition was still running, he gave his lecture. Interestingly, in the "Biblioteka Epoki" series, in 1921 his brochure on a different topic was being prepared for print: *Einstein i teorja względności* [Einstein and the theory of relativity]. See A. Bienenstock, *Kształt i barwa (O malarstwie współczesnem słów kilka)*, "Świt", May 15, 1921, no. 10, p. 2–3; Wystawa obrazów, "Świt", May 15, 1921, no. 10, p. 7; *Biblioteka Epoki*, "Świt", August 1, 1921, no. 14–15, p. 10.

62 M. Kitowska-Łysiak, "Cliché-verre", p. 59–64.

63 The figure of Adolf Bienenstock is rather well known in Schulz studies. He was the author of a review of Schulz's exhibition in 1922. The artists jointly participated in the exhibition in Drohobych in 1921. Urszula Makowska recognizes Bienenstock as the patron of Schulz's participation in the group exhibition in Lviv in 1920. See A. Bienenstock, *Z wystawy wiosennej. Prace graficzne Brunona Schulza*, "Chwila" 1922, no. 1213 (July 8), p. 5; *Wystawa obrazów*, "Świt", May 15, 1921, no. 10, p. 7; B. Łazorak et al., op. cit., p. 164–165; U. Makowska, op. cit., p. 14.

64 On March 13, 1921, Marek Dörfler (Doerfler) gave a lecture on Art in Antiquity, in which he discussed the art of Egypt, Assyria, Greece and Rome in the context of their historical development. Cf. (K.), *Odczyty*, "Świt", March 15, 1921, no. 6, p. 7.

65 S. N-owa, op. cit., p. 2–3. For a reprint of texts about exhibitions, see: B. Łazorak et al., op. cit., p. 226–233.

66 Ibidem.

in Boryslav, we discussed in more detail the nature of his work"[67]. However, it is not possible to confidently assign another pseudonym to Michał Friedländer.

And now about the new thread.

Nine months after Schulz's exhibition in Boryslav, on January 15, 1922, "Świt" published a work which, in my opinion, is directly related to his work. It was about Marceli Weron's short story "Undula". The title character is the embodiment of the ideal woman from the Schulz's *The Booke of Idolatry*[68]. As we remember, at the exhibition, which was a local success, the artist included, among others, works from *The Booke*.

The main female character from Schulz's drawings, together with her characteristic features, "travels" to Marceli Weron's story: "Undula lies in her fragrant bed in the embrace of a heavy sleep, which drains from her the memory of all the orgies and frenzies. Her inert and soft body, stripped of the tightness of gauze, panties and stockings, takes the darkness under her like a big furry bear, encloses it in her four huge paws and gathers her white, velvety limbs into one sweet and soft handful, over which she pants her purple tongue"[69]. We do not know the origin of the name "Undula"[70]. It is probably a name Schulz created without a specific source. According to Jerzy Ficowski, "Undula" is associated with Undyna – a fairy, from the Latin *unda* – with a wave, stream, whirlpool, anxiety[71]. Włodzimierz Bolecki combines Schulz's Undula with Undine (Ondine) by Friedrich de la Motte Fouqué. Undine, the title character of the novel popular in the 19th century, is a water nymph, or mermaid, a creature with a dual nature, which belongs to the human world and the water element. This image of female characters is typical of romantic fantasy. The nymph (meaning "girl" in Greek), a being intermediate between deity and man, lives a very long time without ageing, although she does not seek immortality. Schulz's nymph Undula symbolizes the female figure in general[72]. Ficowski claims that Undula, who reigns in *The Booke of Idolatry*, is the first variant of the image of Rachel, an actual servant in the Schulz house, to whom the writer gave the name Adela in his literary works[73].

The first comparison of the text of Weron's story with Schulz's prose allows us to discover some common features – for example, certain syntactic peculiarities: the use of subordinate clauses in direct speech. Other similarities are,

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67 Al. Stewe, *Z wystawy obrazów*, p. 7.

68 See chapter "Xięga bałwochwalcza (1920–1922)", [in:] B. Schulz, *Księga obrazów*, zebrał, oprac., komentarzami opatrzył J. Ficowski, Gdańsk: słowo/obraz terytoria 2012, p. 231–268.

69 M. Weron, "Undula", p. 4.

70 M. Kitowska-Łysiak, "Undula", [in:] *Słownik schulzowski*, p. 401–402.

71 J. Ficowski, *Regiony wielkiej herezji i okolice*, p. 275.

72 W. Bolecki, *Witkacy–Schulz, Schulz–Witkacy: wariacje interpretacyjne*, "Pamiętnik Literacki" 1994, No. 1 (85), p. 88–90.

73 J. Ficowski, *Regiony wielkiej herezji i okolice*, s. 275–276.

among other things, the interweaving of reality and sleep, the use of the concept of awakening, and the masochistic eroticism typical of both authors. There are also clear affinities, for example, in the use of child characters, the maid Adela, the Demiurge, as well as the figure of a crab or a roach.

The beginning of Marceli Weron's story is somewhat reminiscent of Schulz's novella "Loneliness". The entire text is accompanied by the hiss of an old oil lamp, and events take place in a constant intertwine of dream, dream and reality.

A common feature of Weron's and Schulz's stories seems to be masochistic eroticism, but while in the former it is overt, in Schulz's, although ubiquitous, it remains, as Jerzy Ficowski noticed, hidden[74]. Like the man in Schulz's engravings, Marceli Weron's character is the "humble Lazarus" at Undula's feet, an awkwardness (which is the figure of a man) in the splendour of perfection (which is the figure of a woman – a statue). Undula sentences Weron's character to "suffer until the end the error of the Demiurge" who created him[75]. As we know, the figure of Demiurge – the creator, the father – is also present in Schulz's fiction.

The text also contains stylistic similarities with Schulz's stories. The eponymous Undula, for example, in Weron's story "took the darkness under itself like a big furry bear"[76], and in Schulz we read: "Lying face downward on the furry lap of darkness, we sailed in its regular breathing into the starless nothingness"[77]. Another vivid example can be found in the following episode: "Large black cockroaches stand still and stare mindlessly into the light. They seem dead. Suddenly, these flat, headless hulks begin to run in an incredible crab-like manner and cut diagonally across the floor"[78]. And in Schulz: "In the corners, large cockroaches sat immobile, hideously enlarged by their own shadows which the burning candle imposed on them and which remained attached to their flat, headless bodies when they suddenly ran off with weird, spiderlike movements"[79].

Weron's character (and narrator), who follows Undula, will have to "walk blindly, with sleep on his eyelids, up some old stairs, climbing up many dark floors, crossing black attic spaces, climbing overhead galleries" until he finally reaches a quiet, a familiar corridor and he will realize that he has stopped in front of the entrance to the apartment from his own childhood. He is greeted by his former maid, Adela, "treading silently on the velvet stoppers of her slippers"[80]. Analogies come to mind here with the description of Schulz's family home in

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74 Ibidem, p. 440.
75 M. Weron, op. cit., p. 4.
76 Ibidem.
77 B. Schulz, "Tailor's Dummies", [in:] idem, *The Street of Crocodiles and Other Stories*, translated by Celina Wieniewska, London: Penguin Books 2008, s. 27.
78 M. Weron, op. cit., p. 3.
79 B. Schulz, "Visitation", [in:] idem, *The Street of Crocodiles and Other Stories*, p. 12.
80 M. Weron, op. cit., p. 3.

his story "A Visitation". Moreover, these "groping journeys" in Weron harmonize with the motif of the labyrinth, one of the important motifs of Schulz's prose[81]. The maid Adela is one of the three most important characters in Schulz's world[82].

Marceli Weron's story ends with a search for his childhood apartment. The figure of the child is interesting. The character has the impression that he has heard the "monotonous song" of the kerosene lamp earlier, at the beginning of his life, "when – a sick and tired infant – he was capricious and whining through long, crying nights". And he wonders further:

"Who called me then and turned me back as I was groping for my way back to my mother's proto-nothingness?"[83]. An analogy with Schulz's "returning childhood" immediately comes to mind[84]. The figure of the child belongs to the "iron capital" of Schulz's fantasy[85]. Many similar examples can be provided. Weron's text is as if a mixture of Schulz's paintings and at the same time a combination of different worlds of his work, for example, the characters of Undula and Adela. The shared motifs in Weron's work appear deformed, and the story as a whole seems to be an echo of Schulz's well-known works. However, Schulz's prose as we know it today did not exist at that time, so it was impossible to copy, imitate or interpret it.

All this allows us to boldly assume that the author of the story "Undula" was Bruno Schulz himself, and Marceli Weron was his pseudonym[86]. The main reason for its use may have been the masochistic-erotic content of the story. Innate modesty or shame made it difficult for Schulz to publish it under his own name. Already a renowned writer, Schulz confessed in one of his interviews that he would not be able to write a masochistic work – "I would be ashamed"[87]. As we know, the same reality was expressed in Schulz's drawings and prose, differing in both forms only in a fragment and in the fullness of expression[88]. However,

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81 J. Jarzębski, "Labirynt", [in:] *Słownik schulzowski*, p. 186–187.

82 S. Rosiek, "Adela", [in:] *Słownik schulzowski*, p. 13–14.

83 M. Weron, op. cit., p. 4.

84 See letter from Bruno Schulz to Andrzej Pleśniewicz of March 4, 1936, [in:] B. Schulz, *Dzieła zebrane*, t. 5: *Księga listów*, zebrał i przygotował do druku J. Ficowski, uzupełnił S. Danecki, Gdańsk: słowo/obraz terytoria 2016, p. 120–121.

85 "Bruno Schulz do St. I. Witkiewicza", [in:] B. Schulz, *Dzieła zebrane*, t. 7: *Szkice krytyczne*, koncepcja edytorska W. Bolecki, komentarz i przypisy M. Wójcik, oprac. językowe P. Sitkiewicz, Gdańsk: słowo/obraz terytoria 2017, p. 7.

86 It is possible that the nickname comes from the name of one of the leading French aestheticians of the second half of the 19th century, art theoretician and publicist Eugène Véron (1825–1889). *L'Esthétique*, published in 1878, was his most important work, which was published in Poland in 1892 in a translation by Antoni Lange. Interestingly, Véron provided an afterword to the book of the already mentioned Ménard, *La Mythologie: Dans l'Art Ancien Et Moderne. Suivie d'un appendice sur les origines de la mythologie*, Paris 1878.

87 J. Nacht, *Wywiad drastyczny. (Rozmowa z Brunonem Schulzem)*, "Nasza Opinia" 1937, no. 77, p. 5.

88 "Bruno Schulz do St. I. Witkiewicza", p. 8.

in his opinion, the written word carried a greater charge of emotion and risk. According to Ficowski, it was shame that prevented the exposed erotic idolatry from gaining wider access to the much fuller world of Schulz's prose[89]. In the case of "Undula", however, it should be remembered that it would represent the early writing attempts of the young Schulz, only selected, trimmed and polished years later. It is difficult to be certain here, since the "early" Schulz is unknown to us.

An additional reason for using the pseudonym could have been the reservations of Izydor Schulz, who, although he supported his brother's extravagant work, could not jeopardize his reputation and high position in the oil industry.

An interesting view on the interpenetration of literature and art in Schulz's work from the early 1920s – that has not gained widespread acceptance of Schulz scholars, though – was expressed by Serge Fauchereau[90]. He assumes that Schulz's original idea for *The Book of Idolatry* was to be a hybrid literary work, which, in addition to drawings, would also consist of a written text presenting the history of Undula[91]. Schulz, realizing that illustration that is not limited by the written word contains a deeper meaning, decided to abandon his original intention. This hypothetical text, according to Fauchereau, was never published and disappeared along with the author's other manuscripts[92]. Perhaps Weron's (Schulz's?) "Undula" is part of this lost text? We are getting lost in guesswork. Marceli Weron's short story was probably written in the spring of 1920 or 1921, together with a drawing of Undula. It was probably published in its entirety in "Świt", as there was no announcement from the editors of a sequel[93]. Significantly, this is the only publication of all the preserved issues of "Świt" with a disclaimed that prohibited reprinting without permission.

Interestingly, in the next issue a review of the monthly poetry magazine "Skamander" appeared for the first time under the codename "mw" (Marceli Weron?). The author emphasized the importance of the monthly for Polish literature, comparing it to such literary periodicals as "Życie" and "Chimera", and considering the group of poets gathered around "Skamander" as the most outstanding contemporary talents[94]. However, the review is limited to reproducing the table of contents, and the reviewer's full name is missing.

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89 J. Ficowski, *Regiony wielkiej herezji i okolice*, p. 437.

90 S. Fauchereau, *Twórczość Brunona Schulza [wstęp do francuskiego wydania Xięgi bałwochwalczej]*, przeł. A. Trznadel–Szczepanek, "Twórczość" 1985, no. 7/8, pp. 153–166; B. Schulz, *Le Livre Idolâtre*, préface de S. Fauchereau, postface de W. Chmurzyński, Quimper 1983.

91 Jerzy Ficowski considered this information to be fictitious – *Regiony wielkiej herezji i okolice*, p. 277–278.

92 S. Fauchereau, op. cit., p. 155.

93 There may have been other similar publications, but it is difficult to determine because the complete annuals of the biweekly "Świt" have not survived. The biggest gap is the lack of issues of the newspaper from June to December 1922.

94 (mw.), *Z książek nadesłanych. Skamander*, "Świt", February 15, 1922, no. 27–28, p. 10.

It is possible that Undula was also critically received by the audience. In the issue that followed its publication, there was a response to a letter from a certain Mr. Adam Z. Let us quote a fragment of it: "Our ambition is to be read in the widest possible circles and, of course, we will have even more powerful weapons. So don't let the cultural section or column irritate you! As for the value of the latter, we are so immodest that we shall ask you to, please, leave us an assessment. The relevant part of your letter was apparently written under the influence of ignorant people"[95]. In the "Feljeton" column mentioned in the letter, next to "Undula", there was only a short poem entitled "Żal" [Sorrow][96].

Finally, it is worth emphasizing that Bruno Schulz's exhibition in Boryslav, despite favourable notes in the local press, probably did not play a major role in promoting his work, as we do not find any evidence of wider interest in it in nationwide newspapers, for example in the Lviv press. However, this was the artist's individual debut in his home region. Therefore, the belief that Schulz avoided presenting it in the Drohobych area due to the "risky nature" of the subject matter of his artistic works should be corrected. Most importantly, the analysis of exhibition activities revealed Schulz's hypothetical literary origins from the early 1920s. However, the relationship between visual and literary representations of Undula requires deeper research. If our hypothesis were confirmed, it would fundamentally change the views on the beginnings of Bruno Schulz's literary work, as the story Undula appeared twelve years before the publication of *Sklepy cynamonowe*. So maybe Schulz debuted in two fields at the same time?

Translated by Language Extreme from the Polish translation by Adam Pomorski

95 *Odpowiedzi Redakcji*, "Świt", February 15, 1922, no. 27–28, p. 8.
96 H. H., *Żal*, "Świt", January 15, 1922, no. 25–26, p. 2.

Urszula Makowska: "Strange Aversion". About Schulz's Exhibitions

"There is no artist without exhibitions", a gallery owner repeats when preparing for almost every opening. Today, participation in exhibitions is an integral part of a painter's or drawer's biography, the framework of their professional biography, and often a criterion for professional assessment. It was similar in the 19th century, especially in the second half of it, and then in the 20th century, too. Exhibition catalogues and press reviews of individual exhibitions constitute a significant part of art documentation from that period. This is evidenced by the contents of name files kept in the Polish Artists Dictionary Studio at the Institute of Art of the Polish Academy of Sciences.

The materials in the file signed "Bruno Schulz" are no exception in this respect. It includes (apart from clippings from post-war newspapers) extracts about four exhibitions in Lviv and one in Cracow. Basic publications, usually considered when developing entries for *Słownik artystów polskich i obcych w Polsce działających* [Dictionary of Polish and foreign artists active in Poland], presents information about exhibitions in Drohobych, Vilnius, and Truskavets, as well as Schulz's debut in Lviv[1]. At the beginning of my work on his biography[2], I knew about nine events. I kept searching, but to no avail. By compiling and comparing data, I managed to only slightly supplement and confirm (more often) or question (much less often) the current findings of scholars regarding Schulz's exhibitions. Later, after the publication of a dictionary with an entry about Schulz, I learned

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1 See *Polska bibliografia sztuki 1801–1944*, t. II: *Rysunek. Grafika. Sztuka książki i druku*, oprac. J. Wiercińska, M. Liczbińska, Wrocław 1979; J. Malinowski, *Malarstwo i rzeźba Żydów Polskich w XIX i XX wieku*, Warszawa 2000. The extent of material covered by research constituting the basis for these publications allows us to assume that researchers found information about the exhibitions regardless of the findings on this subject in the reconstructions of Schulz's biography, initiated by Jerzy Ficowski (e.g. "Słowo o *Xiędze bałwochwalczej*, [in:] B. Schulz, *Xięga bałwochwalcza*, przygotował do druku i słowem wstępnym opatrzył J. Ficowski, Warszawa 1988, p. 7–15; (mkł) [M. Kitowska-Łysiak], "Wystawy", [in:] *Słownik schulzowski*, oprac. W. Bolecki, J. Jarzębski, S. Rosiek, Gdańsk 2003.

2 U. Makowska, "Schulz Bruno", [in:] *Słownik artystów polskich i obcych w Polsce działających (zmarłych przed 1966 r.). Malarze, rzeźbiarze, graficy*, t. 10: Sa–Się, pod red. U. Makowskiej, Warszawa 2016, p. 285–299; see also eadem, "Schulz Bruno", [in:] *Allgemeines Künstlerlexikon. Die Bildenden Künstler aller Zeiten und Völker*, Band 102: Schleime–Seiffert, Berlin 2019, p. 272–273.

from a book by Ukrainian authors about another exhibition he had in Boryslav[3]. However, there is no certainty that the register of public presentations of his works can be considered complete. Thus, our knowledge about the circumstances and repercussions of recorded exhibitions also remains partial.

Ghost exhibitions

The exhibition in Truskavets, protested by senator Maksymilian Thulli as pornographic, is dated in Ficowski's first publications (and others after him) to 1928 or 1929 (at some point, the earlier date was commonly accepted). It should be identified with the joint exhibition of Schulz and Joachim Kahane in the summer of 1930; Ficowski knew about the near-miss scandal from a letter by Juliusz Flaszen, who probably got the year wrong[4].

Ignacy Witz's memory must have failed him when he wrote about "two or three" individual exhibitions of Schulz "in Lviv at the premises of the Artists Trade Union", when Witz was "about eighteen years old"[5]. Ficowski adds the number eighteen to Witz's year of birth (although "about eighteen" does not mean exactly that) and gets the year 1937, the date of the exhibition. He admits that there are "no mentions in the press" of the exhibition, but he does not explicitly question it, so the date enters scholarly discourse[6]. Meanwhile, the lack of mentions in the press (even in "Głos Plastyków", the organ of the Cracow Association that recorded artistic events throughout the country) means that there simply was no such exhibition. We are not dealing here with an event organized in the provinces or in a community centre of a local organization that could have escaped the attention of journalists. Besides, Schulz was not a member of ZZPAP[7] and the invitation to take part in the December exhibition in 1935 (see below) was probably a one-time event. Most likely, this particular exhibition must have tripled

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3 B. Łazorak et al., L. Tymoshenko, Ł. Chomycz, I. Czawa, *Widomyj i niewidomyj Bruno Szulc (socjokulturnyj portret Drohobycza)*, Drohobych 2016 (Б. Лазорак, Л. Тимошенко, Л. Хомич, І. Чава, *Відомий і невідомий Бруно Шульц (соціокультурний портрет Дро гобича)*, Дрогобич 2016), hereinafter: B. Łazorak et al. et al.

4 In *Regiony wielkiej herezji* (1967, 1975), Ficowski indicates 1928 as the date of the exhibition, and in the introduction to *Xięga bałwochwalcza* (1988) he writes that the event took place "in 1928 or 1929" (p. 10); in the *Polski Słownik Biograficzny (1995–1996)* he mentions the exhibition with the correct year 1930.

5 I. Witz, "Bruno Schulz", in: idem, *Obszary malarskiej wyobraźni*, Kraków 1967, p. 40.

6 J. Ficowski, "Słowo o *Xiędze bałwochwalczej*", p. 14. In *Słownik schulzowski* (p. 417) the date 1937 is provided with a question mark.

7 His name is not on the list of members of the Lviv ZZPAP (*Salon Plastyków Związków Zawodowych Polskich Artystów Plastyków. Kraków, Lwów, Łódź, Poznań, Warszawa*. Styczeń 1936, IPS, Warszawa, p. 77–78). However, the names and addresses of Fryc Kleinman, Jarosława Muzykowa and Andrzej Pronaszka, who exhibited together with Schulz in 1935, are listed there.

in Witz's memory, as he was almost seventeen (or "about eighteen") years old when he saw it.

The information about Schulz's works presented at the Society of the Friends of Fine Arts (TPSP) in Cracow in 1931, published in *Polskie życie artystyczne*, also requires correction[8] (especially because it was repeated in other studies). Schulz's works were perhaps to be presented at this institution, as evidenced by a note in the eighth issue of "Głos Plastyków" from that year. However, the next issue of the magazine only mentions group exhibitions by Tadeusz Cybulski and Stanisław Podgórski, and a collection of works by Hanna Krzetuska; the names of these authors were included in the TPSP[9] catalogue (by the way, it is worth explaining that "collective exhibition" meant an individual one, while today it is understood as an exhibition with the participation of many artists, each of whom presents one or several works). One can also add to this list the exhibition in Lviv in 1929, which is mentioned by Jerzy Malinowski in the monograph *Malarstwo i rzeźba Żydów Polskich* [Painting and sculpture of Polish Jews][10]. In this case, the source of the mistake was probably Artur Lauterbach's supposition in an article printed in "Chwila" in August 1929; the critic wrote about Schulz's expected appearance "soon" before the audience[11], even though this did not happen until the spring of the following year.

While crossing out the years: 1928, 1929, 1931 and 1937 from chronology of exhibitions in which Schulz participated can be accepted without any major reservations, doing so with the exhibition at Warsaw's Zachęta in 1922 is not so easy. Schulz himself wrote about it in an application from August 9, 1924 to the Ministry of Religious Denominations and Public Enlightenment: "I have exhibited my works several times in capitals, with some success, as the press reports, and so in March 1922 I presented several works at the Society for the Encouragement of Fine Arts in Warsaw; in June 1922, I had a small collective exhibition at the Society for the Encouragement of Fine Arts in Lviv"[12]. However,

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8 *Polskie życie artystyczne*, ed. A. Wojciechowski, Wrocław 1974, p. 243 (noted in the text: "B. Szulc"; in the index there is a reference to: "Schulz Bruno").

9 "Głos Plastyków" 1931, no. 8, p. 6; with 9, p. 5. In the catalogue (*Wystawa akwarel i grafiki francuskiej. Wystawy zbiorowe Tadeusza Cybulskiego i Stan. Podgórskiego. Kolekcja prac Hanny Krzetuskiej*, marzec–kwiecień 1931 roku, Towarzystwo Przyjaciół Sztuk Pięknych w Krakowie) Schulz is never mentioned by name. Reviewers never mention him either, including Henryk Weber (*Wystawy w Pałacu Sztuki*, "Nowy Dziennik" 1931, no. 105 (20 April), p. 8–9), who less than a year earlier wrote kindly about Schulz's works presented at the Jewish Academic House in Cracow.

10 J. Malinowski, op. cit., p. 327.

11 "Undoubtedly, however, the artist will soon again present himself in front of a wide audience" – A. Lauterbach, *Talent w ukryciu. O grafikach Brunona Schulca* [!], "Chwila" 1929, no. 3740, August 21, p. 5.

12 B. Schulz, *Księga listów*, zebrał i przygotował do druku J. Ficowski, wyd. 3, Gdańsk 2008, p. 211 (hereinafter: *KL*).

the writer's name does not appear in the catalogues and reports of the Society for the Encouragement of Fine Arts. Even if he had exhibited "outside the catalogue" – as was the case with the Jewish exhibition in Lviv in 1920 – some trace would have remained in the press. Such an event could not, in fact, have gone unnoticed. If they did not appear in reviews, the names of artists exhibiting at Zachęta, the capital's most respectable gallery, were generally mentioned in short information notes[13].

However, research I have conducted on Warsaw magazines, also covering the spring of 1921 and 1923 (assuming Schulz's mistake in the yearly date), did not produce any conclusive results[14]. If Schulz had participated in a so-called current exhibition, changing every three weeks, which usually accompanied the main individual, group or thematic presentations, and if for some reason he had not been included in the catalogue, it is difficult to believe that his work – if only because on the topic – would not attract the attention of journalists[15]. Especially since, as he himself states, he put several works on exhibition, not just one small sketch. It was possible not to notice a still life with an apple in the rooms of Zachęta, but it was impossible to remain indifferent to the dark and grotesque sexuality, multiplied in many, even small, pictures. So did Schulz get the place and month of the exhibition wrong? (In the same application, he made a mistake in the name of the Lviv institution). Perhaps further search, extended to other months, will solve the mystery. However, it is worth remembering that Zachęta's exhibitions, despite the destruction of its archives during World War II, are quite well documented and researched[16]. Therefore, it cannot be ruled out that the Warsaw exhibition was added by Schulz in the official letter to strengthen the argument, and the phrase about the press votes regarding the Lviv exhibition was also extended to it. For now, in the absence of any other evidence apart from the entry in the application – a crowning piece of evidence, but, in my opinion, still

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13 A (probably incomplete) list of 25 artists who submitted works for the "current exhibition" was published by, among others, "Gazeta Warszawska" 1922, no. 64 (March 5), p. 6.

14 In addition to the Zachęta catalogues, the following magazines were included in the research in the collections of the Library of the Institute of Art of the Polish Academy of Sciences and the National Museum in Warsaw (the most complete in this respect): "Kurier Warszawski", "Gazeta Warszawska", "Gazeta Poranna", "Rzeczpospolita", "Świat", "Tygodnik Ilustrowany", "Ivy". In the Vilnius "Południe" (1921–1925), which meticulously recorded not only local art exhibitions and their participants, Schulz's name is also absent.

15 Władysław Wankie wrote in "Świat" (1922, no. 8, February 25, p. 6): "The current exhibition at Zachęta does not deserve to be considered", and Jerzy Centnerszwer in "Nasz Kurier" (1922, no. 54, February 24, p. 2) described the current exhibition as "barren". Similar formulations are present in other reviews from Zachęta from the spring of 1922.

16 On this subject, see J. Wiercińska, *Towarzystwo Zachęty Sztuk Pięknych w Warszawie. Zarys działalności*, Wrocław 1960; eadem, *Katalog prac wystawionych w Towarzystwie Zachęty Sztuk Pięknych w Warszawie w latach 1860–1914*, Wrocław 1969; *Towarzystwo Zachęty Sztuk Pięknych. Materiały z sesji*, red. J. Sosnowska, Warszawa 1993.

insufficient – I am moving Schulz's participation in the Warsaw exhibition from the register of facts to that of assumptions.

Facts on exhibitions

Currently, this register of facts includes ten exhibitions in which Schulz certainly participated. On the timeline, they form two distinct series. The first includes the Exhibition of Jewish Art in Lviv in January 1920, the following year an individual show in Boryslav (March) and a collective presentation of artists in the auditorium of the King Władysław Jagiełło Junior High School in Drohobych (May), as well as the Spring Salon of the Society of Friends of Fine Arts in Lviv in May, June and July 1922, and an exhibition of Jewish painters in Vilnius, opened less than a year later. The second series takes place in 1930, after a seven-year break; Schulz then shows his achievements at the Jewish Academic Home in Cracow (February), again in TPSP in Lviv (from May to June, a separate room at the Spring Salon) and at the above-mentioned exhibition in Truskavets in the Social Club. After more than five years, in December 1935, the artist took part in a joint show (with Fryc Kleinman, Jarosława Muzyka and Andrzej Pronaszko) at the premises of the Lviv Trade Union of Polish Artists. His last public appearance took place at an illustration exhibition organized in Lviv in May and June 1940 by the local organizing committee of the Union of Soviet Artists of Ukraine, apparently later moved to Kiev.

Year of projects – 1938

An event from May 1938 can also be added to the exhibition register. Some of Schulz's drawings (or their reproductions) were presented – in connection with Emil Breiter's article about *Sanatorium Under the Sign of the Hourglass* – at the showcase of the administration office of "Wiadomości Literackie"[17]. The showcase was designed by Marian Eile, who – as in other exhibitions known for his photography[18] – probably used some simple and effective visual and mental concept. Schulz was interested in how the showcase was received; he asked Romana Halpern for her opinion[19]. Perhaps for the first time, he did not have a direct influence on the selection and arrangement of the works shown, which,

17 The premises were located at ul. Królewska 13, where on October 1, 1932, the magazine's administration was moved from ul. Świętokrzyska. Breiter's text *"Sanatorium pod Klepsydrą" Schulza* was published in "Wiadomości Literackie" 1938, no. 23 (29 May), p. 4.

18 See "Wiadomości Literackie" 1938, no. 9, p. 8 (four photos).

19 *KL*, p. 166–168; Schulz received a photograph of the showcase from Kazimiera Rychterówna, ibidem, p. 170.

moreover, were made available not to a narrow circle of art lovers, but, in the full sense of the word, exposed to public view. Questions about the effects of Eile's work are one of the very few references to exhibitions in Schulz's statements. The rest are also from that year. In an interview from the beginning of January, there is talk about projects to organize shows, together with Egga van Haardt, in galleries in London and Paris[20]. Perhaps these ideas influenced Schulz's trip to Paris and the plan to organize his exhibition in one of the galleries there, which did not come to fruition due to an unfortunate combination of events (resulting in the postponement of the trip until August) and financial barriers[21]. Meeting with Natan Szpigiel ("he was delighted with my drawings and advised me to go to Paris to organize an exhibition"[22]) probably did not so much set the goal of the Paris expedition as it confirmed Schulz's decision. The word "exhibition" was mentioned again three months later in correspondence with Romana Halpern: "M. Eile intervenes at Zodiac to organize an exhibition of drawings and prints for me, so that I can sell something for the trip. Menashe Seidenbeutel is here, and he says that such an exhibition can be a financial success"[23].

Although none of these exhibitions (apart from the showcase designed by Eile) came to fruition, one can get the impression that the first half of 1938 was the period when Schulz began to seriously think about organizing shows of his works. Whether this is really a special stage in his biography in this respect – it is difficult to say, since we only have part of the correspondence, and most of it from the second half of the 1930s. But it is probably no coincidence that all references to exhibitions are accompanied by notes about contacts with other artists (Egga van Haardt, Natan Szpigel, Marian Eile, Menasze Seidenbeutel, Ludwik Lille[24]). With them, Schulz probably found confirmation of the value

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20 P. Sitkiewicz, *Bruno Schulz w Poznaniu*, "Schulz/Forum" 5, 2015, p. 133–146. It is hard to resist the impression that in the interview quoted here for the Poznań "Nowy Kurier" (1938, no. 7, p. 4–5), Egga van Haardt answers the journalist's questions – as if speaking on Schulz's behalf or supplementing his answers. The two Lviv exhibitions mentioned in the same interview were shows at TPSP in 1930 and at LZPAP in 1935, which had the character of individual exhibitions and were undoubtedly the most important in Schulz's career. The events he took part in in Boryslav and Truskawiec were provincial, and he probably did not take them seriously.

21 *KL*, p. 170–172, 276–279, 292; (jj) [J. Jarzębski], "Paryż", [in:] *Słownik schulzowski*, p. 258–259; Ł. Chomycz, *Wyjazd Brunona Schulza do Francji*, "Schulz/Forum" 11, 2018, p. 179–188.

22 Letter to Romana Halpern, March 3, 1938, *KL*, p. 160. In the same letter, a few lines above, Schulz states; "Nothing has come out of my trip to Paris yet". This probably means that the trip plans were made independently of the conversation with Szpigiel.

23 Letter to Romana Halpern, after June 12, 1938, *KL*, p. 170. Undoubtedly, Seidenbeutel was right – the Zodiak café, favoured by artists and writers, was in close proximity to the Society, the Institute of Art Propaganda, the headquarters of "Wiadomości Literackie" and other Warsaw cafés and restaurants that were fashionable in the late 1930s.

24 The name of Zofia Leśmianowa can be added to this list, whose opinion is referred to by Kazimiera Rychterówna in a letter to Schulz of July 28, 1938 – *KL*, p. 283.

of his works and practical advice on organizing exhibitions. This connection – between exhibition plans and contact (or the need for it) with artists – probably existed from the beginning of Schulz's artistic activity. The proof can be found in the words of Edmund Löwenthal, who met him in 1921: "In the time before he was appointed a drawing teacher, there was talk of attempts to send drawings to exhibitions in Paris, of seeking contacts with people from Drohobych painters – L[eopold] Gottlieb and Lilien"[25]. Of course, this relationship went deeper – drawing, just like literary work (and any other), is nourished by contact with other works, an exchange of thoughts with people related professionally and spiritually. It is just that these needs are much more difficult to satisfy in correspondence; letters will not replace conversation engaged in while looking at paintings or drawings together.

Schulz's trips to Lviv, Warsaw and Zakopane, where he could meet painters, as well as their visits (or longer stays) in Drohobych, did not mean establishing any permanent, close relationships with the artistic community. At least nothing is known about that being the case. In Lviv, Schulz visited the studio of photographer Wanda Diamand (and "there was not one Lviv artist who did not come across this atelier"[26]) as well as residence of Izabella Hermanowa (Czermakowa). However, Witz's opinion about his belonging to the "Artes" circle seems to be greatly exaggerated[27]. What brought them together was a joint exhibition in Lviv in 1930 (in which other artists took part) and his acquaintance with Debora Vogel. He was friends (or maybe just colleagues) with Jerzy Janisch, whose name appears most often in his letters; he met Henryk Streng, the illustrator of a volume of poems (*Toge-figuren*, 1930) and a volume of short stories (*Akacje kwitną*, 1936) by Debora Vogel, but he saw others – Ludwik Lille and Tadeusz Wojciechowski – rather sporadically[28]. The brother of Ludwik Tyrowicz, one of the members of "Artes", a friend of the entire group, wrote the following: "I did not have the opportunity to meet Schulz in person, because he rarely came from Drohobych to Lviv"[29]. In turn, in contacts with artists closely related to his biography, such as Feliks Lachowicz or Zenon Waśniewski, Schulz, as has already been written several times, did not reach either an agreement on artistic issues

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25 *Wspomnienie Edmunda Löwenthala*, [in:] B. Schulz, *Listy, fragmenty, wspomnienia o pisarzu*, zebrał i oprac. J. Ficowski, Kraków 1984.

26 I. Witz, "Wspomnienia lwowskie", [in:] *Księga wspomnień 1919–1939*, red. M. Berman, Warszawa 1960, p. 365–366.

27 Idem, *Bruno Schulz*, p. 40.

28 Despite these fleeting contacts, there could have been a real understanding between them (as evidenced by Lille's text about Schulz, see A. Kato, *Schulz i Lille*, "Schulz/Forum" 3, 2013, p. 126–134), which, still, did not perhaps translate, as one might assume, into a permanent incentive to work.

29 M. Tyrowicz, *Wspomnienia o życiu kulturalnym i obyczajowym Lwowa 1918–1939*, przedm. J. Maślanka, Wrocław 1991, p. 53.

or an intellectual partnership. Witkiewicz, in many respects an ideal partner, took care of his provincial colleague during his stay in Warsaw[30] and probably in Zakopane, but he was not very good as an advisor or helper, which Schulz confirmed at some point: "He cannot do anything practically good for anyone. I don't blame him"[31].

The intensity (relative, anyway) of all confirmed contacts between Schulz and visual artists could mainly be observed in the 1930s, i.e. after both series of exhibitions. The reconstruction of what came before must, of course, be built largely on assumptions and ideas based on flimsy premises. Therefore, it is impossible to avoid the tedious qualification of most statements with the formulaic "perhaps", "probably", "possibly", "apparently", etc.

1920–1923 Lviv, Boryslav, Drohobych, Vilnius

Therefore, it is possible that in the period preceding his artistic debut, Schulz maintained a relationship, which provided the opportunity for professional conversations about art and creation, with Adolf Bienenstock, who taught drawings at the Władysław Jagiełło Junior High School in Drohobycz from 1918–1922[32]. In Schulz studies, Bienenstock is present as the author of the review of the Spring Salon in Lviv TPSP, titled *Prace graficzne Brunona Schulza*, which appeared in "Chwila" in 1922[33]. Did the (supposed) contact between the two artists end only when Bienenstock moved to Przemyśl in December of that year, or did it happen a few months earlier? The mentioned review, despite the subtitle "Z wystawy wiosennej" [From the Spring Exhibition], was devoted entirely to Schulz and was undoubtedly of a promotional nature; his name written in bold in the headline was more eye-catching (and memorable) than placed in a grey column of the text. The characteristics of the exhibited works demonstrated the professionalism of the author of the article, and their overall assessment should be generally considered favourable. But it is possible that Schulz may have felt offended by the unbearably patronizing tone of the review. Bienenstock was right

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30 S. I. Witkiewicz, *Listy*, oprac. i przypisami opatrzyli T. Pawlak, S. Okołowicz, J. Degler, t. 2/1, Warszawa 2014, p. 291 (letter of December 28, 1934).

31 Letter to Romana Halpern, around mid-February 1938, *KL*, p. 157.

32 *Sprawozdanie Dyrekcji Państwowego Gimnazjum im. Króla Władysława Jagiełły w Drohobyczu za rok szkolny 1928/29 z uwzględnieniem dziesięciolecia 1918–1928*, Drohobycz [1929], p. 12, 14, 17, 20, 23, 27, 32.

33 A. Bienenstock, *Z wystawy wiosennej. Prace graficzne Brunona Schulza*, "Chwila" 1922, no. 1213 (8 July), p. 5. Presumably, the article about Schulz is the only review that Adolf Bienenstock published. Jerzy Malinowski (op. cit., p. 325, 346) attributes its authorship (without any commentary) to Maksymilian Bienenstock, who wrote a lot for "Chwila" (and other magazines), also about art. However, in the book by B. Łazorak et al. (op. cit., p. 165, footnote 34), Maksymilian Bienenstock's texts are given as examples of Adolf's journalism.

to suggest that his colleague from Drohobych resist "the temptations to exploit one's natural abilities", but the phrases repeated several times – about a young artist (or a young talent) and the attractiveness of his works to a naive viewer – revealed the reviewer's sense of superiority towards the artist who was only four years younger than him and enjoyed no worse prospects[34]. It is difficult to draw any far-reaching conclusions about the relationship between the two artists or about Bienenstock's personality from this fact. Besides, very little is known about him, even the date of his death is uncertain[35]. Of his considerable achievements, only one painting has survived (*Portrait of a Jewish Woman*, also known as *Inta*, 1925, National Museum of the Przemyśl Land) and the memory of polychromes and stained-glass windows in the Przemyśl synagogue[36]. Based on articles about Bienenstock's work published in the press, it can be assumed that his artistic assumptions, if not convergent, were certainly not in contradiction with Schulz's views on art[37]. We also managed to find a few small facts from the painter's life, which may be traces on the map of the affinities of both artists: as a student of one of the older classes of the real school in Tarnów, Bienenstock discussed the activities of Efraim Mosze Lilien at a meeting of young Zionists[38]; in 1919, he recited "The Raven" by Edgar Allan Poe in the reading room in Przemyśl[39]; in February and March 1921 in Drohobych, at the meetings of the local Circle of the Society of Teachers of Secondary and Higher Schools, he presented a paper on Einstein's theory of relativity[40]; in 1937 at the Marshal Edward Śmigły-Rydz Junior High School in Brzeżany he served as the guardian of the School Club of

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34 This aspect of Bienenstock's statement was also noticed by Piotr Sitkiewicz (idem, *Bruno Schulz i krytycy. Recepcja twórczości Brunona Schulza w latach 1921–1939*, Gdańsk 2018, p. 20–21).

35 According to Józef Sandel, author of Bienenstock's biography in *Słownik artystów polskich* (vol. 1: A–C Wrocław 1971, p. 160), the painter died in 1937 in Przemyśl. This was questioned by Tomasz Pudłocki (*Podwójne życie rozdarte traumą*, "Nasz Przemyśl" 2007, no. 8, p. 41); he obtained access to documents that allowed him to establish valuable details concerning the artist's biography, as well as to witnesses whose accounts indicate that Bienenstock survived the war and, under a changed name, as Władysław Strzelecki, became a professor at the State Maritime School in Gdynia in 1945; he died in 1962. The date of the painter's death given by Sandel is not supported by any sources and may indeed be a mistake (although not a "hoax" that someone "cared about", as Pudłocki writes), but the hypothesis about the change of identity also raises doubts.

36 A photograph of a fragment of the interior of the New Synagogue in Przemyśl is reproduced at http://przemysl.blogspot.com/2008/11/scheinbach-synagogue.html (date of access: February 1, 2019). A photograph of the stained-glass window (and mention of the author) in the book: M. Goldstein, K. Dresdner, *Kultura i sztuka ludu żydowskiego na ziemiach polskich. Zbiory Maksymiliana Goldsteina*, przedm. M. Bałaban, Lwów 1935, p. 86.

37 Most reviews note and quote in fragments J. Malinowski, op. cit., p. 322–323.

38 Y. Feig, "Memories", translated by Y. Klausner, in: *Tarnow: The Life and Decline of a Jewish City*, Tel Aviv 1954–1968, p. 766, https://www.jewishgen.org/yizkor/tarnow/tar1_764.html Accessed: February 1, 2019.

39 T. Pudłocki, *W rywalizacji z Atenami Galicyjskimi – Czytelnia Naukowa w Przemyślu*, "Studia Historyczne", 2011, no. 3–4, p. 305 (note 76).

40 "Przegląd Pedagogiczny" 1921, no. 2–3, p. 44.

the Air and Gas Defence League[41]. Finally, it is no longer a random parallel but an informative testimony: at the individual exhibition at the TPSP in Lviv in 1923, Bienenstock showed, among other things, "a piece of work made in a new technique (engraving on a suitably prepared photographic plate)"[42]. I guess it could not have been anything else than a cliché-verre, an obvious loan from Schulz.

Regardless of how the intellectual and artistic relations really developed (and how the alleged animosities arose) between the two Drohobych teachers, Adolf Bienenstock could be credited with the role of the promoter of Schulz's first public appearance. It took place during the 1st Exhibition of Jewish Art in the Hall Kahal (Jewish commune) at ul. Bernsteina 12 in Lviv in 1920. The exhibition was organized by the Jewish Art Lovers Circle, represented by Maks Bienenstock – an outstanding teacher, translator of belles-lettres, literary critic, and finally senator of the Republic of Poland – with the participation of architect and graphic artist Zygmunt Sperber[43]. It seems possible that Maks (Maksymilian Jakub) Bienenstock was Adolf's older brother[44]. It is believed to be his likeness (*Portrait of Dr. B.*, charcoal drawing) that the painter showed, together with two oil paintings, at this very exhibition. And maybe he was the one who encouraged and supported Schulz as one of the late participants of the event, whose works were accepted after the catalogue was published[45].

This outline of facts is only hypothetical, but there is no doubt that Adolf Bienenstock and Bruno Schulz appeared together among Jewish artists in the Kahal hall in Lviv, and it was probably a debut for both of them. There are many indications that on this occasion Schulz met Maksymilian Goldstein, the founder of the Jewish Art Lovers Circle and a famous collector. In the same year, he designed two bookplates for him and, perhaps also then, sold (or gave) him some works from the exhibition[46]. He showed several or a dozen of them; they were probably drawings, as can be seen from the cursory description contained in

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41 *Jednodniówka młodzieży Gimnazjum Państwowego im. Marszałka Edwarda Śmigłego-Rydza w Brzeżanach*, Brzeżany 1937, p. 66.

42 E. Byk, *Ku ewolucjonizmowi w ekspresjonizmie. (Z powodu wystawy A. Bienenstocka w Tow. Sztuk Pięknych)*, "Wiek Nowy" 1923, no. 6508 (March 1), p. 3–4.

43 J. Malinowski, op. cit., p. 315–317.

44 Both were born in Tarnów – Maks in 1881, Adolf in 1888; Adam Bienenstock, mentioned as Maks' brother in the memoirs of Yeshayahu Feig (op. cit.) must have been the same person as Adolf.

45 *I Wystawa Sztuki Żydowskiej w sali Kahału. Katalog*. Koło Miłośników Sztuki Żydowskiej we Lwowie, Lwów 1920, wstęp Maks Bienenstock; the catalogue had at least two different editions – its larger version recorded 244 exhibits. During the exhibition, "a lot of new paintings arrived, both private and for sale" – *Kronika*, "Chwila" 1920, no. 360 (January 15), p. 6.

46 Goldstein had in his collection "a number of boards made with Schulz's specific technique (cliché-verre)" and "six compositional drawings" – M. Goldstein, K. Dresdner, op. cit., p. 98, see also p. 107, 110–111.

Henryk Hescheles' review: "Great achievements could be expected from Bruno Schulz, whose newly exhibited drawings herald extraordinary talents in the field of the grotesque, all the more significant because he had previously only been trained on the available book reproductions of Rops, Lautrec, and Goya"[47].

The second exhibition in which Schulz and Bienenstock took part was organized a year later, in May, in the auditorium of the Drohobych high school, where works by the Przemyśl painter Marian Stroński and three slightly older artists – Ludwik Misky, Kazimierz Łotocki and Antoni Markowski – were also presented. In addition, paintings made using the appliqué technique by Ernestyna Bienenstock, Adolf Bienenstock's wife, could also be observed[48]. Bienenstock himself spoke at the opening of the exhibition, so it can be assumed that must have been its organiser and invited Schulz to participate in the show.

An event dividing these two occasions chronologically – an individual presentation of the Schulz's works in March 1921 in Boryslav, at the headquarters of the Association of Polish Drilling Technicians (at ul. Kościuszki 82) – was probably the outcome of Stanisław Weingarten's initiative. As an employee of the Galician Oil Company "Galicja", he may have had connections in the Association of Oil Officials, whose Educational Section became the official organizer of the project. Weingarten presented a paper at the opening. Before him, Michał Friedländer, later an outstanding teacher and publicist, who worked as an official in Boryslav and ran educational activities there, spoke on behalf of the Association[49]. He probably knew Schulz from the time when he attended the Drohobych high school (matriculation exam in 1912); it is possible that they also met in Vienna, where Friedländer studied and worked briefly after obtaining his doctorate. After his return – what is most important here – he was a member of the Department (board) of the Drohobych Association "Kalleia", established in 1919 and registered the following year[50]. (The Schulz exhibition could be included among the events

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47 H. Trejwart [H. Hescheles], Jewish painters, "Chwila" 1920, no. 366 (January 21), p. 5. It is possible that another reviewer of the same exhibition, Gabriel Kenan, had Schulz in mind when he wrote about "the illustrative works of several of the youngest, who unnecessarily waste their energy in pursuit of an impressive theme of literary ideas that do not replace the deeper content of artistic experiences" – idem, *Wystawa sztuki żydowskiej we Lwowie*, "Chwila" 1920, no. 353 (8 January), p. 4.

48 *Zbiorowa wystawa obrazów*, "Świt. Organ urzędników naftowych w Borysławiu" 1921, no. 9 (1 May), p. 7; Al. Stewe [M. Friedländer], *Z wystawy obrazów*, "Świt" 1921, no. 11, p. 6–7 (after: B. Łazorak et al., op. cit.). p. 231). See also: (x), *Wystawa obrazów w Drohobyczu (w dziale Kronika)*, "Chwila" 1921, no. 849 (29 May), p. 10. Adolf Bienenstock's wife, Esther née Weingarten, supposedly came from Drohobych (T. Pudłocki, *Podwójne życie*; B. Łazorak et al., op. cit., p. 165).

49 I. Michalska, *Nauczyciel dla nauczycieli i wychowawców. Michał Friedländer jako popularyzator wiedzy o wychowaniu w latach międzywojennych*, "Studia Edukacyjne" 2018, no. 48, p. 133–149.

50 B. Łazorak et al., op. cit., p. 240, 259; the authors of this book established, based on the documents found, the circumstances of the creation of "Kalleia", which differ from those accepted in previous Schulz studies. Maybe "Kalleia" described by Maria Budracka-Tempele was the first, informal incarnation of the association?

implementing the program of this association). It was probably Friedländer who was the author of extensive and extremely enthusiastic reviews in "Świt" (the organ of oil officials in Boryslav) of both exhibitions mentioned in 1921, in Boryslav and Drohobych, the latter of which was signed with his permanent pseudonym Al. Stewe[51]. We find there a passage ("On the occasion of the exhibition of Schulz's works in Boryslav, we discussed in more detail the nature of his work") suggesting the identity of the author of both texts[52]. Thanks to Friedländer's article, it is known that Schulz showed "several dozen paintings" in Boryslav; most of them depicted a woman "imbued with the desire to tame male bodies" lying at her feet, but in addition to them, the reviewer mentioned portraits with a "talking" background, the composition *Spring Awakening* ("Art Nouveau school. Several boy figures") and the watercolour *Circe*[53]. In the auditorium in Drohobycz, there was the same set supplemented with a "pencil drawing *Omphale*" and "colourful picture called *Girl* with characters of knights and clouds from fairy tales" in the background[54].

It is impossible to guess who seconded Schulz in his application for the next Jewish exhibition, opened in Vilnius at the beginning of April 1923[55]. It is possible that his works were sent from Berlin. The author of the exhibition review mentions at the beginning "the Berlin etcher, Mr. Bruno", and further characterizes the works of Bruno Schulz, who "created a series of etchings with a theme that was not very original (and that is what it is all about) and traced its lineage to Goya, Rops and many others, but made tastefully and good in drawing"[56]. It is possible that in a hurry (and this is how reviews were often written) the critic

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51 I know the pseudonym of the author of the review only from the publication: B. Łazorak et al., op. cit.; the authors of the book consistently use this form, although Leopold Held (*A Tyśmienica nadal płynie*, [b.m.w] 1993, p. 59), mentioning Friedländer not only as a German teacher from Boryslav, but also as the author of the brochure Romain Rolland and his "Jean Christophe" (Drohobycz 1921), provides the entry: Al. Steve (brochure also noted in B. Łazorak et al., op. cit., p. 302). This form (with "v") is also found in *Słownik pseudonimów pisarzy polskich XV w. – 1970 r.*, oprac. zespół pod red. E. Jankowskiego, t. IV: *A–Ż. Nazwiska*, Wrocław 1996, p. 168.

52 Al. Stewe [M. Friedländer], op. cit. B. Łazorak et al. assume that the authors writing under the pseudonyms "Al. Stewe" and "S. N-owa" are the same person. The pseudonym S. N-owa is not included in *Słownik pseudonimów pisarzy polskich*.

53 S. N-owa, *Wrażenia z wystawy. (Wystawa obrazów Schulza)*, "Świt" 1921, no. 6 (March 15), p. 2–3; quoted after: B. Łazorak et al., op. cit., p. 226–227. See also: S. N-owa, *Wystawa prac graficznych młodego artysty p. Brunona Schulza*, "Świt" 1921, no. 5 (March 1), p. 7, after: B. Łazorak et al., op. cit., p. 156.

54 Al. Stewe [M. Friedländer], op. cit., p. 229.

55 Mieczysław Goldstein mentions the opening of the exhibition "in these days" in his correspondence from Vilnius dated April 10 (idem, *Żydowskie życie kulturalne w Wilnie. Korespondencja własna "Naszego Przeglądu"*, "Nasz Przegląd" 1923, no. 27 (22 April), p. 4.

56 da., *Wystawa obrazów żydowskich art.-malarzy*, "Przegląd Wileński" 1923, no. 8 (April 29), p. 7. The assumption that Schulz was called a "Berlin etcher" is supported by the similarity in defining the technique of the works shown.

gave the artist's name instead of his surname in the first mention. This is all the more likely because the other participants in the event represented the local community and, without exception, were all painters. However, none of them were famous. Maybe that is why the exhibition did not generate much press coverage. Its recipients – as in the case of the Lviv exhibition three years earlier, promoted by Maks Bienenstock – were quite a narrow circle of Jews interested in artistic culture, which was not as popular as literature and music. Since the event in Lviv gathered artists of international renown (Efraim Mosze Lilien, Borys Schatz, the Hirszenberg brothers, Jerzy Merkel, Zygmunt Menkes, Roman Kramsztyk), much more has been written about it than about the Vilnius show, but all the articles and notes taken come exclusively from Jewish "Chwila". Therefore, if Schulz became known outside Drohobych thanks to these exhibitions, his fame was local and even in this locality very limited. Moreover, the "Drohobych fame" turned out to be weak and unstable. In none of the published statements of the writer's students or friends, there is a single word about the exhibition at Władysław Jagiełło Junior High School. Many of them did not even know that Schulz was a painter (i.e. a visual artist)[57]. The event in Boryslav, although individual (which usually translates into a high-profile event, at least in the artist's biography) and well publicized in the local press, did not seem to attract crowds either. However, it could bring some profits if we assume that the local intelligentsia (and visitors from nearby Truskavets) bought Schulz's works.

Of this earliest series of exhibitions, only the Lviv Spring Salon TPSP, organized in 1922 in the Palace of Art in Plac Targów Wschodnich, found a wider resonance. This was determined by the importance of the institution, which for several decades has been organizing the most frequently visited exhibitions in Lviv, preceded (at least formally) by a selection of exhibits carried out by a professional jury. In addition to the above-mentioned article by Adolf Bienenstock in 'Chwila", reviews and mentions of the Spring Salon were published by "Gazeta Lwowska", "Lwowska Gazeta Poranna", "Kurier Lwowski", "Słowo" and "Wiek Nowy"[58]. The exhibition was accompanied by a printed catalogue[59]. Thanks to

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57 See video: *Bruno Schulz jako malarz – Wilhelm Fleischer – fragment relacji świadka historii* (Beer Sheva, November 29, 2006), http://biblioteka.teatrnn.pl/dlibra/dlibra/doccontent?id=106605 Accessed on August 19, 2019.

58 Reviews including Schulz's participation: A. Bienenstock, op. cit.; W. Kozicki, *Ze sztuki*, "Słowo Polskie" 1922, no. 117 (29 May), p. 5; idem, *Życie sztuki we Lwowie. Wystawa wiosenna. III*, "Słowo Polskie" 1922, no. 138 (June 24), p. 5; KS, Salon wiosenny w Pałacu Sztuki, "Chwila Poniedziałkowa" 1922, no. 16 (June 12), p. 3; W. Moraczewski, *Wystawa sztuki na placu powystawowym*, "Wiek Nowy" 1922, no. 6295, p. 3; W. J. Terlecki, *Sztuki plastyczne. Salon wiosenny 1922 r.*, "Kurier Lwowski" 1922, no. 152 (July 9), p. 3.

59 *Katalog Salonu Wiosennego połączonego z wystawą art. malarza Marcelego Harasimowicza i wystawą zbiorową art. malarza Kazimierza Sichulskiego w Pałacu Sztuki na Placu Targów Wschodnich maj – czerwiec 1922*, Towarzystwo [Przyjaciół] Sztuk Pięknych we Lwowie, [Lviv 1922], item 258–

it, it is known that a total of 333 works were exhibited, and Schulz was the author of twenty. He showed ten plates from *The Booke of Idolatry* and ten other works, eight of which had been borrowed from private collections (maybe those of Maksymilian Goldstein and Stanisław Weingarten), and apart from the graphic series, only two – the watercolour *Pilgrims*, and *Circus* (made in an unknown technique, probably a drawing) – could be bought.

1930 Lviv, Cracow, Truskavets

The Spring Salon held at the same facility in 1930 had a similar prestige. In addition to the "general exhibition", it included the posthumous exhibition of Anna Harland-Zajączkowska, an event by Związek X Artystów Plastyków we Lwowie, and an exhibition of folk art[60]. Attention was paid to it in the Lviv press; the event was also recorded in the chronicle section of the monthly "Sztuki Piękne"[61], published in Warsaw since 1924. This time, Schulz's success was more noticeable because his works were exhibited as part of the "general exhibition" made up of a "collective exhibition" (as defined in the catalogue), located in a separate room. The artist showed almost twice as many of them as before – seventeen cliché-verre images, twenty pencil drawings (or pencil and ink), one watercolour and one tempera. Apart from some illustrations, only eight works did not come from a private collection. Two of them (which will be discussed later) were placed in the National Gallery of the City of Lviv, which was an official expression of appreciation for Schulz's work. The inclusion of a reproduction of the Pilgrims graphic (with the caption "The Infanta and Her Dwarfs" and misleading information about its presentation at the exhibition in Łódź) in an illustrated supplement to "Chwila" should also be treated as a kind of distinction[62]. However, not all reviews were overwhelmingly favourable; for example, Janina Kilian-Stanisławska called the artist "non-contemporary in form", although she considered the Fantasmagoria sketch "great" and expressed hope that it heralds a positive change in style[63]. Thanks to this exhibition, Schulz established contacts with

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60 *Salon Wiosenny, maj – 1930, Towarzystwo Przyjaciół Sztuk Pięknych we Lwowie, Pałac Sztuki – Plac Targów Wschodnich*, item 640–678.

61 The following reviewers wrote about Schulz: J. Kilian-Stanisławska, *Salon wiosenny 1930*, "Gazeta Poranna" 1930, no. 9223 (21 May), p. 11; W. Kozicki, *Z "Salonu Wiosennego" (Wystawa ogólna: grafika i rzeźba: Lewe skrzydło)*, "Słowo Polskie" 1930, no. 141, p. 7; *Kronika artystyczna*, "Sztuki Piękne" 1930, no. 5, p. 201; A. Lauterbach, *Ze sztuki. Salon wiosenny*, "Chwila" 1930, no. 4005 (21 May), p. 7; K. Majewski, *Towarzystwo Przyjaciół Sztuk Pięknych. Salon wiosenny 1930. III*, "Gazeta Lwowska" 1930, no. 119 (22 May), p. 3; MK, *Ze sztuki, „Salon Wiosenny" – Maj 1930. Wystawa ogólna*, "Wiek Nowy" 1930, no. 8675 (21 May), p. 4.

62 *Obrazy z salonu wiosennego w Łodzi*, "Chwila. Dodatek Ilustrowany" 1930, no. 18 (25 May), p. 3.

63 J. Kilian-Stanisławska, op. cit.

members of the ARTES group (exhibiting as "Left Wing") and became better known in the artistic community of Lviv[64]. But not anywhere else. Ludwik Lille lamented a few years later: "When every art exhibition in Cracow or Warsaw is reported by magazines throughout Poland, [the] organization of the exhibition in Lviv, for an individual who only shows his achievements here, often had merely local significance"[65].

Schulz presented several (perhaps even a dozen works) the same year – three months earlier, at an exhibition of Jewish painters in Cracow, which was to become "a serious attempt to bring a Jewish artist closer to Jewish society"[66]. The assumptions, nature and effect of this project can be compared with the analogous exhibition in Lviv from ten years ago, although the works of any internationally renowned artist were not shown in Cracow[67]. Among the Cracow magazines, probably only the Jewish "Nowy Dziennik" published more extensive comments and reviews[68]; there were mentions in other newspapers (without the names of the exhibiting artists)[69]; a larger passage also appeared in "Sztuki Piękne", but – despite the magazine's nationwide reach – it did not fundamentally change the apparent importance of the event[70]. Although Schulz could probably subscribe to the slogans of cultural consolidation of the Jewish community, they certainly did not dominate his individual artistic program[71]. However, crossing

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64 M. Tyrowicz, op. cit., p. 165

65 L. Lille, *Lwów jako ośrodek współczesnej plastyki*, "Gazeta Artystów" 1935, no. 22, p. 6. The article also presents the difficulties artists from outside Warsaw and Cracow had "breaking through" to local exhibitions, which also sheds light on the mystery of Schulz's Warsaw exhibition in 1922.

66 H. Weber, *I Wystawa malarzy żydowskich w Krakowie (Na marginesie wystawy)*, "Nowy Dziennik" 1930, no. 47 (February 27), p. 7. The exhibition, held in the Jewish Academic House in ul. Przemyska, inaugurated the activities of the Jewish Society for the Promotion of Fine Arts in Cracow, see. N. Styrna, *Zrzeszenie Żydowskich Artystów Malarzy w Krakowie (1931–1939)*, Warszawa 2009, p. 40–43. Schulz exhibited, among others, *The Booke of Idolatry*, of which he sold six plates, which was noted in the press, with short information about their author, "known in eastern Małopolska". *Z teatru, literatury i sztuki*, "Nowy Dziennik" 1930, no. 61 (March 7), p. 8.

67 Both exhibitions were opened with great pomp, many guests were invited, and several speeches were given; they were accompanied by readings.

68 H. Weber, *Wystawa malarzy żydowskich w Krakowie (Na marginesie wystawy) II*, "Nowy Dziennik" 1930, no. 48 (February 22), p. 6.

69 See "Ilustrowany Kurier Codzienny" 1930, no. 46 (February 20), p. 9.

70 *Kronika artystyczna*, "Sztuki Piękne" 1930, no. 5, p. 110.

71 Schulz's position on this issue (and his attitude towards the Zionist movement) was defined explicitly in the article by E. M. Lilien, *"Przegląd Podkarpacia" 1937*, "Schulz/Forum" 6, 2015, p. 83–96. Stefan Chwin, writing about Schulz's participation in Jewish exhibitions and the design of his parents' tombstone referring to the Judaic tradition, states: "All this allows us to assume that as a graphic designer and painter he did not mind being considered a Jewish artist" (idem, *Why Bruno Schulz Did Not Want to Be a Jewish Writer: On the "Erasing" of Jewishness in Sanatorium Under the Sign of the Hourglass and The Cinnamon Shops*, "Schulz/Forum", special issue 2023, p. 35). It did not bother him, but it perhaps limited his audience. Most Jewish artists active in Poland in the interwar period took part in exhibitions organized by both Jewish associations and Polish institutions, and accepted commissions from both Poles and Jews. Many lived for a long time in France,

the boundaries of Jewishness was not his goal either. When seeking communication with people with similar sensitivity and a similar perception of the world, their ethnic identity did not matter much. (Making friends with Jewish artists was – for various reasons – simply easier. In this respect, the chain of people mediating Schulz's contact with Zofia Nałkowska is quite telling – Schulz got to Nałkowska through Debora Vogel and the sculptor Magdalena Gross, who knew the writer through her sister and her colleague, Hanna Nałkowska-Bickowa).

Another exhibition in 1930 is mentioned (with an incorrect date) in Schulz studies because of an incident described in the aforementioned letter by Juliusz Flaszen to Jerzy Ficowski. However, only Schulz's close friends knew about Senator Thulli's protest. Maybe not all of them, since no one apart from Flaszen talked about the case. The scandal did not actually break out; on the contrary, it was quickly resolved. No traces of the controversy could be found in the press, although showing Schulz as scandalous could have contributed, as Flaszen noted, to the commercial success of the exhibition[72]. Or maybe it would also be the beginning of popularity? However, this did not happen, and the exhibition opened in July at the local Social Club (Dom Zdrojowy), including two presentations of individual work – by Schulz and Joachim Kahane. It enjoyed perhaps a bit more publicity than the exhibition in Boryslav from 1921. It was held in a famous health resort, in the middle of the season, and could attract much more viewers (and buyers) than the previous one, especially since the note announcing it in the local weekly presented Schulz in superlatives only (great talent, outstanding artist, extraordinary talent, isolated phenomenon, demonic creation)[73]. Among the vacationers and tourists was the famous Warsaw critic, Jan Kleczyński, who in his report on his stay in Truskavets, published in "Kurier Warszawski", gave a short description of the exhibition, mentioning ink drawings, etchings and paintings by Schulz, but without indicating even an estimated number of them[74].

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for example, without breaking ties with Poland or denying their Jewishness.

72 Juliusz Flaszen's letter, [in:] B. Schulz, *Księga listów*, opracował, wstępem, przypisami i aneksem opatrzył J. Ficowski, Kraków 1972, p. 159–160; J. Ficowski, *Regiony wielkiej herezji. Szkice o życiu i twórczości Brunona Schulza*, wyd. 2, Kraków 1975, s. 102–103; idem, *Słowo o "Xiędze bałwochwalczej"*, p. 10–11; see J. Kandziora, "Przestrzenie pamięci, przestrzenie rozproszenia (Jerzego Ficowskiego skła-danie biografii Brunona Schulza", [in:] *Przestrzenie geo(bio)graficzne w literaturze*, red. E. Konończuk, E. Sidoruk, Białystok 2005, p. 250–251. In "Głos Drohobycko-Borysławsko-Samborsko-Stryjski" of July 28, 1930 (no. 19, p. 5) the guest list only recorded the arrival of Dr. Maksymilian Thulli, a professor at the University of Technology, who came with his wife from Lviv and stayed in the Jadwinówka villa.

73 *Niezwykła impreza artystyczna w Truskawcu*, "Głos Drohobycko-Borysławsko-Samborsko-Stryjski" 1930, no. 15, p. 5; see also *Z wystawy Schulza i Kahanego*, "Głos Drohobycko-Borysławsko-Samborsko-Stryjski" 1930, no. 22, p. 6.

74 J. Kleczyński, *Wrażenia artystyczne z Truskawca. Widok na Borysław. – Muzeum w Pomiarkach. – Wystawa dzieł J. Kahanego i B. Szulca w Klubie*, "Kurier Warszawski" 1930, no. 235 (August 28), evening ed., p. 8–9. The exhibition was also mentioned in "Chwila" 1930, no. 4056 (July 11), p. 13 and no.

The appearance of Schulz's name in a capital daily and a favourable opinion about his work did not mean, however, any breakthrough in the artist's career. Compared to Kahane, who was presented in Kleczyński's article as "already known [...] in Warsaw for his reliefs carved in metal", the presentation of Schulz was very modest.

There is no evidence of the relationship between the exhibiting artists. Schulz might have met Kahane earlier. The latter was a co-founder of the Circle of Jewish Art Lovers in Lviv and – like Schulz – took part in the exhibition organized by this association in 1920. From the early 1920s, he lived in Łódź, but he visited Lviv to participate in exhibitions at TPSP in 1929 and 1932[75]. It is possible that he did not want to transport the unsold works from this earlier exhibition to Łódź and therefore organized a show at the Truskavets Social Club[76]. Or maybe he commissioned it to someone, and he was not even there at the time? Kahane himself or his assistant were certainly better versed than Schulz in matters related to arranging exhibitions (renting premises, transporting and hanging exhibits). But, on the other hand, who knew the summer in Truskavets and its solstice better than Schulz, who knew more about this season in this specific place? Although the knowledge contained in the story "Autumn" was not very useful when organizing the exhibition, it resulted from the maximum familiarity or creative appropriation of the space of the spa, where Schulz felt confident, where he was at home. The most mundane matters in this territory were arranged in a network that was understandable, easily accessible, and mastered by multiple visitors. (As we know, Schulz practiced this role not only in Truskavets, but also in Kudowa and Marienbad, and maybe somewhere else[77]). Some good friend from the Truskavets Spa Management Board or from the management of the Social Club could have helped him with completing the formalities and arranging the work in the interior. Schulz did not have to rely on Joachim Kahane or his colleagues from Lviv[78].

4072 (27 July), p. 15.

75 J. Malinowski, op. cit., p. 322. In the illustrated supplement of "Chwila" ("Dodatek Ilustrowany") of 1932, no.20 (15 May), p. 3 two works by Kahane from the exhibition in Lviv were reproduced; see also no. 23 (5 June), p. 4, and no. 27 (8 July) from 1934 (photograph of works prepared for the next exhibition in Truskavets).

76 "Chwila" 1930, no. 4072 (July 27) states that numerous works by Kahane were purchased (p. 15).

77 How well-versed Schulz was in health resort matters is shown, for example, in his letters to Romana Halpern, in which he gives her professional advice and suggests a specific resort (*KL*, p. 161–165).

78 J. Ficowski (*Słowo o "Xiędze bałwochwalczej"*, p. 10) writes that Schulz was "persuaded by friends" to participate in the exhibition. Press notes suggest that Kahane's works were included in the exhibition a little later than Schulz's (*Z wystawy Schulza i Kahanego*).

1935 Lviv

Only after five years did Schulz take part in another exhibition. It was organized in December 1935 in the newly opened premises of the Trade Union of Polish Artists, in the building of the Industrial Museum on Dzieduszyckich Street in Lviv. This time, they were separate solo exhibitions; in addition to Schulz, who was the only non-affiliated participant, the first president of the Lviv branch of the union, Andrzej Pronaszko, and its members – Fryc Kleinman and Jarosława Muzyka also took part[79]. Who invited Schulz to a joint show? That was probably the only way he could be co-opted into the trade unions. It is possible that it was Ludwik Lille, who was head of the Lviv ZZPAP that year. But the exhibition's co-participants were also suitable for the role of introducers, especially that by then Schulz – as the author of *The Street of Crocodiles* – had become a popular persona. His name improved the chances of bringing in representatives of the world of literature or even readers to the gallery. Therefore, apart from Kleinman, who – like Bienenstock and Kahane – took part in the Lviv Exhibition of Jewish Art in 1920, Andrzej Pronaszko, probably the best-versed among the other participants in the theatrical, artistic and literary events in Poland[80].

The exhibition strengthened Schulz's position in the artistic community, but it was probably not very well attended. Although it did not present the most avant-garde tendencies, it did require some preparation and knowledge of current trends in art. For less experienced viewers, lectures by Artur Lauterbach on the exhibited works were organized in the exhibition halls[81]. Lauterbach also wrote an extensive review, in which he concentrated on Schulz. Like other critics,

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79 *Wystawa prac Fryca Kleinmana, Jarosławy Muzyki, Andrzeja Pronaszki, Brunona Szulca [!], Lwowski Za-wodowy Związek Artystów Plastyków*, Lviv, December 1935; I have been unable to find this catalogue, I know it from extracts found in the research lab of *Słownik artystów polskich* at the Institute of Art of the Polish Academy of Sciences.

80 Emil Górski, Schulz's student and friend, was in Cracow in the summer of 1947 and turned to "Prof. Pronaszko" regarding the exhibition of works entrusted to him by a teacher from Drohobych (B. Schulz, *Listy, fragmenty*, p. 76; Górski's letter to Jerzy Ficowski of June 20, 1948, Muzeum Literatury, inventory no. 5964, a fragment of it was kindly provided to me by Jerzy Kandziora). It is impossible to clearly determine whether he was in contact with Zbigniew Pronaszko (professor at the Academy of Fine Arts in Cracow since 1945) or with his younger brother, Andrzej, who may have been better known to him as a participant in a joint show with Schulz in 1935 and other exhibitions in Lviv (where he lived in 1932–1937), as a set designer of local theatres and a cultural activist. After the war, Andrzej Pronaszko lived and worked in Cracow (until 1956), and his position as a lecturer at the Theater Studio at the Stary Theater could have given rise to the informal, customary title of professor.

81 *Kronika*, "Chwila" 1935, no. 6011 (December 15), p. 13; no. 6018 (December 22), p. 13; *Wiadomości bieżące*, "Gazeta Lwowska" 1935, no. 294 (December 22), p. 2.

he referred to his literary works[82]. The exhibited drawings were interpreted as a complement to the *The Street of Crocodiles*, which was supposed to justify their "supremacy of content over form"[83]. Janina Kilian-Stanisławska, who knew Schulz's artistic work from the Lviv Spring Salon in 1930, noted that despite the continuing tendency to be illustrative, "the artist revised his earlier technique, and his drawings exhibited are in a new, cubist form"[84].

1940 Lviv

Participation in a graphic exhibition in Lviv in 1940, organized by the Office for Art of the Council of People's Commissars of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic and the Lviv organizing committee of the Union of Soviet Artists of Ukraine[85], was probably not entirely a matter of choice, nor was union membership[86]. The published catalogue contains a list of three hundred and forty works by seventy-two authors, most of whom were artists who had previously participated in Polish exhibitions in Lviv or were refugees from other cities (such as Bronisław Wojciech Linke, who came from Warsaw). Almost all works presented ideologically neutral topics – landscapes and city views (also from France and Italy!), portrait studies, still lifes, and drawings. Schulz contributed three pencil and three pen drawings to the exhibition, all entitled "Illustration", with subsequent numbers. Ignacy Witz, also taking part in the event, does not say what the drawings depicted: "As far as I remember, they were 'illustrations' for something that had not been written yet and probably never was"[87].

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82 A. Lauterbach, *Wystawa u Artystów. Bruno Szulc. Andrzej Pronaszko, Jarosława Muzyka*, "Chwila" 1935, no. 6011 (December 15), p. 10.

83 J. K[ilian] Stanisławska, *Wystawa prac lwowskiego Zaw. Związku Plastyków*, "Kurier Lwowski" 1935, no. 345 (December 14), p. 7. See also: AM Mars, *Nowa wystawa Związku Plastyków. Pronaszko – Szulc – Muzyka – Kleinman*, "Nowe Czasy" 1935, no. 33 (December 24), p. 7; *Kronika. Lwów*, "Głos Plastyków" 1935, no. 1–6 (December), p. 97; *Wiadomości bieżące. Komunikaty*, "Gazeta Lwowska" 1935, no. 285 (December 12), p. 2. Schulz's literary work is not mentioned in: K. Kuryluk, *Życie kulturalne we Lwowie*, "Tygodnik Ilustrowany" 1936, no. 5 (2 February), p. 96; J.G. [J. Gamska-Łempicka?], *Ze sztuki. Wystawa w Zw. Plastyków*, "Gazeta Lwowska" 1935, no. 295 (December 21), p. 2.

84 J. K[ilian] Stanisławska, op. cit.

85 "Wystawka grafiky, traweń – czerweń 1940", *Uprawlinnja w Sprawach Mystectw pry RNK URSR ta Spiłka Radjańskych Chudożnykiw Ukrajiny, Orgkomitet Mista Lwowa*, [Lwiw] (Виставка графіки, травень – червень 1940, Управління в спавах мистецтв при РНК УРСР та Спілка Радянських Художників України, Оргкомітет Міста Львова, [Львів]). See also B. Łazorak et al., p. 315–316.

86 Its vice-president was Henryk Streng. See "Ważniejsze fakty z życia Marka Włodarskiego", [in:] *Marek Włodarski (Henryk Streng) 1903–1960. Wystawa monograficzna grudzień 1981 – styczeń 1982*, Muzeum Narodowe w Warszawie, Warszawa 1981, p. 45. For a synthetic description of the situation, see J. Sosnowska, "Życie artystyczne we Lwowie w czasie pierwszej okupacji sowieckiej 22 IX 1939 – 22 VI 1941", [in:] *Między Polską a światem. Od średniowiecza po lata II wojny światowej*, pod red. M. Morki, P. Paszkiewicza, Warszawa 1993, p. 415–426.

87 I. Witz, *Bruno Schulz*, p. 40.

Afraid to decide

The circumstances of this last exhibition make it impossible to answer the question of who invited or persuaded Schulz to show his works. Listing all the previous ones, I was looking for a person (people) without whose help an exhibition of the works of the Drohobych loner would have been impossible. Not because Schulz was exceptionally helpless, but because he did not live in the environment of artists close to him on a daily basis. "Artists, regardless of whether they work individually or in teams", notes Marian Golka, "are connected with the most important reference group for them – that is, with other artists creating the artistic environment [...]. Of course, you can imagine an artist living in isolation, deprived of contact with any artistic environment (which does not mean that he is not connected with any other social environment). This is probably a significant hindrance to the artist's life and work and is rarely conducive to the development of their career"[88]. Would Józef Gielniak – cut off from the world even more than Schulz in the sanatorium solitude of Bukowiec – would he have created and exhibited if it were not for the frequent visits (and frequent letters) of Jerzy Panek, Henryk Płóciennik, Stanisław Dawski and other artists, as well as critics, poets, and art historians? Even such an experienced artist as Henryk Streng, preparing his exhibition as Marek Włodarski after the war, asked his younger colleague for advice: "Choose, please, on your own. I don't know which one is better and which one is worse. When I look at another painter's works, I immediately know which are good and which are bad, but I don't know anything about my own paintings"[89]. Jerzy Tchórzewski, who quotes the above words, knew that "this helplessness in the face of one's paintings is a completely different matter, having little in common with the knowledge of things, especially in artists like Marek"[90]. And like Bruno Schulz, sometimes recalled – due to his similar sensitivity and imagination – by Włodarski's friends[91]. We do not know if Schulz hesitated in a similar manner in assessing his own drawings or etchings, but we do about his relation to his literary works; he was not concerned about the selection of works, but

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88 M. Golka, *Socjologia sztuki*, Warszawa 2008, p. 85; see also: idem, *Socjologia artysty*, Poznań 1995, p. 133.

89 "Wspomnienie Jerzego Tchórzewskiego o Marku Włodarskim", [in:] *Marek Włodarski*, p. 25.

90 Ibidem.

91 Aleksander Wojciechowski emphasizes the affinity of Schulz's literary works with Streng's visual art (*Marek Włodarski*, p. 17–18, 37, 43); see also I. Witz, "Marek Włodarski", [in:] idem, *Obszary malarskiej wyobraźni*, p. 57, 67. So far, I have not found any clear traces of close intimacy between the two artists – apart from the mention of Streng in Schulz's letter to Rudolf Ottenbreit and his mention twice in letters from Debora Vogel, who undoubtedly, as a friend of both, could have brought them together. Didn't Ficowski turn to Włodarski (who died on May 23, 1960)? Or maybe he did npt respond to his appeal?

about the possibility of having them published at all. "I cannot decide to publish a volume of short stories – I am afraid to make the decision. Is this some form of disease?"[92], he asked in a letter. Even after publishing the story, he needed support: "Have you read my 'Spring'? I'm dissatisfied with it myself, so I'm looking for external confirmation"[93]. Sketches, paintings, and cliché-verre images also required such confirmation before they were sent for presentation. The opinion of friends, even those who knew art – such as Debora Vogel or, in a different dimension, Stanisław Weingarten – but were not practitioners, was not fully sufficient. Besides, Schulz would have to go to Debora Vogel (with his works?) to Lviv; Weingarten was also transferred there, and then even further, to Łódź.

Aversion?

In the only longer article about Schulz's artistic work, published in Polish during his lifetime and not a review of the exhibition, Artur Lauterbach wrote: "He is almost completely unknown to this day [...]. The fault here lies partly with the artist himself, or rather with his disposition [fear? – U. M.] before the official exhibition. This strange aversion has deeper causes that flow directly from the artist's own psyche and work"[94]. Lauterbach's diagnosis seems very likely in the light of the hints scattered (not very densely) in Schulz's preserved letters, indicating low, or at least labile, self-esteem. However, the group of friends from Drohobych had to provide not only spiritual support, but also organizational (and perhaps financial) help, without which the first round of exhibitions (1920–1923) might not have taken place at all.

Schulz was aware of the role that public presentation of work plays in building artistic autobiography. He knew that participation in an exhibition, especially one organized by a respectable and famous institution, legitimizes belonging to the world of art and becomes a guarantee of the position of an artist[95]. That is why,

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92 Letter to Andrzej Pleśniewicz, November 29, 1936, *KL*, p. 115.

93 Letter to Andrzej Pleśniewicz, December 1, 1936, *KL*, p. 116.

94 A. Lauterbach, *Talent w ukryciu*, op. cit.; the remaining two monographic articles were written by Debora Vogel and were published in Jewish magazines: Lviv's "Cusztajer" 1930, no. 2, p. 57–58 and Stockholm's "Judisk Tidskrift" 1930, no. 7, p. 224–226.

95 Pia Górska recalls that her professor, Tadeusz Pruszkowski, convinced her to have a solo exhibition, saying that: "anyone can exhibit at the society if the committee of this institution recognizes them as a painter" (eadem, *Paleta i pióro*, Kraków 1956, p. 263). Many artists from Schulz's generation (or slightly older) write about participation in the exhibition as the first success in the artist's career, for example: S. Sheybal, *Wspomnienia 1891–1970*, Kraków 1984, p. 142; A. Słonimski, *Wspomnienia warszawskie*, Warszawa 1957, p. 73; J. Zamoyski, *Łukaszowcy. Malarze i malarstwo Bractwa św. Łukasza*, posłowie Z. Florczak, Warszawa 1989, p. 79; A. Rafałowski, *I spoza palety. Wspomnienia*, Warszawa 1970, p. 7; M. Trzebiński, *Pamiętnik malarza*, oprac., wstępem i komenta-

when applying for a job as a teacher of drawing, he tried to compensate for his lack of artistic education by participating in exhibitions "in capitals" in his application to the ministry[96]. Also, both of his texts dedicated to Feliks Lachowicz (especially the one from 1937) prove that he was convinced of the strategic influence of public shows on the shaping of the artist's biography[97].

The practical dimension of participating in the exhibition, especially if it was properly publicized, was – apart from growing popularity, leading to a further career – the possibility of profit from the sold works. The announcement about the upcoming closure of the exhibition in Truskavets ended with an encouragement to visit it, supplemented with information about the "relatively low prices of the exhibits"[98]. The Truskavets event apparently brought Schulz some income. What is certain, however, is that – as I mentioned – two of his works were purchased from the exhibition in Lviv two months earlier, via TPSP, for the National Gallery of the City of Lviv (which was reported by "Głos Drohobycko-Borysławsko-Samborsko-Stryjski" advertising the exhibition in Truskawiec[99]), which are currently in the collection of the Lviv Art Gallery. These were pencil and ink drawings: *Meeting* (no. 649 in the catalogue) and *Self-portrait with an easel against the background of Drohobych* (no. 650), both included in the price list attached to the catalogue with the price of PLN 300[100]. Four other drawings were priced the same way, and this was the maximum price for Schulz's works at this exhibition; the plates from *The Booke of Idolatry* cost from PLN 15 to PLN 25, and a set of twenty pieces in a separate portfolio could be purchased for PLN 200). Price lists in the catalogues of both exhibitions of the Lviv TPSP show that Schulz's works did not fetch him high income, but they did not differ in quality from others – for example, Henryk Streng's gouaches (probably smaller in size than Schulz's plates) cost PLN 180 and 150, and Ivan Trusz's oil landscapes were sold for PLN 2,000. Taking into account that for one drawing Schulz could get

rzem opatrzył M. Masłowski, Wrocław 1958, p. 71.

96 Letter to the Ministry of WR and OP, August 2, 1924, *KL*, p. 211. Ignacy Witz, probably basing more on his own imagination than on facts, wrote that Schulz "exhibited his works publicly whenever he could, e.g. thereby tarnishing his 'professorial" reputation'", which was neverhteless "forgiven as a kind of eccentricity or whim" (Witz, *Bruno Schulz*, p. 40).

97 This problem, in a historical context and in a slightly different light, is discussed in Oskar Bätschmann's work *Ausstellungskünstler. Kult und Karriere im modernen Kunstsystem*, Köln 1997 (see especially chapter IV: *Strategien und Karrieren*).

98 *Z wystawy Schulza i Kahanego*, op. cit.

99 *Niezwykła impreza*, op. cit.

100 Natalia Filewicz states that both works were purchased in June 1930, and the payment for *Meeting* itself was PLN 550 (eadem, *Lwowska Galeria Sztuki 1907–1944*, "Rocznik Lwowski" 2012/2013, http://lwow. home.pl/galeria/lw-gal-sztuki.html Accessed on September 20, 2019). I would like to thank Professor Jerzy Kandziora for drawing attention to this detail. It is possible that the National Gallery offered a higher amount than indicated in the price list, competing with some other buyer.

roughly the equivalent of his teacher's salary[101], it seems strange that of the thirty-nine works he exhibited in 1930, twenty were private property and therefore not subject to sale. These proportions looked similar in 1922.

Therefore, either Schulz sold everything at once (or gave it away generously) and did not have many new works to show, or he subjected his output to a very strict selection and only chose a small part of it for the exhibition. It does not seem that the uneven, interrupted rhythm of his exhibitions corresponds strictly to the chronology of his creative cycles, which are difficult to recreate, knowing that sometimes hundreds of sketches result in one final work[102]. It is difficult to understand why, at the exhibition in 1930, he showed at least two works (those purchased for public collections) from ten years before that were not at the exhibition in 1922[103]. Their previous dating – around 1920–1921 (*Self-portrait*) and 1920–1922 (*Meeting*) – has not raised any objections so far[104]. Maybe wrongly? Why didn't Schulz exhibit these drawings earlier? Did he perhaps stop creating for eight years? Or did he not accept what he had done before?

Backstage

Undoubtedly, Schulz did not draw "all the time", as if creativity were a kind of production (although, of course, there are known artists who impose the discipline of regular work on themselves). Writing about Jerzy Janisch's arrival in Drohobych at the end of 1934, he confesses: "I regret that I met him so late"[105], and elsewhere: "He encouraged me to draw, which I haven't done for several years"[106]. For several years – that is, since the exhibitions in 1930? Maybe it was

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101 In January 1934, Schulz received a teacher's salary of PLN 285.25 (*KL*, p. 217).

102 Much has been written about the superiority of sketches over finished works in Schulz's surviving oeuvre, see: (mkł) [M. Kitowska-Łysiak], "Rysunek", [in:] *Słownik schulzowski*.

103 In the exhibition catalogue Євреї Східної Галичини (сер.XIX ст. – перша третина XX ст.), Львів 2013, p. 91, it is reported that *Self-Portrait* from the Lviv Art Gallery was exhibited at TPSP in 1922; this seems unlikely, because in the exhibition catalogue the work with this title bore the annotation: "private collections". It could have been another self-portrait, for example the one with an easel, with a procession in the background (given to Józefina Szelińska), or the one from the collection of the Central Judaic Library (at the Jewish Historical Institute in Warsaw), with a drawing desk with the author's date written on it 1919 or another year. In the Warsaw self-portrait, Schulz seems much younger (more than two years younger?) than in the image from Lviv, which, however, does not differ from the self-portraits in *The Booke of Idolatry*. All in all, there is no sufficient basis to radically change the position of the Lviv portrait on the timeline.

104 In the materials of the Dictionary of Polish Artists studio at the Institute of Art of the Polish Academy of Sciences, there is a note stating that in the inventories of the Lviv Art Gallery from the 1970s, works purchased in 1930 were initially dated "around 1929" (probably automatically generated).

105 Letter to Rudolf Ottenbreit, December 18 [1934], *KL*, p. 59.

106 Letter to Zenon Waśniewski, December 19, 1934, *KL*, p. 76. Janisch did not come to visit Schulz; his presence in Drohobych was related to his work on the restoration of frescoes in the local church.

only the works selected from a series of drawings created with the encouragement of a friend that made up a set suitable for hanging in the ZPAP premises in December 1935?[107]

Schulz's letter to Romana Halpern contains a penetrating analysis of the mode and conditions of his own creative process:

> I also have my drawings next to me and sometimes I think that they are really good and that I could make even better ones. My great enemy is lack of self-confidence, lack of self-love. Long months pass and nothing I do gains my approval, no idea that emerges satisfies me, nothing appeals to me. This state of dissatisfaction condemns me to inaction. But sometimes I think that this severity is justified and that I am right to condemn to destruction the underweight and imperfect things. There is only this drawback to things, you have to accept imperfect things at the beginning, gain momentum, get excited and bewildered, and find perfect things somewhere near the limit of your capacities.[108]

Without the mental and emotional "background" described here, it is impossible to speculate on the causes of the frequency or rhythm of Schulz's exhibitions, even though the letter does not mention appearances in front of the public. There is no trace of opportunistic thinking here – about building fame or at least popularity, about the possibility of programming financial success. Although the correspondence with Romana Halpern dates back to the second half of the 1930s, it seems that even earlier, from the very beginning, Schulz found it difficult to treat his own works as commodities and creativity as a way to earn a living[109]. He preferred to donate them, with the comment: "I only take money from rich bourgeoisie"[110]. This may be why he had to give up the idea of making a living by selling drawings or graphics (and not necessarily due to the lack of buyers and amateurs) and decided to take up work as a teacher. Due to this attitude, the possibility of selling works at an exhibition was far from among the reasons that influenced the decision to participate in it. This can explain the small number

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Although – as Schulz writes (*KL*, p. 59) – they did not have much time for meetings, but it can be assumed that there were several of them, within a short period of time, which is not without significance for the creation of an impulse for creative work.

107 A. M. Mars writes that at the exhibition in 1935, Schulz showed drawings "from the period of over a dozen years", which contradicts the opinion of J. Kilian-Stanisławska, who noticed a change in style compared to 1930 (*Wystawa prac*).

108 Letter to Romana Halpern, September 30, 1936, p. 129.

109 Irena Kejlin-Mitelman describes the scene of paying for the portrait: "I know that in the end Schulz accepted the money so as not to upset Father" (B. Schulz, *Listy, fragmenty*, p. 49).

110 Letter to Kazimierz Truchanowski, October 6, 1935, *KL*, p. 104.

of exhibits from outside private collections at the TPSP Spring Salons in Lviv in 1922 and 1930. Only years later, in 1938, when the exhibitions take on real dimensions in a life project, Schulz is perhaps ready to agree to a purely profitable show at the Zodiak café, proposed by Eile.

The borders of worlds

Previously, he was interested in exhibitions for other reasons. It is known that the model of an artist "being out in the world" was alien to him[111]. "He lived on the sidelines. […] Separately, on the margins, rationing social contacts and giving them ritualized forms. One may get the impression that he locked himself up of his own free will (if we make such fundamental decisions consciously and arbitrarily) in the bricked-up room, so pedantically and precisely described in the story *Solitude*. […] From a bricked-up room you go out to others, to the world, thanks to art"[112]. But art must be taken one step further from it. The condition for its existence, its vitality and meaning is the resonance it arouses, which Schulz so often mentioned in his correspondence. In contacts with friends and trusted acquaintances to whom he entrusted his unprinted texts and drawings, he wanted to feel that his world "borders, touches other worlds, that on these borders these worlds interpenetrate and intersect, that they exchange currents and chills"[113]. And then it became necessary to extend these antennae, to widen the channel through which it communicated with the environment. Art turned out to be a method of capturing kindred spirits and spreading traces over increasingly vast spaces, a way of finding a recipient who would "understand" the glow in the author's eyes. "In this short but powerful look, in a fleeting squeeze of the hand, he will grasp, take over, recognize – and close his eyes in delight at this profound reception. Because under the table that divides us, don't we all secretly hold hands?"[114]. Therefore, exhibitions provided an opportunity to reach those who would sit at that table. In this respect – but also in many others (debut, gaining popularity, reviews) – they can be compared to the publication of a literary work by a writer: a book in the case of an individual exhibition, and a story in a

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111 Schulz protested against Gombrowicz's understanding of the criterion of a "complete writer", which – as he wrote – "does not […] concern the essence of the artist at all, it concerns his life or social achievements, or similar things" (letter to Andrzej Pleśniewicz, December 1, 1936, *KL*, p. 116).

112 S. Rosiek, *Schulz poza czasem*, "Schulz/Forum" 10, 2017, p. 5–6. See also F. Szałasek, *Gra w światy*, "Schulz/Forum" 1, 2012, p. 64–82.

113 Letter to Stefan Schuman, July 24, 1932, *KL*, p. 33. Jerzy Ficowski wrote several times about Schulz's search for a "congenial partner". See *Katalog-Pamiętnik Wystawy „Bruno Schulz. Ad memoriam" w Muzeum Literatury im. Adama Mickiewicza w Warszawie*, red. W. Chmurzyński, Warszawa 1995, p. 176–181.

114 B. Schulz, "Księga", [in:] idem, *Proza*, przedm. A. Sandauer, oprac. listów J. Ficowski, Kraków 1964, p. 161. See also the beginning of a letter to Romana Halpern, December 5, 1936, *KL*, p. 138.

magazine in the case of participation in a collective exhibition. The fundamental difference is of a purely formal nature – the number of readers of a book always significantly exceeds the number of viewers visiting even the most advertised show in a renowned gallery. The same will apply to the total number of reviews in the press. But the difference between both types of messages is also visible on a different level. The translation into print (in a multi-stage technical process) of an intimate document, such as a manuscript, depersonalizes the author, erasing the traces of his work and his corporeality[115]. However, at an exhibition, every recipient, not only the selected one, can see such traces on a painting or drawing; especially in drawings, perhaps, because in painting they sometimes disappear when embedded in the matter of paint. Regardless of what the painting depicts, the exhibition visitor experiences in a more direct, visual way – compared to the reader while reading – with that umbilical cord (which Schulz writes about in a slightly different context) connecting the work "with the whole of our problems, blood still circulates there mystery, the ends of the vessels escape into the surrounding night and return from there full of dark fluid"[116]. In the gallery space, not only the artist's works are exposed to public view, but also the artist himself. Schulz was aware of this, because he did not mean that Lachowicz was present at the opening of his exhibition when he wrote about him: "He stood before the Drohobych audience with his work"[117]. Even if we see it as a rhetorical trick, it is not accidental in some sense. A similar formulation was used in relation to Schulz several years earlier by a reviewer of a collective exhibition in Drohobycz: "He stands alone both in this exhibition and among contemporary painters"[118]. Friedländer did not write about any other artist in this way in his text.

Exposure

Of course, baring yourself in front of viewers can give you satisfaction, even purely artistic one. However, not everyone is able to write it down without hesitation as advantage or disadvantage. If Schulz could, he would either take part in all possible exhibitions (or at least try to do so) or he would never exhibit at all. In an interview he said: "I always dreamed that my drawings would reach the

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115 On the presence of the "I" in Schulz's autograph, see S. Rosiek, *Jak pisał Bruno Schulz? Domysły na podstawie sześciu stron jednego opowiadania*, "Schulz/Forum" 4, 2015, p. 52–74.

116 Letter to Stanisław Ignacy Witkiewicz, [1934/1935], *KL*, p. 101.

117 B. Schulz, *Wystawa Lachowicza*, "Przegląd Podkarpacia" 1937, no. 70, p. 2. Schulz does not refer to the opening of the exhibition at all, because he writes about it as having been going on for weeks. This is probably the only text by Schulz in which the concept of "the success of an exhibition among the public" appears.

118 Al. Stewe, op. cit., p. 229.

hands of people who would feel their content"[119]. And he had in mind drawings "in which – unlike in prose – his hidden sexual desires come to the fore with full force"[120]. He is not ashamed to talk about it in his drawings, just as he would be ashamed to write a masochistic novel, as he mentions in another fragment of the quoted interview. Participating in exhibitions could therefore, at least in some respect, become a source of "painful pleasure". So why did he show a "strange aversion" to exhibitions?

The obvious and trivial reason was problems with mastering ordinary life procedures – binding and packing works, corresponding with organizers or intermediaries, etc.[121] Participating in gallery events is also inevitably connected with "attending", for example, vernissages, where you are forced to listen to speeches full of long-winded argumentation and then empty chatter from the audience, where you make accidental and not necessarily desirable acquaintances with the doctor's wife from Wilcza and her doppelgangers. For someone who defines the dominant feature of their fate as "cutting themselves off from everyday life"[122], all this meant having to cross the boundaries of this cut-off and submitting to the torment of everyday life.

But it is also about a different kind of Schulz's cut-off – "from one's own (and other people's) corporeality"[123]. It is one thing to show images in which one's own sinful desires are demonstrated in full unambiguity, but also in the disciplined quotation marks of a visual form, firmly rooted in the iconographic tradition. However, exposing the trace of a hand, a body controlled by the will or escaping this control in random movements and vibrations – is a completely different thing. Schulz probably did not exhibit his sketched images (maybe except for the exhibition in 1935, but there is no evidence for this), only finished drawings, signed and dated, with a completely different status (this difference was noticed

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119 J. Nacht, *Wywiad drastyczny. (Rozmowa z Brunonem Schulzem)*, "Nasza Opinia" 1937, no. 77, p. 5, quoted after *Czytanie Schulza. Materiały międzynarodowej sesji naukowej „Bruno Schulz – w stulecie urodzin i pięćdziesięciolecie śmierci"*, Instytut Filologii Polskiej Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego, Kraków, 8–10 czerwca 1992, pod red. Jerzego Jarzębskiego, Kraków 1994, p. 106.

120 S. Rosiek, *Odcięcie. Siedem fragmentów*, "Schulz/Forum" 7, 2016, p. 31. English translation by Miłosz Wojtyna is available in "Schulz/Forum", special issue 2023, p. 67–105.

121 Jerzy Ficowski explains the break in exhibitions between 1923 and 1930 as follows: "Probably, starting his permanent teaching job in 1924, which was arduous and absorbing, forced the artist to postpone such initiatives until later. Perhaps the fear of losing his job as a drawing teacher was also responsible for this delay […] Regardless of these circumstances, there were probably deeper reasons, too" – Ficowski, *O "Xiędze Bałwochwalczej"*, p. 12. One would have to agree with the last sentence; Schulz's situation as a teacher was not much different in, for example, 1926 and 1930, and there is no information that his participation in exhibitions in 1930 and 1935 caused any repercussions in the school environment.

122 Letter to Stanisław Ignacy Witkiewicz, [1934/1935], *KL*, p. 103.

123 S. Rosiek, *Odcięcie. Siedem fragmentów*, p. 63.

by Małgorzata Kitowska-Łysiak[124]) and related to the author's body in a more controlled way. Cliché-verres ensured an even greater and more lasting distance between the work and its creator. What distinguishes cliché-verres is, apart from the possibility of reproduction, the two-stage work: the matrix shaped by the artist's hand (using tools) receives and retains all its physicality; the print is the visual effect of this work, pure, untainted by corporeality – it is often created without the involvement of the artist at all. Could it be that Schulz sent fragments of *The Booke of Idolatry* to exhibitions so often (he showed them twice at the TPSP in Lviv, in Vilnius, Cracow and Truskavets, and perhaps also in other places) not only because by exposing new prints he was able to obtain large sets of works most quickly? Maybe this technique served as a shield or barrier that prevented the viewer from getting to the body he was creating. Schulz wrote a lot about his graphics in the article devoted to Lilien, although the argument did not require it. He was enthusiastic about Italian woodcuts he saw at an exhibition, which he reported to Waśniewski, whom he asked on another occasion for help in mastering relief printing techniques. In his correspondence with Lille, he thanked him for his advice on lithography. This insatiable desire to practice graphics is most clearly evidenced by Schulz's drawings, which imitate or even pretend to be woodcuts – such as some of the illustrations for *Sanatorium pod Klepsydrą*, the cover of the junior high school magazine "Młodzież" from 1934 with a synthetic panorama of Drohobych, or even sketches in the newspaper "Bolszewicka Prawda". ("Більшовицька правда") from 1941. If somebody specialising in drawing (and occasionally dealing with painting) turned towards graphics, would he exhibit more often?

Territory of exhibitions on the biography map

More questions like this one (and others posed here) could be asked by identifying the circumstances of Schulz's exhibitions. Yet this is not a blank spot on the map of the writer's biography, but an area largely observed by the first explorers. Its boundaries have been pushed in some places but remain faded in others. I have deleted some of the previously marked points marking individual exposures, drawn a circle of uncertainty around some of them and added a few new points. However, the correction process is incomplete. It is also impossible to write down signs from which it would be possible to clearly read whether Schulz genuinely had an aversion to exhibitions or, on the contrary, he felt a desire for them (and the distance between the two is, as we know, neither as great as it

124 See M. Kitowska-Łysiak, *Uwagi w sprawie kanonu. Brunona Schulza szkicownik młodzieńczy i freski w willi Landaua*, "Schulz/Forum" 2, 2013, p. 63–65. English translation is available in this special issue.

might seem, nor as durable). Did the intention to master graphics actually result from the need (conscious or unconscious) to hide the traces of biological existence from the eyes of gallery viewers (voyeurs), or did it stem from purely aesthetic preferences (if any preferences can be purified). This territory called "Schulz and exhibitions", in which already marked paths and established safe places lie between wilderness and tempting byways, remains – like many regions of the writer's biography – a field for imaginative exercises. And sometimes, with a bit of luck, it reaches the limits of what facts can offer. But it rarely exceeds it.

Translated from Polish by Language Extreme

Małgorzata Kitowska-Łysiak: Comments on the Canon. Bruno Schulz's Adolescent Sketchbook and Frescoes in Landau's Villa

Schulz's *œuvre* – paintings, graphics, drawings – can be read in many ways. What image emerges from, for example, works signed, dated, and titled by the author? Is it the same as the one breaking forth from the abundance of sketches and small "anonymous" notes? A signature, an elementary determinant of attribution[1], not only identifies, but also sanctions and even conceives the work; it confirms its authenticity, but simultaneously idealizes and dignifies it, integrates it into the area of convention, into the area of culture and art, making it discursive; it constitutes frames and therefore, limits the work artistically (in the case of Schulz, this situation applies primarily to "A Meeting" and other drawings, both from *The Booke of Idolatry* and the bookplates; Schulz's drawings are rarely signed). An "anonymous" note is completely independent, it is not obligated to anything, it does not have to be composed artistically, it remains non-discursive, a pure expression, a trace of the hand, and thus proof of the author's presence. In Schulz, these two parallel spaces reveal the tension existing in his work between the conceived, programmatic, artistic, and the non-artistic – primal, magical, ecstatic; between what – as a challenge – is addressed primarily to the potential interpreter, and what – as a confession – still belongs pre-eminently to the author. This perspective allows us to treat as "autobiographic" not only those texts and images that evoke associations (and sometimes even find reliable confirmation in messages) with a specific environment but also those that refer to "reality", i.e. actual places, facts, people related to the author. From this perspective, one can look at both, all first-person written "records" and visual "outlines" with a recognizable author-protagonist in the main or subordinate role, as well as at "records" and "outlines" that could be considered traces of spiritual, "internal experience", and those bearing traces of such an experience.

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1 The meaning of this term is consistent with the tradition of art history: to sign – from Latin *signare* – to signify, to seal; in practice, signature stands for, i.e. a handwritten record of the name or surname, or any symbol that allows identification.

The trace of this experience, and at the same time the trace of the hand, are mainly all those works that did not enter the canon, that is, were not included in it by the artist himself. Nevertheless, the canon here is not an absolute, once established, inviolable construction that would refer to one or another area of culture. The definition I am interested in assumes that the artist is the legislator of the "canon". This term refers to his own work, to the way in which he reveals what is – in his opinion – more or less important in his work. However, as viewers and commentators, we can change the determinants of the canon, and move balance points, which allow us to notice increasingly different aspects of the analysed work. One possibility is to emphasize and recognize as canonical the works that were most pointed to by the artist himself: illustrations to his own works, works not only ennobled by their close connection with prose and literature in which the author, as he wrote to Witkacy, expressed himself "more fully"[2], but also distinguished by the fact that – through press and book publications – they reached a mass, yet very special audience, which consisted of readers of the literary press and fiction. From this perspective, other works, not as often presented publicly, including personal ones, made for friends or dedicated to them, appear to be located on the outskirts of the canon.

If the term "canon" is understood here as a set of works recognized by the author, relevant, perhaps representative of his or her own *œuvre*, as a well-thought-out set, a collection of works that constitute an area of identification of the author and the work, then as a different example of a canon (than the above-mentioned) I would firstly acknowledge "A Meeting" and *The Booke of Idolatry*, as well as smaller works: bookplates and some drawings, such as "Sadistic Women" or "Bacchanalia". However, small paintings and drawings that are either of a processual nature could be perceived as extra-canonical, showing the stages of creation, work *in progress* – or else those that are ultimately abandoned, or unfinished (including the adolescent sketchbook). It is impossible to find out why the latter work remained unfinished. Was it due to circumstances, lack of ability to compose further, dissatisfaction with the effect, or – although this is unlikely – part of Schulz's artistic program? Unfinished, *non finito*, if a term most commonly intended for referring to the sculptural effect can be used here, without the final touch, *fini* certification in the form of, among others, a date and signature, which usually function as a craftsman's house mark – all these terms are applicable to both the first, earliest works, spontaneous, navigated by the subconscious, retaining the status of primary, original material, as well as to

2 *Bruno Schulz do St. I. Witkiewicza*, "Tygodnik Ilustrowany" 1935, no. 17; reprinted in: B. Schulz, *Opowiadania. Wybór esejów i listów*, opracował J. Jarzębski, wydanie 2 przejrz. i uzup., Wrocław: Ossolineum, 1998, p. 476 (the original Polish text of the following fragments of Schulz's prose are located in this edition, the page numbers are given in brackets in the main text).

later ones – sketches, notes, conscious forms, mediated by acquired knowledge, unoriginal, also because they are often – as ideas and outlines – subordinated to drawings and painting.

It seems perilous, albeit natural, to think that the current state of Schulz's frescoes concurs with the effect of the unfinished works mentioned above. One may say that, among other things, it is the adolescent sketchbook that poses as a frame, the starting point, the opening of the bracket which closes with the frescoes from Landau's villa; everything else is in between. The canon would therefore emerge from the inside of the bracket made of the artist's earliest and latest works.

Adolescent Sketchbook

Witnesses mention that the writer's artistic talent was noticeable – using the theological lexis from "The Age of Genius", one should say: it was revealed – already at school. Talent is given and so is vision. The artist metaphorically wrote that the beginnings of his drawing were lost in the "mythological fog"[3]. "Mythological" here means old, legendary, passed down by word of mouth, not supported by any documents. Schulz was undoubtedly on point while describing the time and nature of these first attempts. The "fog" has not dissipated to this day. If we consider only the known facts, we will learn little about the artistic path of the author of *The Cinnamon Shops*. We have very limited sources of direct knowledge – mainly fragments of memories reconstructed by Jerzy Ficowski. However, some light is shed on the visual part of Schulz's body of work by quasi-testimonies of several of his own texts; but it must be remembered that they were created *ex post* – they are a kind of memory reconstruction, and probably also the result of "mythologization". These include a quasi-letter to Witkacy, and in addition – also in the form of self-commentary, although of a slightly different nature – fragments of stories: the already quoted "The Age of Genius" and the title story from *The Cinnamon Shops.* An unmediated, priceless document remains, though, in the form of the above-mentioned adolescent sketchbook. It provides an intriguing insight into the nature of Schulz's early attempts as a draftsman; its pages could be considered the fruit of that passionate drawing – "in hurry, in panic, transversally, diagonally" – about which we read in "The Age of Genius"[4].

3 Ibidem, p. 474.

4 B. Schulz, "The Age of Genius", [in:] idem, *The Street of Crocodiles and Other Stories*, translated by Celina Wieniewska, London: Penguin Books 2008, p. 133.

The sketchbook is most likely from 1907–1908[5]. At the time of making it, the author was about fifteen or sixteen years old, a student at the junior high school. His first mature works were created at least ten years later, and the stories from both collections, referring *ex post* to his youthful experiences – twenty-five (*The Cinnamon Shops*) or thirty ("The Age of Genius") years later. Does it matter at all? Do the pages of the sketchbook decisively demonstrate, so to speak, the power of this vision that we later read about in the stories? It appears that they do not, and these early "scribbles" satisfy the artist's belief that he expresses himself more fully in prose. But they also belong to the manifestations of "private mythology", the concept that Schulz uses in his quasi-letter to Witkacy. "Drawing's boundaries are tighter than these of prose"[6], the author emphasises. Of course, he is right: the image in prose is not as overbearing as the image itself in painting, drawing, or in a graphic. But does it always have to be this way? "Tighter boundaries" are defined primarily by the program, aesthetics, and convention, as shown by mature works. The early ones seem, as I have already mentioned, free from limitations. The scribbles, this material trace of the hand on paper, apart from everything else, seem to, quite naturally, connect with the theological phase of revelation. And this is the most crucial aspect.

The sketchbook contains a set of mixed works of various nature. Some of them were made in pencil, some with a pen; in some cases, the author outlined both the obverse and the reverse, as we commonly say, with neither rhyme nor reason. There is no trace of thinking about composition, perspective, or any other order of organizing the surface of paper. One often gets the impression that a blind man was guiding the hand that painted the blurry pictures, palimpsests superimposed one on top of the other – the outlines of recognizable forms struggle to emerge from under the broken, looped lines. Sometimes the hand slides lightly across the surface, but from time to time also presses the pen firmly. Occasionally, the image emerges from a tangle of lines of varying intensity and at times, from clear black blots. We see portrait attempts, drawn hastily, and perfunctorily, and next to them are caricatures of unknown people (women and men). In addition, studies of floral or animal ornaments; among the latter, in several places, one can see a unicorn, which is, among other things, a symbol of love that renounces physical fulfilment and, concurrently, a symbol of sublimated sexuality. This appears interesting from the perspective of erotic themes that dominate the artist's mature art. Other pages contain drawings that give the impression of outlines of characters from unknown fairy tales, such as the princess at the well or the

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5 For more details, see my entry in *Słownik schulzowski*, oprac. i red. W. Bolecki, J. Jarzębski, S. Rosiek, Gdańsk: słowo/obraz terytoria 2003, p. 371–374; the sketchbook is in the collection of the Adam Mickiewicz Museum of Literature.

6 *Bruno Schulz do St. I. Witkiewicza*, p. 475–476.

A page from Bruno Schulz's sketchbook,
1907–1908

giant king, which are associated – but rather by the aura than by the form of representation – with characters known from frescoes, which therefore can be considered as anticipating them.

The diverse nature of the drawings is striking. However, when we try to name and define it, we feel a sense of atrophy and insufficiency of the discursive language. This is the state that Schulz mentioned in his quasi-letter to Witkacy: the comment breaks the umbilical cord connecting the imaginary source of the performance with the author's "entire subject area". The comment concerned prose, but it can be extended to art. On this basis, a commentator, respectful of the artist's assumption, would be even more helpless. Of course, a similar situation applies to fine arts in general, but in this case the author's position is stated directly and publicly, so it is difficult to openly oppose it. But somehow you have to "make public" the content of the sketchbook and, as I mentioned, define its specificity. The variety of works indicates that their author was a talented teenager, completely independent of patterns and free of any teacher's domination. They prove both his ability to observe the surroundings and the ability to explore the psychological characteristics of the model, an example of which is, among others, the charming, carefully crafted – rather than, as Witkacy would say, "polished" – image of a young woman with her hair tied up in a bun. On the other hand, illustrations for fairy tales prove the author's ability to "think in images", and the simplification of animal silhouettes and plant representations show skill at stylization.

The most intriguing, however, are the drawings of fragments of Christ's face (?) and allegorical-symbolic compositions. In the first case, it would be the only such image in Schulz's entire oeuvre, while in the second, it would be necessary to take into account the fact that the sketchbook is an example of imponderables that allow for the reconstruction, at least partial, of the early (earliest?) attempts of Schulz to explore the sphere of erotic imagination. From this perspective, the most important is the simplified, yet idealized figures of naked women often appearing in these youthful exercises. In the most elaborate scene, one of them, winged, stretches out her hands to a naked boy running towards her, brought by another woman in a flowing dress. We will not find a direct continuation of this motif in Schulz's later work. However, its mysterious aura appears in the motif created probably around 1920, the first period of the artist's mature visual work (the second period should be dated to the mid-1930s, when he was working on the illustrations for *Sanatorium Under the Sign of the Hourglass*), dedicated to Stanisław Weingarten. A "bookplate with the Messiah" is how Władysław Panas identifies the figure of a young man fighting a dragon-crocodile[7]. In other

7 W. Panas, *Bruno od Mesjasza*, Lublin: Wydawnictwo UMCS 2001, p. 37–70.

Detail from Bruno Schulz's wall painting at
Felix Landau's villa, 1942

depictions, we only see men in their prime or even older. The much more semantically relevant image of a hermaphrodite boy (the sexual characteristics of whom were neutralized, both in the bookplate and in the drawing from the sketchbook, which, by the way, can be seen as a kind of "diary of adolescence") should therefore be compared with the androgynous Infanta from *The Booke* rather than with any other hero of the author's artistic narratives. Of course, as will be discussed later, such a comparison opens up further possibilities – for instance, for juxtaposing a visual image (Infanta) and a literary image (Bianca). This type of perspective allows us to notice, in these seemingly carefree drawings, the very beginning determining further fermentations of the artist's imagination. It can therefore be assumed that the sketchbook forecasts the artist's mature work.

As a rule, it is believed that the drawings contained in the sketchbook do not display high artistic value. Years ago, I was inclined to think so too. Of course, in the context of canonical works, these are merely announcements and rehearsals. Regardless, they deserve more careful attention not only for belonging to the legacy of a Great Artist. It may be difficult to determine what part they constitute but they are worth appreciating. In this case, the sketchbook is not a rough draft, a collection of first notes; quite the opposite – it gains the status of a fair copy, a collection of recent records; the last ones at the first stage of the artist's formation.

Dictionaries provide a different understanding of the term "rehearsal" than I assume here. A rehearsal is also an exercise, but this does not apply to Schulz's "sketchbook". Exercising means repeating, repeating, polishing. The sketchbook of the author of *The Cinnamon Shops* is not a notebook of an academician, who, by nature, studies, and perfects the mimetic record of observations in drawing, sometimes with a view to a future work. Here – with minor exceptions – we are dealing with pronounced and free expression. It is emphasized by the incompleteness of the works, the afore-mentioned *non finito* effect, which, understandably, in relation to Schulz the visionary, is not the result of the adopted aesthetic concept, but the spontaneous "product" of the hand. It determines the importance of the sketchbook in the context of the artist's achievements, reflects what comes from outside us. According to Bolesław Miciński, the first stage of the creation process, "the preparatory phase, the elusive growth of the internal conflict that gives rise to creativity […] is like collapsing into […] oneself – weakening [the author's] contact with the outside world"[8]. Later comes a phase in which the threads of "logical connections" between the images are drawn (Miciński writes about words, but in the case of images the principle is analogous), but the whole

8 B. Miciński, "Notatki o natchnieniu", [in:] idem, *Podróże do piekieł. Eseje*, Warszawa: Biblioteka "Więzi" 2011, p. 88 and following.

is still elusive and amorphous. Only the third stage is "the moment of binding the unleashed demons", taming the element of inspiration, and shaping the form. According to the above concept, the scribbles from the sketchbook are still far from their final stage.

Frescoes

As for their visual structure, several drawings, created much later than the sketchbook, have, in many respects, a similar character – with *The Booke of Idolatry* or illustrations for stories in mind. However, what all of them have in common is an additional reason, a purpose defining them as they are subordinated to this purpose, and seem artistically captive. Although the thesis I would like to propose seems controversial, I am under the impression that only frescoes constitute a work comparable to the sketchbook on a scale of sovereignty and originality. Of course, the paintings in Landau's villa confuse us and the researcher. They force the question: "Should they be granted a place in the author's body of work, just as all the other works, or should they be treated only as evidence of oppression?". I would rather consider them as a victory for the artist, as the overcoming of a trauma. The frescoes are also rehearsals, but they are not exercises. Similarly to the works from the adolescent sketchbook, they are artistically selfless, although, of course, in the existential plane they had a specific address and purpose. However, if we say that the sketchbook is not art yet, then we are forced to admit, that the frescoes are not art anymore.

The history of these works is rather well known. Schulz made them (with the help of Emil Górski, who, according to reports and all probability, only filled the writer's original concept with paint)[9], in 1942 in the residence of Feliks Landau in Drohobych[10]. It was a stately, three-story house at what was then ul. Świętego Jana 12, owned by the Jochman family before the war[11]. Emil Górski's account was difficult to confirm for many years, although Jerzy Ficowski made attempts to find the paintings. However, they seemed to have been destroyed before the next layers of paint were applied (after the war, someone lived in Landau's villa at what is today ul. Tarnowskiego 14). It was only on February 9, 2001, that the paintings were discovered by a German documentarian Benjamin Geissler, who

9 See memories of Emil Górski in: B. Schulz, *Listy, fragmenty. Wspomnienia o pisarzu*, zebrał i opracował J. Ficowski, Kraków: Wydawnictwo Literackie 1984, p. 74–75.

10 Schulz himself submitted his job application as a draftsman to the Drohobych Judenrat. The painter also decorated the local Gestapo headquarters and the Reitschule (horse riding school) building with frescoes.

11 Wiesław Budzyński states that on the parcel, apart from the villa, which was built "for rent", there was a smaller, one-story house, inhabited by the owners (idem, *Miasto Schulza*, Warszawa: Prószyński i S-ka 2005, p. 310; for an entire chapter on Landau's Villa, see p. 310–314).

was following their traces, inspired by his father Christian, and with the help of information published by Ficowski. Geissler played the role of an explorer, an archaeologist, and an obstetrician – thanks to him, Schulz the painter was born again, reborn for almost the last time[12]. Like a phoenix from the ashes. He shone like an ember bird.

The photographs taken on site were used as the basis for a film made by Geissler titled *Bilder Finden*. The date of its premiere was symbolic – it was November 19, 2002, the one hundred and tenth anniversary of the writer's death. The place was also chosen symbolically – the New York Center for Jewish History. The Polish-Ukrainian-Israeli quarrel over the theft of the paintings and their removal to Yad Vashem broke out before the film's premiere.

However, apart from this history, I would like to consider how, and on what basis, frescoes can be perceived as part of Schulz's artistic achievements. Do we find any artistic context for them, so to speak? Perhaps by adopting such a perspective, we will view them as individual works, that truly belong to the author – despite his oppressive situation – and are inscribed primarily in the field of history of art, and not only in the history of the Holocaust.

As a result of the Yad Vashem operation and the subsequent removal of the paintings' remains from the walls, the entire place was irreversibly damaged. That is what we assume. However, the term "entire" is not defined in this context. What is the scale of the gaps that do not result from damage? In other words: did Schulz achieve his goal? Were the frescoes completed and finished in his opinion? Either way, all we have today are fragments. Is our knowledge of the paintings in Felix Landau's children's room less exhaustive than it would be if we had a chance to see the walls as the author left them, after putting down the brush? We cannot fully verify the account of Emil Górski, who noted that generally, the author remained faithful to the creative method he used in both literature and art – to the principle of combining reality with imagination: "On the wall paintings in the Gestapo officer's apartment, in a fantastic fairy-tale setting, the characters of kings, knights, and squires had quite 'non-Aryan' facial features of people among whom Schulz was at that time. The similarity of their emaciated and tortured faces, captured by Schulz's memory, was extraordinary"[13]. However, even if we agree that one of the faces (the coachman) belongs to the artist himself, it will still be challenging to identify the others.

Perhaps the whole is illusory, impossible, and false; perhaps we only encounter the true whole when we put the fragments together. The whole is forcing, depressing, and inhuman, while the fragment is closer to us, tailored to human

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12 I am leaving out small works that constantly appear at auctions; however, the probability of discovering a large set of Schulz's works, let alone other wall polychromes, seems to be quite low.

13 E. Górski, "[Wspomnienie]", [in:] B. Schulz, *Listy, fragmenty*, op. cit., p. 74.

dimensions, more tangible, and specific. Finally, the whole is demanding, insistent, blackmailing the viewer, demanding attention, sometimes continuation, or completion; a fragment gives more possibilities, it is just like a drawing, a scribble of a child or any other individual focused on their own world – rebellious, non-schematic, open, anarchic, allowing you to let go of the pencil, pen or brush, tearing them off the page or canvas at any time. The whole is logical and obedient, and the fragment is rebellious. However, if we strive for truth rather than facts, the fragment is our ally. Moreover, it allows both the viewer and the artist to "delightfully fabulate"[14], to fabricate. *Ergo*, the fragment (fragmentariness) is the essence of the whole.

Umberto Eco writes about works with a similar structure as "works in movement" (*opere in movimento*). He "invites us to identify inside the category of 'open' works a further, more restricted classification of works which can be defined as 'works in movement', because they characteristically consist of unplanned or physically incomplete structural units"[15]. An "artwork in motion" is a work that can be shaped in various ways, that is constantly in the phase of birth, that is open, mobile, changeable, uncertain, fluid. Schulz would say that thereby it "diffuses beyond its borders" (in this case, primarily the borders of an existential threat), blurs them, breaks rules and conventions, and is itself a guarantor of both, reality and freedom. Moreover, in Schulz's work – as many authors have already pointed this out – we are dealing with a world that is becoming, unstable, uncertain, and therefore mediocre. Things are as they are, just "for appearances" sake, mostly unrealised. This is a key principle of Schulz's aesthetics.

The paintings in Landau's villa are, as we know today, the last works ever made by Schulz; and, as I have already mentioned, works made under extreme circumstances – under duress. For the artist, the room of Landau's several-year-old children is a kind of burial chamber (the room is small, 240 cm in length and 180 cm in width). Geissler could feel like a discoverer of paintings in the Roman catacombs. The frescoes are of great historical importance, both from the perspective of micro- and macro-history, they are an individual biography, and a piece of collective fate. In the first sense, their creation is a specific, individual

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14 I am recalling here the phrase used by Leszek Engelking, translator and author of the afterword to: M. Ajvaz, *Morderstwo w hotelu Intercontinental. Powrót starego warana. Inne miasto*, Sejny: Pogranicze 2007, p. 354.

15 U. Eco, *The Open Work*, translated by Anna Cancogni, with an introduction by David Robey, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, p. 12. What is extremely important in the context I am interested in, is that Eco sees the announcement of "work in movement" in the book of Mallarmé (p. 40–45), while some researchers see it as a source of Schulz's concept of the Book and its incarnation, which is *The Booke of Idolatry* – see A. Kato, "Obraz i Księga. O autoreferencyjności w twórczości Brunona Schulza", [in:] *Białe plamy schulzologii*, red. M. Kitowska-Łysiak, Lublin: Wydawnictwo KUL 2010, p. 151–167.

biographical and artistic (f)act, in the second sense – as "Holocaust murals" – they are a fact from the history of the Shoah.

Schulz painted the scenes with perishable "powder paints with casein glue, which you can make yourself from milk or cheese"[16]. In the technological sense, they were not frescoes (*al fresco*), i.e. polychromes made on a wet surface, although the term stuck to them. It is also consistent with the colloquial use of the term – as the name of any wall painting, regardless of the technique of execution. However, the *al fresco* technological process is long and complicated and, above all, requires a specially prepared multi-layer substrate and, usually, prior preparation of cardboards (mainly because it is difficult to make corrections, which may even require chipping off the top layer of plaster). The technique chosen by Schulz is rather closer to *al secco* – the dry fresco technique, where paints are applied directly to dry plaster. While it was rarely used in the 19th century, in the 20th it was perceived as anachronistic. Some circumstances may have prompted the artist to use this particular method, which is less complicated and simultaneously allowed him to work faster: the pressure of the situation – the tension resulting from the need to complete the task in a short time, lack of experience in monumental painting, or shortage of appropriate materials. It is worth noting that because *al secco*, among other reasons, does not require prior preparations, it allows for the directness of the painting gesture, the effect of which may be corrected, but itself remains fresh and, similarly to a sketch, for an element of the original expression. We will never find out whether Schulz had artistic ambitions with the frescoes, but we can be almost certain that he did not treat them solely as a form of ransom that he had to pay to survive. Emil Górski noted that even in a space filled with death, Schulz "somehow managed to remain faithful to his creative principle"[17]. Górski saw its essence in the combination of what is real (visible, possible to experience sensually and mentally) with what is imagined, in this case, fairy tale. Let me quote a fragment of his memories once again: "The figures of kings, knights, and squires had quite 'non-Aryan' facial features of the people among whom Schulz was at that time". We know this technique both from prose and earlier works of art.

In one of Schulz's most important stories, in the seventeenth chapter of "Autumn", we read about "great breeding grounds of history", "factories of plots", and "hazy smoking rooms of fables and tales". Would we also be "among the Mothers" if we entered the space of the stories presented in the "frescoes"? If every fragment of reality is a reflection of an eternal myth, then the whole is redundant. Well, maybe we should not even try to find out what form the whole has.

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16 I quote from Andrzej Osęka, citing the expertise of specialists from the Warsaw University of Technology; see idem, *Nie ma "fresków" Schulza*, "Gazeta Wyborcza" 2001, no. 132.

17 E. Górski, "[Wspomnienie]", op. cit., p. 74

Although it sounds cruel, it must be said that in the case of frescoes, the situation favoured the choice of technique. Based on what we can see today, it is difficult to imagine the original state. We do not know which of the effects – especially when it comes to colours – are traces of the artist's hand. What is the result of the conditions that prevailed for many decades in the Landau villa, inhabited by the Kałużny family after the war? What is the degree of mechanical damage caused when fragments were hastily removed from the walls? Has conservation – both carried out at Yad Vashem and in the Drohobyczyna Museum – brought us any closer to the original? There are too many unknowns for us to be able to answer these questions.

However, what remains to be seen is not easy to describe. Striking, at first glance already, is the freshness of the colours and the simplicity of the representations, their naturalness, and – to use Mieczysław Wallis's beautiful, extremely vivid expression, referring to Monet's late paintings – "the blurring of contours"[18], the elusiveness of form. Schulz clearly tried to produce a form of order without reaching for patterns or conventions. He referred to childhood associations. The characters had to be recognizable, so the dwarf has a red pointed hat, the princess with an apple in her hand is young and slender[19], and the old woman – stooped, with her head covered with a traditional scarf. What attracts attention is the image of the coachman, who some authors perceive as a portrait of Schulz himself[20]. The same applies to animals: the horses rear up and the cat holds its tail up in a characteristic way (this exceptionally charming image – unlike the discoveries with figures of horses that ended up at Yad Vashem – remained in Drohobych). However, these are not standard illustrations for fairy tales. The identity of the characters is not unambiguous, even though individual fragments of the play complement and comment on each other, revealing a narrative dynamic. Although we cannot fully recreate the logic that governs the entire set of images, we can identify the young woman as Snow White and connect her and the dwarves, the old woman Witch and the saviour Prince into one story. This is a Brothers Grimm's tale, which German children knew from the beginning of the 19th century, and Polish children learned about only in 1895, when the Polish translation of *Kinder und Hausmärchen* was published (in the Polish version the title was *Baśnie dla dzieci i młodzieży*). Landau's children – Uwe (?) born in 1928 and Helga, one year younger[21] – certainly knew this book, but

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18 M. Wallis, *Późna twórczość wielkich artystów*, Warszawa: PIW 1975, p. 189.

19 In some accounts, the woman appears as a princess; according to Wiesław Budzyński, she has the face of Felix Landau's second wife – Gertrude Segel, married to him at the beginning of May 1943, but already brought to Drohobych from Radom at the end of 1941 (see idem, *Miasto Schulza*, p. 365).

20 See M. Michalska, *Polski protest*, "Gazeta Wyborcza" 2001, no. 138.

21 I quote from W. Budzyński, *Miasto Schulza*, p. 419.

the choice of a text that was to be illustrated on the walls of the room (it is not clear whether the children shared one room or had separate bedrooms[22]), was probably made by the father only in consultation with them. The story about *Schneewittchen* was particularly popular, it had a clear moral and was perfect for decorating a children's room, both for a girl (the story about a Princess) and for a boy (there is the chivalrous Prince – the Princess's liberator from the rule of the Evil Stepmother).

Iconographically, at the level of what-is-visible, the works, though not at all trite in many other aspects, appear to be trivial. Schulz does not seem to go beyond fairy-tale intrigue and character attributes recognizable by a young reader. However, the visual language used by the author reveals more and clearly distinguishes his work from book illustrations from that era, to which one would naturally like to compare them: book illustrations from the beginning and, by extension, from the first half of the 20th century are dominated by linearity and flat plasticity. Sadly, this area of reference is not the most pertinent, since we are dealing with works made using a different technique than most illustrations (drawings, graphics). The author of the idea was Landau; perhaps he wanted to implement the decorations he knew from his childhood to the villa in Drohobych, or he gave in to a trend prevailing in Germany… It is difficult to decide and unfortunately, I have not been able to find any documentation that could verify any such hypothesis. Besides, Schulz did not know the suggested technique, neither from personal experience nor from reproductions. They were created on individual orders and were not popularized by professional literature on art, because they were simply not considered artworks.

Schulz's wall polychrome with a motif taken from *Kinder und Hausmärchen* has its own aesthetics. He used the potential of the technique: as I mentioned, he thinned out the paint and softened the stain, making the figures and objects appear to be painted in watercolour, and at the same time resembling those we know not only from pictures drawn or painted for children, but also by children. But there is much more to define the sovereignty of frescoes. They have the author's stamp thanks to several other elements, the hierarchy of which is difficult to establish, since all of them are equally important: starting with the method of "lending credibility" to the depicted story, through the use of specific, real images, primarily one's own (the coachman), through the similarity between some heroes and figures that appear earlier in the sketchbook, to the key aspect – the idea of "returning childhood" and "regression", which seems to have been realized in this particular painting project, and about which the author of *The Cinnamon*

22 Most authors write about Landau's "son's room", omitting the fact that the officer also had a daughter.

Shops wrote in a letter to Pleśniewicz, identifying it, as we know, with the concept of the "age of genius"[23].

These issues seem to coincide in the motif of a carriage with horses, which appeared in the artist's body of work – both visual and literary – in all its phases, starting from childhood, through the mature stage (see prose illustrations, among others), to – as exemplified by the paintings in Landau's villa – the last days of his life. In his often-quoted quasi-letter to Witkacy, Schulz refers to this image, emphasizing that in his childhood he initially drew only carriages with horses. "The procedure of riding in a carriage – we read – seemed to me to be full of importance and hidden symbolism. Around the age of six or seven, the image of a horse-drawn carriage with an open booth, burning lanterns, and leaving the night forest came back to my drawings again and again. This image constitutes the base of my fantasy, it is a nodal point of many lines escaping into the depths. To this day I have not exhausted its metaphysical content"[24]. The author further mentions images "of decisive importance" that appear in childhood, "statute the iron capital of the spirit" and "set the limits of artists' creativity". The horse carriage is one of them.

"These are wonderful drawings", says Szloma about Józef's drawings, created in ecstasy, and adds: "the world has passed through your hands in order to renew itself"; in his opinion, the drawings were created to restore "the reflection of divine hands"[25]. Józef replies that he is not sure of his authorship, that he feels as if "something outside" him had used his inspiration, and at the same moment he confesses that he found the Original: "in the bottom of the drawer lay the long unseen, precious, beloved script"[26]. In a semantic sense, the drawings are adjacent to the Authentic and have a similar status to it. Doesn't it remind us of the case of the adolescent sketchbook and the frescoes? Do not youthful scribbles and illustrations to popular fairy tales belong to the same world as the knick-knack in the chest of drawers? This seems to be the case – they belong, in Kantor's words, to "a lower-rank reality". This aspect unites them all, and this unifying brings the frescoes out of the space of death, allowing us to break the thanatological veil and see them, just like the drawings from the "sketchbook", as artistic attempts, this time not the first, but the last ones. It can therefore be said that both, the fairy tale motif and its essence, are aspects that allowed Schulz to go beyond the oppressive situation and include frescoes in his body of work.

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23 B. Schulz, *Księga listów*, wyd. 2, Gdańsk: słowo/obraz terytoria, 2002, p. 113–114 (letter of March 4, 1936).

24 *Bruno Schulz do St. I. Witkiewicza*, p. 474.

25 B. Schulz, "The Age of Genius", [in:] idem, *The Street of Crocodiles and Other Stories*, translated by Celina Wieniewska, London: Penguin Books 2008, p. 138.

26 Ibidem, p. 139.

The paintings in Landau's villa are a symbol of suppressed freedom, but freedom nonetheless. The eleventh hour of a Great Artist who wants to save not only his life but also, and perhaps above all, the integrity of his art.

To sum up, it must be said directly: a sketchbook, just like the knick-knack, is an emanation of the Authentic; viewed from the same perspective, the frescoes cease to be "Holocaust murals" and become yet another of its incarnations, the incarnation of the Authentic. As a result, Schulz, as an artist, manages to escape fate.

Translated from Polish by Language Extreme

Jerzy Jarzębski: Schulz the Universal

Bruno Schulz, an inconspicuous son of a mercer from Drohobych, was born to a Polonised Jewish family on July 12, 1892. His hometown was located about a hundred kilometres south of Lviv, which, at the end of the 19th century, served as the capital of the Austro-Hungarian province of Galicia. Having never moved permanently from the place of his birth, Schulz was consecutively a citizen of the Austria-Hungary Empire, interwar Poland, Soviet Ukraine, and finally the Nazi Distrikt Galizien, where he was murdered, on the street of his town, by a Gestapo officer during an unplanned pogrom against Jews on November 19, 1942. One can already see that, Schulz's life, thus condensed, becomes a symbolic biography of the 20th-century artist, a story of an individual whose works reflect the incredibly multicoloured diversity of the world at a time of great wars and revolutions, and who is yet a plaything and ultimately a victim of political forces indifferent to his fate.

Schulz did not work in any of the European literary capitals of the time (although he would visit Vienna and even attend lectures at the Academy of Fine Arts there). Drohobych was a rather provincial town, even though Ivan Franko, one of the most prominent Ukrainian writers and political activists, was born in the area, and the town itself was the birthplace of the famous Polish poet Kazimierz Wierzyński and several great Jewish painters (including the Gottlieb family). Its status did not change even with the discovery of a rich oil deposit in nearby Boryslav in the 19th century and the growing affluence of Drohobych's residents. Schulz first dabbled in painting, drawing, and printmaking; then, for many years, until the beginning of the German-Soviet War in 1941, he worked as a teacher of drawing and handicrafts in Drohobych's middle schools. His art brought him little fame, mostly confined to the Jewish artistic circles of Lviv and its environs, where his few exhibitions were noted, one (in Truskavets) even sparking a moral scandal because of the erotic subject matter of his drawings and prints. Only as a writer, author of two collections of short stories, published in the 1930s by the renowned Warsaw-based Rój publishing house, did Schulz gain recognition among Polish critics; for a few years, he participated in the capital's literary life. Although, in addition to favourable reviews, his work was met with negation, these disputes could have won the writer real long-run renown, especially since the most eminent writers and critics of the era talked about him and plans were made to translate his prose into several European languages.

Sadly, Schulz faced a political atmosphere that was exceptionally inauspicious for his work. He experienced the earnest of it in Warsaw, where he was rejected, as a Jew, by reviewers from the nationalist right newspapers, and even such prominent left-oriented critics as Kazimierz Wyka and Stefan Napierski condemned him for the lack of political commitment and alleged destruction of the image of the world. What is more, after the outbreak of the war, in Soviet Lviv, the editor of the Polish magazine *Nowe Widnokręgi* [New Horizons], the poet and critic Adam Ważyk, disqualified Schulz's works from the position of socialist realism as "formalistic". A legend has it, against Ważyk's disclaimer, that this verdict (by an outstanding expert and translator of 20th-century French literature) was encapsulated in the neat slogan "We don't need Prousts!". Schulz's reputation as an ill-fitting "formalist" in the new socialist realist literature was upheld by the political supervisors of culture in Stalinist Poland. Unrecognised even in his home country, he could not count on foreign-language translations for long. His short stories were not reissued until a year after the political changes of October 1956, in the Krakow-based Wydawnictwo Literackie publishing house, preceded by an introduction by Artur Sandauer, an influential critic and Schulz's acquaintance from before the war. The poet Jerzy Ficowski, who held Schulz in almost religious adoration, had begun his years-long efforts to find and reconstruct the canon of the artist's visual and literary works.

The year 1957 is thus the actual starting point in the history of Schulz's international fame. Published in 1961 in Yugoslavia, France, and Germany, in 1963 in England, and in 1964 in Denmark, the Netherlands, and Finland, he did not, however, immediately receive the attention he deserved, for he fell prey to what Gombrowicz warned against in his *Diary*: the audience read him as an "epigone of Kafka", based on the essentially superficial similarity of world images and motifs (such as a man transforming into a cockroach). For a critical approach to these usually exaggerated analogies to be possible, Schulz had to first be thoroughly read and interpreted in Poland, a task that has turned out to span several generations of scholars and certainly remains unfinished today.

In the 1930s and 1940s, when Schulz's short stories were a literary novelty, as I have mentioned, they usually elicited extreme reactions, from delight to fundamental opposition and rejection. Why such polar responses? It can be assumed that Schulz's language played a huge role in the reception of his works: ostentatiously unlike standard literary Polish, full of original metaphors and similes, as well as words of foreign origin or belonging to the local language, characteristic of borderlands inhabited by a diverse population. This language, extremely elaborative for its saturation with poetic tropes, could appeal to the audience because of unexpected, original charms, but it could also stir repulsion and lead to rejection. The prose of the interwar period aimed at liberation from the mannerisms of Young Poland, and thus a "transparent" style was valued, like that of Maria Dąbrowska in *Noce i dnie* [Nights and Days], which Przyboś praised

for its simplicity and crystal purity. Therefore, if even the poetic avantgarde, with its worship of difficult metaphor, bowed to simplicity, Schulz's language could be considered an aberration or anachronism, and in any case, in terms of aesthetics, reading his prose meant walking on the edge.

For Schulz to reach more readers, the language and style of his prose had to travel at least part of the distance to ordinary, standard Polish. But since Schulz's stories could no longer change, the standards of "ordinariness" had to change, which simply means that it was prose style that journeyed to meet Schulz, increasing its capacity to accept linguistic excesses and experiments. It was the war and post-war events that influenced the stylistic standards of prose; the great migration was effectively like shaking a bottle with different, hitherto unmixed, liquids. This resulted in a complex concoction in which different styles, local languages, and poetics interfered and interplayed with each other. This linguistic frenzy, although paradoxically somewhat inhibited by the normative stylistics of socialist realism, was, as a social experience, ready to penetrate literature in the long run. In 1957, Schulz and his stylistics no longer offended; on the contrary, they fascinated the readers as a reach into their whole collective experience of "confused languages".

But Schulz is, on the one hand, a writer whose stories enact what happened to the language of literature after his death, and, on the other, an artist who epitomises everything that evaporated from Polish culture after the war turned the country into a virtually uniform nation state; he symbolises all that disappeared yet simultaneously remained a kind of dream about a rich but receding past. He represents Jewish culture, once inextricably tied to Polish culture, and today, despite efforts to bring it back to life, living only in memories. In addition to Jewishness, Schulz also represents the culture of the Polish Eastern Borderlands, with its diversity and accumulated foreign elements that provide context and boundaries for Polishness. The Borderlands are fascinating both because they reveal what is no longer Polish and because they make us realise that without this foreignness, Polishness cannot be conceived of or defined; for, in a multinational and multicultural state, it simply existed for centuries against the background of and in opposition to Otherness. Schulz is thus oriented as much forward, towards future (linguistic) events, as he is oriented backwards, towards the worlds that have fallen into ruin, yet remained a myth, a fantasy of Polish culture, dreaming of a bygone plurality of its formative contexts.

Having grasped one of Schulz's intriguing ambivalences, let us move on to the next one. Schulz undoubtedly emblazons the world as a meaningful Whole; he fulfils, or rather tries to fulfil, the agelong human dream about the cosmos as a realm of Order anchored in ancient mythical stories. For Schulz, the writer is a kind of steward of this heritage, equipped with a higher awareness of what it means in our lives and how it enters them as a key to understanding current events. Schulz himself utilises it again and again in constructing his stories. This

sounds proud, but does he really resemble monumental figures such as Joyce or Thomas Mann, with their terrific erudition and competence? Schulz's prose combines a holistic design and ambition with a sense of personal inferiority and inadequacy (Sandauer was surely right in extending the meaning of Schulzian masochism beyond erotic aspects). This is why, in Schulz's works, the embrace of the world as a whole is laced with the quizzical poetics of the grotesque, the fragment, the crippled and incomplete form; creation generally appears as unfinished and abortive, with defeat or (self-)compromise becoming an important element of the story: Father witnesses the pogrom of the misbegotten birds he brought into existence, Joseph has to give Bianca to Rudolph, and in "The Sanatorium under the Hourglass", instead of helping Father, he leaves him within the reach of a strange beast, the bookbinder-dog; even the great spectacle of the end of the world due to a comet colliding with Earth, which the writer seemingly sharpens his pen to describe, does not come through, for the bolide, before it hits the planet, "goes out of fashion", surpassed by some other current events.

This second of the many ambivalences is no longer locally Polish, but universal, and perfectly corresponds with the trajectories of human thought in the 20th century. Schulz managed to accurately portray the crisis that the world was going through at the turn of the century: the optimism accompanying the great discoveries of science and socio-economic changes inevitably combined with a great disappointment, a growing sense of defeat and a mortal threat to the very foundations of civilization. The point is that Schulz finds consolation for man firstly through his belief in the universal cyclicality of the world, which makes every human defeat only a stage of existence, and on the other hand, through the conviction that the impairment of "provincials" (who constitute ninety percent of the Earth's population) is relative, for everyone, in a sense, lives "at the centre of the cosmos", communicating with the mythical heritage of humanity in their own way. Therefore, Schulz's characters are provincial in a horizontal sense, that is, when we map the distance between them and the capitals of the world; yet, if looked at vertically, they are as close to the source of the universal meaning as Parisians or Londoners.

Schulz's discovery is very close to the mood of modern-day people, who have come to understand that in the age of global information networks, they are all "close to the centre", but still on the periphery in terms of power to decide their own affairs; that is, they are governed by great, often anonymous forces that cannot be resisted (this is how modern commercialism makes for the decline of traditional trade and, consequently, the bankruptcy of old Jacob's "noble trade"). Therefore, Schulz's characters are ridiculous in their pompous roles, gestures, and intentions, but at the same time remarkably true as reflections of people of the 20th century. Their example may well be used to discuss the problems of modern artists, whose work can no longer be treated fully seriously, for all hierarchies of values enabling evaluation and aspiring to objectivity have fallen into ruin, so

they are left, at best, with something like Father's avian affair, which on the one hand reveals, almost too openly, its unintentional shoddiness, and on the other its pretextuality (for the aim of the artist delivering "A Treatise on Mannequins" is, after all, erotic and seductive). Thus, as in the case of contemporary art, psychoanalysis is necessary as a language to describe Schulz's works, and so is the language of studies on peripherality as an important factor in contemporary culture.

We can now see that the said ambivalence is perhaps the most important for Schulz as an artist and places him at the centre of contemporary literature and art. Although he is a modernist, the crisis of modernism is already clearly visible in his thinking; he (still) believes in the existence of an objective and cognizable world order, but this order falls apart for him every now and then (which comes as no surprise, since Schulz's philosophical teacher was Nietzsche, one of the "masters of suspicion"). What is more, another very important aspect of this disintegration is brought by science, primarily the theory of relativity and quantum mechanics, radically remodelling the hitherto prevailing picture of matter and the cosmos, as well as by the discoveries of psychoanalysis and anthropology. Schulz took great interest in these branches of knowledge, and at the same time noticed the curse of modernist science: namely, that its efforts to build rational, experience-based structures of cognition are paid with ever-progressing destruction of the foundations of prior knowledge of the world and man. Paradoxically, then, it was the world that had to, in a way, mature enough to read Schulz, in order to notice the full relevance of the problems he presents and his precursor role.

Finally, the third ambivalence, which decided Schulz's fate and boosted his worldwide career as an artist symbolising his time. Schulz was born a member of the Jewish community and a resident the Polish-Ukrainian borderlands. With this multinational background, he did not necessarily like to be assigned to very definitive identities. This is why he was closely associated with Galicia's Jewish artistic circles as a painter and drafter, but as an author writing in Polish, he sought friends and allies in the literary circles of Warsaw and naturally nurtured close relations with such Polish writers as Zofia Nałkowska, Stanisław Ignacy Witkiewicz, Tadeusz Breza, and Witold Gombrowicz. His fiancée, Józefina Szelińska, came from a converted Jewish family, and Schulz officially left the Jewish community for her, but chose not to join the Catholic Church, which would have facilitated the wedding. He had Ukrainian friends among the staff in the gymnasium where he taught; incidentally, he met Józefina through one of them.

At the same time, Schulz's writing was greatly impacted by authors from the German language circle, such as Goethe, Nietzsche, Rilke, Thomas Mann, or Kubin. Therefore, Schulz, as a person, thinker, and artist, embodied multiculturalism, yet totalitarian ideologues or even ordinary Polish nationalists forcibly confined him to only one national and social group: the Jews. The fact that it was as a Jew that Schulz was murdered added pathos to these efforts.

At this point, Schulz's work merges with the biographical legend, becoming, quite unexpectedly, the story of an artist who was a Holocaust victim; Schulz-the-universal disappears, leaving us with the image of a tormented Jew waiting for death. Schulz played both roles in his lifetime, but, paradoxically, it was the latter that determined his international fame to a greater extent. As an artist and thinker, he is demanding to his audience, for reading his prose requires not only attention and intellect to recognise and decipher different sign systems, but also erudition to evoke various literary and cultural contexts. Yet as a Jew condemned to death by the Nazis and harnessing his painting talent to postpone his inevitable execution, he requires mainly empathy. The same is true about the legendary novel *Messiah*, which he is said to have written and given to someone outside the ghetto for safekeeping, and which seemed to almost resurface twice (the holder of the manuscript wanted to sell it, but both of his chosen clients died prematurely, leaving no contact to identify him). *Messiah* is paradoxically easier than Schulz's existing stories, because we know almost nothing about it, so it can perform any pathos-filled function in the legend. It can even become the mythical Book of Radiance, but this radiance is unidimensional, as it were; it does not require interpretative effort, because in fact, without knowing the book, we take from this symbol exactly as much as we had put into it.

In 1973, Wojciech Has made a famous film based on Schulz's fiction, *The Hourglass Sanatorium*, which won the Jury Prize at the Cannes Film Festival and the main prize at the Trieste Science+Fiction Festival. The picture is impressive due to its visual abundance and variety. The set designers even built a whole Jewish "borderland town" near Krakow and tried to recreate the noisy market square (which was most difficult because they lacked a sufficient number of Yiddish speakers). At the beginning of the film, its plot is based on the first scenes of the short story. Joseph, the young protagonist, travels to visit a town in which his father is being treated in a sanatorium. In fact, it is as though the father has already died, and the sanatorium only reverses time to revive its former patient. When it comes to interpretation, it may be assumed that it is actually Joseph who receives treatment, because the father exists only in his memory, as if in a dream. However, the father, summoned back, lives more and more intensely, which allows the director to enrich the plot with many motifs from Schulz's other stories, especially "Spring". This is how the entire film becomes a dream of the Jewish past, strange, fantastic, and beautiful at the same time, and in the end, everything is ushered into a grave in a scene truly daring as a cinematic image, in which the camera, lit by the thousands of sepulchral candles, plunges underground.

Perhaps, Has's film deserved all the rewards, for it is perfectly made, but at the same time it shows how the Holocaust theme restricts the meanings of Schulz's prose. The director makes the images of the Jewish past incredibly beautiful, yet they are also difficult to understand, as he cut the original narrative into individual scenes, which, mixed with each other, ceased to be signs in the message

of Schulz's extremely structurally precise tales, and became just an intriguing and poetic "dream of a dead world", to eventually descend into a great collective grave that the entire Jewish culture found itself in. Such approach to Schulzian writing, on the one hand, aestheticizing, on the other, emotional, and combined with ambitions to depict the Jewish past in a reconstructive manner (although, only the external forms of this world are reconstructed, not the complex and universal message of the original stories) has become a common ploy in most theatrical and cinematic adaptations of Schulz. The directors seem not to notice that all the stories were written b e f o r e the war and the extermination of the Jews, and that their function was rather consolatory, as they portray a world constantly reborn in a circle of eternal return, which meant that no death was ever ultimate in it.

What appears as the best material for writers, filmmakers and theatre directors to base their plots about Schulz is exactly that which, for obvious reasons, did not enter his stories at all, namely the last, war-torn years of his life, the Soviet and Nazi terror, and finally the bizarre relationship between the artist and his "patron" Gestapo officer, Felix Landau. Combined with psychomachy, this drama was perfectly understandable and had only one flaw: all the roles were dealt out and punchlines written by life itself. Therefore, the authors who decided to go with it were condemned to incurable imitativeness and never-ending repetition of the same themes and solutions. The most interesting productions based on Schulz's biography or short stories are those whose authors decided to move away from "genre paintings", staging his fiction or Drohobych or Jewish life itself.

Even these last few sentences show that Schulz plays a special role in today's literary, cinematic, and theatrical world; he provides literary material but above all becomes the protagonist of new works. This is one example of his worldwide fame. The preliminary assumption here is to perceive Schulz's work as unfinished and mutilated, although leaning towards closed form clealy enough to make the idea of filling in the empty spaces and completing this creation immensely attractive for artists around the globe. The unfinished work, abandoned by the author at a time when he was just gaining full creative awareness and "sturdiness of hand" as a painter and writer, is a kind of a symbol of the era of great wars, when higher values had to give way to conflicts of material or ideological interests on a world scale. At the same time, Schulz was particularly well- suited to fulfil such a function because he, as a person, was sympathetic to the world and people (Gombrowicz called him "Bruno the angel"), and all of his work was a great celebration of existence in all its shapes and forms.

Let us note how the accents shift here: Schulz becomes a global symbol not as an artist, but as a human being, a victim of his times. This is what lay at the root of the great scandal around the mural paintings from Felix Landau's Drohobych apartment, a scandal that occupied the world media for some time. The paintings were found by the German filmmaker Benjamin Geissler, who

went to Drohobych with his father to make a film about Schulz. The father was a prominent activist in the German expiatory movement, whose members wanted to at least partially redeem the crime of the Holocaust, so at the beginning of the whole story Schulz was important to the filmmakers mainly as a victim of the Shoah. They searched for the mural paintings that Schulz was known to have drawn up on the walls of the children's room in Landau's apartment, and having set to work quite artfully, they found them. It was early 2001. The paintings had to be uncovered from under the layers of paint that allowed them to survive, removed from the walls of the small pantry, which, as it turned out, had served as the children's room during the war, and then given a place to be exhibited. All these actions required activity on the part of diplomats and agents of the Polish and Ukrainian Ministries of Culture, who acted on the matter at a snail's pace indeed. A few months after the paintings were found, news broke that Yad Vashem's representatives from Jerusalem had come to Drohobych, removed the paintings and transported them to Israel, probably in quiet agreement with the local authorities, who saw no reason to deal with the legacy of a Polish-Jewish artist they did not understand.

Only then did a worldwide quarrel start, with the Polish emphasising Schulz's Polishness as a member of the pantheon of national art and literature and the Israelis highlighting his Jewishness and symbolic role as an artist-victim of the Holocaust. Schulz made his way to the headlines of the world's newspapers in the latter role, as the paintings were certainly not great works of art; not a masterpiece stolen for its outstanding aesthetic qualities, but rather a memento from the times of the great crime, a symbol of the artist's fate in a totalitarian system. Yet the media hype stirred around the author eventually played a positive role and brought the figure of Schulz-the-artist to the attention of critics and readers. The decade following the discovery of the paintings was a period in which Schulz and his artworks triumphantly marched through exhibition halls, and his prose through the university auditoriums of many countries around the globe. Perhaps today it is Schulz, and not Gombrowicz or even Miłosz, who is the most widely known and appreciated Polish writer of the 20th century, and the number of articles written on his work in various parts of the world runs over hundreds. If we add the aforementioned peculiar reception of his works and biography by literature, theatre, and cinema, we see a picture of an artist who, more than seventy years after his death, is still winning over new minds with youthful energy. But those who read him now no longer reach for his books as the works of a Holocaust victim (as was probably the case with the first generation of the reading boom in the early 21st century). As a remarkable artist of word and thought, a first-rate intellectual and an author of deep, multifaceted reflection on the world, Schulz offers his audience a much more extraordinary adventure.

The comparison with Kafka may serve a distinctive function here. While in the 1960s or 70s the world spoke of Schulz as an "epigone of Kafka", at the turn

of 2010–2011 in Stockholm there was already an exhibition juxtaposing the two as equivalent personalities: the darker one (Kafka) and the luminous one, full of hope (Schulz).

Finally, a few words about Ukraine, where for many post-war years Schulz played no role whatsoever, seemingly bizarre and alien to the local literary tradition. But the publicity that he has gained since the discovery of the paintings has led to the initiative of Schulz Festivals in Drohobych, hitherto indifferent to Schulz, which, from year to year, play an increasingly important role in the local cultural movement. Wiera Meniok, who initiated these events (along with her prematurely deceased husband Igor), has done so much for Schulz's cause over the past decade that she may be the best proof of how wrong the Israeli side was when its representatives deported the paintings and explained it with the Ukrainians' negligible interest in Schulz. The situation is now changing – thanks to festivals and new translations (Schulz has been retranslated by the prominent contemporary Ukrainian writer Yuri Andrukhovych), and Drohobych's residents, while reading Schulz's descriptions of the town's market square, streets, and urban folklore from years ago, have a chance to see their home anew, from a different perspective, and to identify with it again, even more deeply.

In Poland, Bruno Schulz has been waiting for a critical edition of his works for a really long time, given that proxies of such editions already exist in other languages: German and Japanese. I write "proxies" not to diminish the work of foreign editors, who deserve admiration and gratitude, but to emphasise that in principle, these editions, regardless of the amount of work and effort put into them, will have a *raison d'ètre* only when a reliable critical edition of the writer's works in the original language is created. This is the basis for all foreign equivalents. Yet, to date, there has been no such complete and canonical edition in Poland, as the volume of Schulz's prose I edited, published twice in the "Biblioteka Narodowa" series, intended mainly for students, could not play this role due to being incomplete and lacking a full critical apparatus. It is hard to believe that, since 1989 to the present day, that volume has been the most serious attempt to edit Schulz's prose in Poland.

The fact that słowo/obraz terytoria publishing house has gathered a group of experienced Schulzian scholars, supported by young adepts of editing trained by Professor Stanislaw Rosiek at the University of Gdańsk, to work on a critical edition of Schulz literary and art works is thus a repayment of the tremendous debt that Polish literature and culture have incurred from the humble drawing teacher from the Galician town of Drohobych. Experts in Schulz's work who are collaborating on this critical edition must, above all, take into account all the dramatic aspects of his the extraordinary career of his work, much of it simply uncovered from the ashes. The project requires them to be incredibly responsible and critical. Schulz and his work underwent a trial by fire during the war, which increases the difficulty of establishing the definitive text. There is

also a second dimension to this responsibility. Schulz succeeded in something unusual: while remaining a private man and building the world depicted in his prose from elements of everyday reality in a borderland town, close to ordinary experience, he was at the same time able to construct a cosmogony relating to mankind's universal myths; his characters both reflected his relatives and friends and tried to fulfil their vocation to the roles of mythical heroes. This forces the editors to pay special attention to creating a system of footnotes and references explaining the meanings of the various words used in the texts and the events that constitute each story.

Yet the work of editing Schulz also brings a unique satisfaction – not only was he an outstanding artist, but also a man of great heart, who served the Good in a dimension that is as metaphysical as it is purely practical; it is difficult to imagine Schulz's fan as an aggressive chauvinist or terrorist acting in the name of religious or any other fanaticism. Therefore, his editors may rest assured that their efforts are honourable and that by dedicating their time to the author of *Cinnamon Shops* they certainly serve a good cause[1].

Translated from Polish by Marta Kurek

1 This text heavily relies on my article "Schulzomania?" (*Radar* 2012, no. 6, pp. 3-7).

Jerzy Kandziora: Jerzy Ficowski on Schulz – Between Reconstruction and Rhetoric (*Reflections on Regions of the Great Heresy*)[1]

1

Whenever the role of a biographer, a commentator of a work of an exceptional artist or writer is taken on by another remarkable writer, we – who attempt to "read" this role – are obliged to be particularly sensitive to the specific rhetoric employed in such a situation. In this case, rhetoric should be understood as a way of shaping the artistic text – that is, not merely as a reconstruction of some objective truth, embedded in sources and testimonies, but also as an original story, an artistic statement in its own right.

Commentators of Jerzy Ficowski's writing on Bruno Schulz emphasize the persistent, diligent detective effort the author of *Regions of the Great Heresy* put into discovering and saving all of Schulz's works that were not devoured by the war – as well as into writing his biography[2]. The *ratio* between the biographer's and commentator's respective activities is crucial here. I will, of course, also look into this reconstruction, but what seems equally important is the nature of the poetics of *Regions of the Great Heresy*, the recognition of the traditions and conventions that are prominent in Ficowski's first work on Schulz, and establishing which elements of Schulz's aesthetics are particularly close to Ficowski's poetic sensitivity[3] and allow us to read *Regions* as a kind of guide to Ficowski's own kind of poetry.

Ficowski's opening confession about Schulz, regarding the book's genesis, is quite instructive here. "Although I did not know Schulz personally and am not

1 The article was written as part of a research project financed by the National Science Center under decision number DEC-2011/03/B/HS2/04352.

2 See among others: J. Jarzębski, "Krytyk miłujący: Jerzy Ficowski jako badacz twórczości Schulza", [in:] idem, *Prowincja Centrum. Notatki do Schulza*, Kraków: Wydawnictwo Literackie 2005, p. 174; idem, "Jerzy Ficowski", entry in: *Słownik schulzowski*, red. W. Bolecki, J. Jarzębski, S. Rosiek, Gdańsk: słowo/obraz terytoria 2006, p. 115–117; A. Słucki, *Księga i autentyk*, "Twórczość" 1967, no. 10, p. 125.

3 Ficowski's debut volume *Ołowiani żołnierze* was published in 1948, an extremely important year in the author's Schulzological explorations.

engaged in either literary theory or literary criticism, I persisted in my resolve to write *Regions of the Great Heresy*. My desire was not a new one. It had emerged immediately after my initial delight with *Cinnamon Shops* [in 1942 – JK]. My first sudden thought was to thank this writer – previously unknown to me, and about whom I knew nothing – and to express to him my appreciation for his existence" (RGH 25)[4].

Next comes a description of an attempt to contact Schulz by letter in 1942.

We learn about a letter marked with, as Ficowski writes, "all the enthusiasm of an eighteen-year-old", containing expressions of his greatest admiration, as well as a sentence about "the greatest writer of our time". It seems, though, the letter never reached the addressee. Ficowski found out about Schulz's death in the spring of 1943[5]. *Regions* became, as the author confesses, a response to the event, "an irrational act of reader's gratitude" of someone who, after reading, imagined Schulz as a "kind of genius who sometimes creates great religious systems, or a magician and master of black arts, whose predecessors were burnt at medieval stakes" (RGH 26).

This matter and this confession are important because they confirm that *Regions of the Great Heresy* could not be a cold and distant book. Even if the material of this work developed so much over the years – it transformed from a short essay, "some thirty-odd pages in manuscript" (RGH 27), written by an eighteen-year-old in 1943[6] into a work that contained 248 pages in its first edition – it

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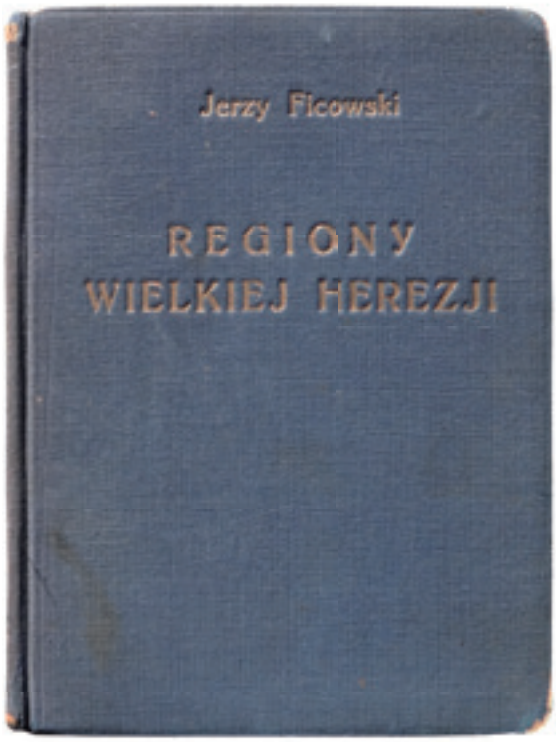
4 J. Ficowski, *Regions of the Great Heresy. Bruno Schulz: A Biographical Portrait*, translated and edited by Theodosia Robertson, New York and London: W. W. Norton and Company 2003, p. 25. Quotations from this source are further marked with the abbreviation "RGH" and a page number.

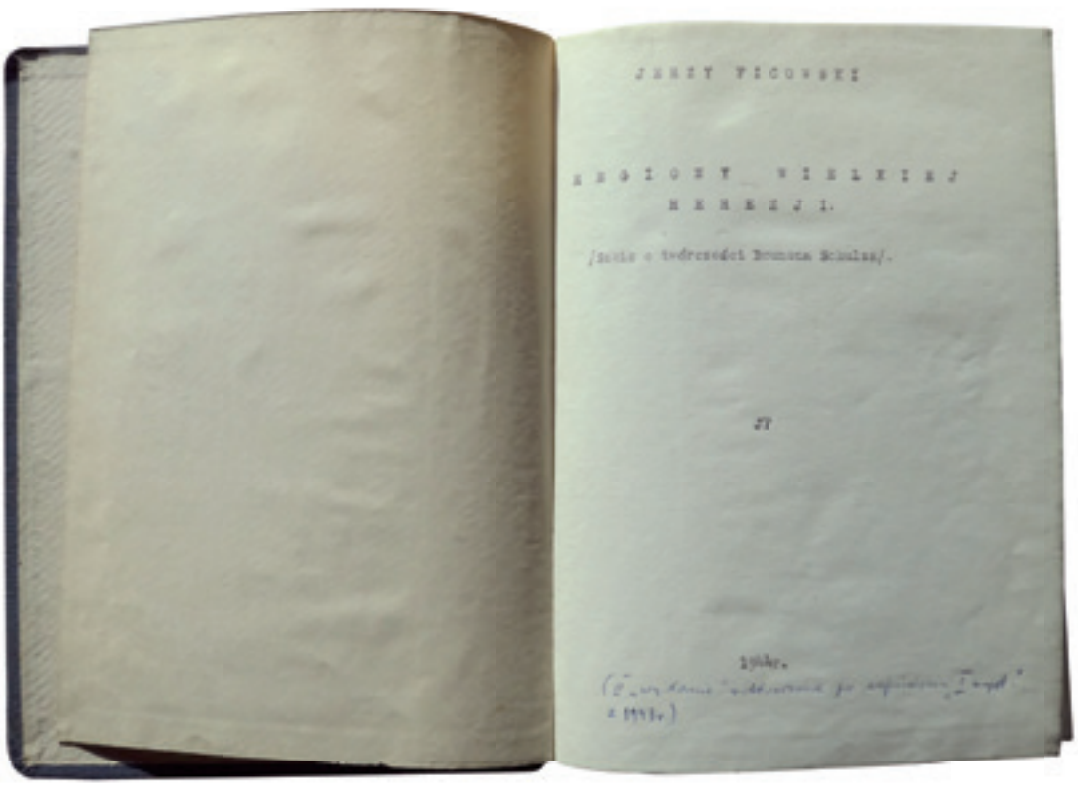
5 We read, in a letter from Jerzy Ficowski to his sister Krystyna, typewritten during the war: "As you know, about a month ago I sent a letter to Bruno Schulz. Since I addressed it to Drohobych (Galicia), I expected that the letter would take a week to 3 weeks to be delivered. Could you imagine that 3 days ago Mr Pleśniewicz (the friend of Schulz to whom he addressed the letters) called the chamberlain's friends to inform that Bruno Schulz died the previous day [!]. I am devastated! We won't see a talent of this kind anytime soon. Dadek [Adam Pawlikowski] has not yet learned the details of his death, but any day now he will see Pleśniewicz or his friends (the family of one of your friends, Dadek's "fiancée") and find out. I wonder if he [Schulz] received my letter before he died. I do not wish this to sound weird, but I think that if he read my letter before his death, it must have made him happy as it was written with great and sincere admiration. Or maybe he did manage to reply, and I will still receive a letter from him?" (letter from J. Ficowski to K. Ficowska, no date, with a later, handwritten note: "(1942) / letter from J. Ficowski", typescript in the Ossolineum collection: Correspondence of Jerzy Ficowski. Letters, notebooks and copies of letters to the following, files A–Ł, no. 165/83 et seq.). This later dating of Ficowski's own letter is questionable. After all, he writes in *Regions* that he learned about Schulz's death in the spring of 1943 (RGH 25), and there is a sentence in the quoted letter that also suggests the spring of 1943: "I will probably start work on Monday, I will waste the most beautiful days of spring". Thereby, the first information about the date of Schulz's death that reached Ficowski seems to be quite late and imprecise (in fact, Schulz died on November 19, 1942) and that Ficowski's letter to Schulz was sent after the writer's death.

6 A handwritten copy titled *Regiony wielkiej herezji (Szkic o twórczości Brunona Schulza)* [Regions of the Great Heresy (Sketch on the Work of Bruno Schulz)], dated "1944", a recreated version of the

Jerzy Ficowski – shooter "Wrak" [Wreck] from the regiment Baszta [Tower], Home Army, Mokotów, 1944. Jerzy Ficowski's Archive, deposited at the University of Warsaw Library



The first version of *Regions of the Great Heresy*, 1944 – the second "edition", reconstructed after the first edition from 1943 was lost. Jerzy Ficowski's Archive, deposited at the University of Warsaw Library



still remains a very personal book. It is situated in the very centre of Ficowski's writing sensitivity and enters into complex relationships with both his poetry, which in turn took inspiration from Schulz's prose, and the trend of popular, fictional literature. This trend also shaped the narrative about Schulz, determining its dramaturgy, resulting in extraordinary popularity, and this paradoxical phenomenon – a writer of the absolute artistic avant-garde of the interwar period, about whom Polish critical treatises were and are still being written, was placed by Ficowski in the very centre of the consciousness of educated Poles, and even, to some extent, in the Polish mass imagination.

2

Although *Regiony wielkiej herezji* (English translation: *Regions of the Great Heresy*), published in 1967, used a subtitle *Szkice o życiu i twórczości Brunona Schulza* [Sketches on the Life and Work of Bruno Schulz], the book seems to be rather homogeneous, unlike Ficowski's next "schulzological" work, *Okolice sklepów cynamonowych* (1986), about which the author himself wrote the following in his preface: "What I have included in this book are notes from only one stage of this meandering [following the footsteps of Schulz – JK], but full of various observations"[7].

Regions was hardly a mere collection of "notes". *Rzecz o Brunonie Schulzu* [A Thing About Bruno Schulz] was the subtitle Ficowski gave the text in the third edition (1992) as if correcting the elusiveness of the original subtitle. Published for the first time eleven years after the thaw of 1956, twenty-five years after Ficowski discovered Schulz, it was designed as a complete text in itself.

The compositional idea of the whole project is as important here as the poetics of subsequent individual chapters. As Ficowski's first concise publication about Schulz, the book was supposed to provide a complete and coherent image of the author of *The Cinnamon Shops*. An image complete and systematic despite the contrasting nature of reality – despite numerous biographical gaps, and the loss of manuscripts, letters and Schulz's artworks. While reading *Regions*, we can notice the presence of the imperative of combining the biography and the work, the need to indicate and describe the relations between Schulz, his work and the world surrounding him, and even the "smuggling" of certain features of poetics and imagination through discreet paraphrases. In this respect, it is worth taking a closer look at the narrative of Ficowski's book.

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lost text from 1943, can currently be found in the Manuscript Department of the Library of the University of Warsaw, file 158.

7 J. Ficowski, *Okolice sklepów cynamonowych*, Kraków, Wrocław: Wydawnictwo Literackie 1986, p. 7.

Throughout it, we can observe biographical chapters regularly interspersing with the interpretive ones, devoted mostly to Schulz's poetics and philosophy of writing. The writer's story begins with a biographical chapter, "Bruno, Son of Jacob", and takes us to 1918, the end of the "happy epoch" (RGH 42), marked by the father's illness and the end of his work as a merchant, the family leaving the house in Drohobych (1910), the death of the father and the burning of the house (1915), and finally World War I. Ficowski emphasizes that the time of the mother's caretaking and the period of the father's illness are not included in Schulz's mythology.

Instead, we have two chapters devoted to a reconstruction of Schulz's mythology ("The Book, or Childhood Regained") and reflections on time in Schulz's works ("Schulzian Time"). The first one shows the entire uniqueness of Schulz's image of childhood as am "age of genius", which contains the "iron capital" of imagination, with the Book, the Authentic, located in the centre. It may take the form of the last pages of an illustrated weekly magazine saved from destruction. The power of the Book as a source of childhood myths lies in its visual experience, in its setting in ordinariness, and sometimes even campness – for example in advertisements in magazines that suddenly "take on magical power and poetic content" (RGH 75). The chapter devoted to time emphasizes the essentially compensatory nature of Schulz's writing, which opposes the dictate of real time. It activates alternative time, that is subordinated to psychological needs, and which characterizes heretical trends, "side streets", and volatile density of time, especially in "Sanatorium Under the Sign of the Hourglass", the "most monothematic" story in this respect (RGH 85).

The following two chapters: "Return to School" and "The Prehistory and Origin of *Cinnamon Shops*", are again of biographical nature. The first one characterizes Schulz as a teacher of drawing at the Drohobych middle school (where he worked since 1924), and provides information on Schulz's early creative activity, especially in visual arts, and about his family situation, which, like his career as a teacher, was rather destructive to his work as a writer. The chapter on the genesis of *The Cinnamon Shops* describes Schulz's correspondence with Władysław Riff and Debora Vogel, and their artistic dialogues that inspired Schulz; it formulates a hypothesis about the initiating role their lost (or destroyed) letters played in the emergence of respective texts. Particularly detailed is the description (in the form of postscripts to the letters to Debora Vogel) of the very birth of *The Cinnamon Shops*[8], published thanks to the recommendation of Zofia Nałkowska

8 In the Library of the University of Warsaw, in Jerzy Ficowski's archive, we can find a manuscript of the Polish translation of Rachela Auerbach *Nie dosnute nicie. Garść wspomnień: zebrane wiadomości o życiu i twórczości Debory Vogel i Brunona Schulza oraz ich zagładzie z rąk niemieckich* (Manuscripts Department, Library of the University of Warsaw, file 121c), which contains the following passage:

and advocated by Rachela Auerbach (RGH 63). Ficowski extensively reconstructs Schulz's literary dialogue with Vogel. In this chapter, he also establishes the chronology of Schulz's work, pointing out that his short stories from *Sanatorium Under the Sign of the Hourglass*, published after *The Cinnamon Shops*, were in fact his earliest works, written in the 1920s, during Schulz's communication with Riff or shortly after the latter's death.

Once again returning to the content of the work, the chapter "Phantoms and Reality" explores the elements of actual topography and physiognomy of the inhabitants of Drohobych in Schulz's mythologized world. During his stay in Drohobych in 1965, Ficowski learnt about the extraordinary faithfulness of Schulz's metaphors to the realities of the city and its surroundings. Ficowski calls this *modus operandi* – grounding the myth in the logic of reality, in the real properties of beings, objects and places – "Schulz's mythology". The chapter offers many examples of mythologization in the sphere of imagery. It ends with a consideration of the protective function of humour in Schulz's mythologies and a distinction between the worlds of Schulz and Kafka, the former of which brings a compensating myth that alleviates the horror of existence, while the latter suggests a descent to "metaphysical terror from which there could be no return" (RGH 102).

In the chapter "Excursions Abroad", the biography discusses the 1930s. We observe the expansion or a renewal of Schulz's recognition in the literary world caused by his writing debut (Nałkowska, Witkacy, Breza, "Wiadomości Literackie"). The critical reception of *The Cinnamon Shops* (1933) is discussed, as well as the psychological situation of the writer who, after a successful debut, wants to write something new, but his teaching job limits his possibilities. Ficowski lists Schulz's new works, written during his vacation from school duties in 1936, during which he also worked on reviews and prepared for printing the text of *Sanatorium Under the Sign of the Hourglass* (1937), mainly composed out of old pieces. The novel *Messiah* is also mentioned. Events from the private life of the writer included, among other things, the death of his mother (1931), his broken engagement with Józefina Szelińska (1937) – who is never mentioned by name – and his trips to Stockholm (1936) and Paris (1938).

"The 'postscripts' that followed one another in these letters were so stunningly interesting and original that [Debora Vogel] gave them to me to read". Except for this account, the beginnings of *The Cinnamon Shops* are acknowledged in the lost correspondence by a fragment of a letter, firstly mentioned by Ficowski in "Epistolografia Brunona Schulza", [in:] B. Schulz, *Proza*, Kraków: Wydawnictwo Literackie 1964, p. 542. In this letter, addressed in 1936 to Romana Halpern, we read: "*The Cinnamon Shops* were slowly coming into being in my letters. They were mostly addressed to Mrs Debora Vogel". Also, the retrospective references to these letters and former contacts included in Vogel's late letters to Schulz from 1938, as well as Schulz's mention in a letter to the critic Andrzej Pleśniewicz from 1936, indicate the origins of Schulz's work (see also J. Ficowski, "Słowo wstępne", [in:] B. Schulz: *Księga listów*, collected and edited by J. Ficowski, Kraków: Wydawnictwo Literackie 1975, p. 6, 8–9).

The penultimate chapter – "Magic and Definition" – is another dive into Schulz's imagination, this time focused on metamorphoses, and the protean form of matter in his prose. Ficowski emphasizes the non-oneiric, always *quasi*-rationalized nature of these changes, which Schulz describes in cause-and-effect relationships and in scientific terms ("fermentation", "decomposition", "precipitation" and so on). Ficowski distinguishes various stages of these transformations, people's metamorphoses, and half-transitions, and also focuses on Schulz's literariness, its poetic nature and definition, which give the "new myths" the appearance of treatises. Finally, he emphasizes the self-referential dimension of the father figure, in whose shop, as in Schulz's work, the multicoloured matter and the discipline of terms and procedures coexist, creating "magic and definition". This is the final interpretive formula of the analytical current of Ficowski's book.

The last chapter – "The Last Fairy Tale of Bruno Schulz" – returns to biography, covering the period of Nazi occupation until Schulz's death. The writer is characterised as hypersensitive, and defenceless against captivity and aggression. Subsequently, the chapter discusses the following aspects: the period of Soviet occupation, Schulz's teaching work, his artworks commissioned by propaganda officials, the officials' refusal to publish Schulz's works as inconsistent with the zeitgeist, and then – the growing threat under the German occupation: involuntary artworks made for the Gestapo officer Landau and by the orders of the Drohobych Gestapo, cataloguing confiscated book collections, news of the death of friends – Anna Płockier and Marek Zwillich – in a mass execution, Schulz's resettlement to the ghetto, planning a departure to Warsaw on falsified papers, and his death at the hands of a Gestapo officer in the so-called "wild action" on November 19, 1942.

When reading *Regions of the Great Heresy*, we are constantly moving – I tried to depict this in the above summary – between the matter of the biography, presented in a specific way, and the content of Schulz's work, subjected to deep exegesis. This alternation of biographical parts in which Schulz's life is reconstructed with the narrative about the artistic language, the world of imagination, and the Schulz myth, the rules of which are often discussed, echoes something fundamental to Schulz's fiction – the oscillation between the specific material, the matter of events, the vegetative sphere and the regions of fantasy emerging from them. At the highest level of generality, such a composition of *Regions* can be a reflection of Schulz's metaphor of the Book-Authentic. A book made of pages of a destroyed illustrated magazine, filled with advertisements ("The Book") or Rudolf's "stamp book" (*markownik* in "Wiosna") will be the seed source of fantastic worlds. Of course, in *Regions* Ficowski does not transform Schulz's biography into a fairy tale; this comparison has a limited scope. But two components (the empiricism of biography and the world of myth) and two attitudes (a collector and bookkeeper of memory and an exegete of myths and a poet) coexist in Ficowski's book, which becomes a constant turning of the pages of reality and the legend inherent in literary work.

This is the first compositional echo of Schulz's artistic philosophy resonating in Ficowski's book. However, I would like to complicate this image a bit and perhaps take it beyond the metaphor of the Book-Authentic and move towards more philological considerations, related also to the contexts of history and literature. I would like to distinguish two elements in Ficowski's construction that seem crucial for his attitude towards Schulz in *Regions of the Great Heresy*. The first would be the reconstruction and recovery of Schulz's biography, despite history, and the second is the poetry of explication of Schulz's world, which, at the same time, would be defining the principles of Ficowski's poetic imagination. In other words, it can be expressed as the co-presence of a story that contrasts decay, loss, and confusion with the very traditional coherence of the presented world, a kind of *vie romancée* (although, of course, Ficowski's book is not a biography in the strict sense), and a deeply interiorized "poetic exercise" that was also important for Ficowski as a programmatic statement. Of course, in both cases, we are dealing with the same saving gesture of extraordinary power Ficowski performed.

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Let us start with the reconstruction of Schulz's biography in *Regions*. How is this reconstruction carried out? How does the need to rebuild Schulz's world manifest itself? To explain this precisely, I will quote a later text by the author of *Regions*. In Ficowski's study *W poszukiwaniu partnera kongenialnego*, written in 1992, the unveiling of two newly discovered letters from Bruno Schulz dated 1934 – to Rudolf Ottenbreit, a professor of Polish literature and a teacher at a middle school in Rzeszów – is accompanied by a reflection that must truly move someone who carefully and repeatedly read *Regions of the Great Heresy*. Ficowski writes: "His [Schulz's] biography, fragments of which I have been collecting for half a century, has largely fallen into oblivion along with all those relatives, friends, confidants, allies, brothers in art… Only fragments have been found. Therefore, we do not know how many people he trusted, who he tried to trust as a congenial partner, and how many disappointments he experienced during these epistolary queries, full of false hopes. […] Despite the passage of so many years, lost details and faint fragments of his biography are still coming to light, and from them emerge figures close to Schulz, including those about whom we knew nothing. One of such people was Rudolf Ottenbreit"[9].

This is the language of reflection on Schulz that is absent in *Regions of the Great Heresy*. The language of biography which does not hide missing links and is aware of its incompleteness. It suggests that, despite previous searches, the biography

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9 J. Ficowski, "W poszukiwaniu partnera kongenialnego", [in:] *Czytanie Schulza. Materiały międzynarodowej sesji naukowej "Bruno Schulz – w stulecie urodzin i w pięćdziesięciolecie śmierci"*, ed. J. Jarzębski, Kraków: Instytut Filologii Polskiej UJ 1994, p. 28–29.

composed of fragments is not final; it seems that subsequent discoveries – letters, people, "congenial partners" – could give it shapes, landmarks, and emotional vectors different from those previously "established" by the biographer, or at least significantly modified. It can be said that only against the background of these relatively late reflections Ficowski wrote at a time when his most important works on Schulz had already been published, one can understand the significant internal coherence of the biographical current of Ficowski's first book. While the former was written in the poetics of "filling space", the sketch, written many years later, departs from that convention, focusing instead on what we did not know about Schulz's life, employing the poetics of "information deficiency". It proves that we can also consider Schulz's biography as incomplete, partial, or fragmentary.

This is why Ficowski's confession is so touching. The text allows us to strengthen our reading intuitions and realize that a full biography is a convention, especially in the case of Schulz's fate, and that we can look for these elements in *Regions* that empower the coherence of the world and biography, that in a way mask – or perhaps one should say: rebuild – the gaps in space and time caused by the Holocaust that devoured Schulz, his manuscripts, and letters, written mainly to other victims.

Regions of the Great Heresy is not a biographical story. There are no fictional dialogues, no reconstructions, and no novel conventions in full swing, using direct speech. And yet, let's face it, a certain fictionalization of biography comes to the fore in the biographical parts. It results from Ficowski's reluctance to use footnotes and, to a large extent, the implementation of marked quotations from sources, primarily letters and accounts obtained in the early period of research (the late 1940s) from Drohobych students or colleagues of Schulz who survived the war. Some of these accounts were embedded in the narrative without quotation marks, as hidden quotes[10]. As a result, the texture of the narrative may give the impression of a fictionalized story:

"Once, in the second or third class, when given a homework assignment in which the pupils were free to choose their topic, Schulz filled up an entire notebook with a kind of a fairy-tale story about a horse. Amazed at the extraordinary composition, the Polish instructor showed the notebook to Joseph Staromiejski, director of the gymnasium. Realizing the value of the composition, Staromiejski shared it with his colleagues" (RGH 37).

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10 The names of people who contributed to *Regions of the Great Heresy* are mentioned at the end of the first chapter titled "Znalazłem autentyk (zamiast wstępu)". The number of these names changed: in edition 1 (1967) – 51, in edition 2 (1975) – 55, in edition 3 (1992) – 54 and the formula "and many others". In another edition (J. Ficowski, *Regiony wielkiej herezji i okolice. Bruno Schulz i jego mitologia* – op. cit.), which contains *Regions of the Great Heresy*, Ficowski no longer includes this list of names, contenting himself with collective acknowledgements.

"The entire household was permeated by a strange and gloomy aura: three old women pacing like cats, its cluttered length and width in soft carpet slippers, appearing unexpectedly at any moment in every nook and corner of the large flat. The depressing atmosphere of this impoverished home impressed every visitor. Its silence was broken only by Hania's nervous attacks or meowing of cats. It was a quiet without isolation, one threatened by continual anxiety" (RGH 48).

"He was commonly considered to be a person who was good 'to the point of being ridiculous'. An egoist, Schulz nevertheless did not know how to be neutral toward human injustice. Himself sunk in poverty, he never refused alms to a beggar. He once even gave a beggar five zlotys" (RGH 53).

"Above and beyond these voluntary activities, he had – in addition to his classes – numerous obligations of the most boring kind. He gritted his teeth in hopeless despair when he was overloaded with many hours of handicraft work classes, and at the same time had to prepare and give specialized lectures, such as the one he gave in Stryj in 1932 titled *Artistic Formation in Cardboard and Its Application in School*" (RGH 53).

It seems that in this type of narrative, the elements of reality (the mention of director Staromiejski, the title of Schulz's paper) are intertwined with elements of characterization, the citation or source of which becomes unclear due to the lack of quotation marks, bringing them closer to the convention of the novel ("He gritted his teeth in hopeless despair", "He once even gave a beggar five zlotys", a suggestive characterization of Schulz's apartment). To a greater extent than it might seem, these *quasi*-novelistic fragments, resembling the point-of-view technique, perhaps even close to indirect speech, have their prototype in witness accounts. Most of these accounts have been preserved in Jerzy Ficowski's archive and can today be compared with the text of *Regions of the Great Heresy*. I will quote two of them to show how the author processed the material.

This is a passage from a letter from Michał Chajes, Schulz's friend: "What stands out among the memories of his childhood and school years is his friendliness, as he was always happy to help his friends with, for example, drawings and homework, which earned him the general respect of the class. When, in one of the first grades of middle school, the class was given an assignment to write a fairy tale about a horse, Szulc [*sic*] wrote the length of a notebook. It must have been something outstanding there since the teacher thought it was worth showing the principal of the middle school, Staromiejski, who took the notebook as a kind of curiosity, which itself had already been widely commented on in the class and throughout the whole school"[11].

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11 Letter from M. Chajes to J. Ficowski of June 18, 1948, typescript in the Ossolineum collection: Correspondence of Jerzy Ficowski [hereinafter: Correspondence...], file Ce-Cze (no. 134/80 et seq.).

Another passage comes from Emil Lewandowski's letter: "I was a peer and a close friend of his nephew who lived with Szulc [*sic*] in one apartment. I remember the thick silence and dimness of their apartment – the household members in felt slippers outdid the cats with the noiselessness of their movements"[12].

The way Ficowski makes fragments of accounts function as a larger whole often does not even consist in telling them completely in "his own words", but in a certain narrativisation, in placing them in a psychological action, in a story, in a broader image of Schulz. Another example is the description of Schulz's meeting with Zofia Nałkowska, which paved the way for him to publish *The Cinnamon Shops*. Initially, in the first two editions of *Regions* (1967 and 1975), the following description was included:

"It was all about Zofia Nałkowska. One day, a shy and startled Schulz visited her in Warsaw. The presence of a few more people took away the very rest of his composure, so he asked the writer for half an hour just for himself, alone. Nałkowska read the fragment, then – delighted and moved – supported the cause and led to the publication of *The Shops* in 'Rój' in December 1933"[13].

In 1985, Ficowski received a letter from Alicia Giangrande, an Argentinian painter who spent her youth in pre-war Warsaw[14], showing the real course of the event, in fact revealing Ficowski's earlier "fictionalization". The author included this account in place of the previous fragment in the third edition of *Regions* (1992). It significantly modifies the situation originally constructed by Ficowski. Schulz gave his manuscript to Nałkowska to read. There is no mention of a "private" conversation here, nor is there any mention of the presence of any witnesses in Nałkowska's house. Schulz, however, exhibited a surprising determination at a party at Róża Gross's guesthouse, when he asked Nałkowska's friend, Magdalena Gross, to make an appointment with the writer on the same day. "His voice had a pleading tone, but at the same time was very strong"[15] – Giangrande recalls.

In a sense, one story replaced another. In this case, I am not tracing factual accuracy (Giangrande's account obviously has an advantage over the earlier version), but rather the psychological dramaturgy that connects both variants of

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12 Letter from E. Lewandowski to J. Ficowski of July 10, 1948, manuscript in the Ossolineum collection: Correspondence..., file L–Lips (no. 61/79 et seq.).

13 J. Ficowski, *Regiony wielkiej herezji. Szkice o życiu i twórczości Brunona Schulza*, wyd. 1, Kraków: Wydawnictwo Literackie 1967.

14 Letter from A. Giangrande to J. Ficowski dated April 16, 1985, manuscript in the Ossolineum collection: Correspondence..., file G–Gró (no. 61/79 et seq.). Giangrande's account of Schulz was previously published in Rita Gombrowicz's book *Gombrowicz en Argentine. Temoignages et documents 1939–1963* (Paris 1984).

15 J. Ficowski, *Regiony wielkiej herezji. Rzecz o Brunonie Schulzu*, wyd. 3, poprawione i uzupełnione, Warszawa: Słowa 1992, p. 83.

the visit at Nałkowska's. Both images – of the shy and startled Schulz and the determined Schulz – place the writer in a certain narrative[16].

In the subsequent biographical chapters of *Regions,* a series of episodes are combined into a story in a way that does not raise questions about what happened "in between". In such writing, there are no formulas such as: "at this point the trace ends", "we don't know what Schulz was doing during those six months, who he was in contact with", "we find our protagonist in 1936 in Paris" and so on. What I am talking about here is the feature of narrative that does not create questions about gaps and blanks in the biography, but develops into a coherent whole, with a certain novelistic fluidity, suggesting a continuum without gaps or significant disruptions.

Observing Ficowski's construction of a biographical narrative from other people's accounts, we must recall the tradition of the great realist novel, of which the author of *Regions of the Great Heresy* was an admirer. In particular, he was a passionate reader of Charles Dickens throughout his life[17]. The tradition of Polish realist prose of the 19th century was also imporant to Ficowski's writing sensitivity, including works by such authors as Klemens Junosza-Szaniawski (who was called by one of the pre-war critics a "Polish Dickens")[18], Józef Ignacy Kraszewski[19], and Ignacy Chodźko.

Paradoxically, the story about Schulz's life, the reveller of Polish interwar fiction, is governed by the axiology of the traditional narrative of the realist novel, outlining the framework of biography, which should not go beyond a certain

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16 Interestingly, the 1948 memory of Paweł Zieliński, the husband of Magdalena Gross (see Bruno Schulz. *Listy, fragmenty. Wspomnienia o pisarzu*, zebrał i oprac. J. Ficowski, Kraków, Wrocław: Wydawnictwo Literackie 1984, p. 65–66), quoting her account on this subject, is closer to the memory of Alicia Giangrande than to Ficowski's version, which would confirm that the original fragment contained an element of quite free "psychologization".

17 Ficowski's bibliography includes several articles devoted to Dickens: *Stulecie "Opowieści wigilijnych"*, "Gazeta Ludowa" 1946, No. 310, p. 4; *Charles Dickens*, "Młodzi idą" 1948, No. 9, p. 5; *Dickens w Polsce*, "Nowa Kultura" 1962, no. 49, p. 5; *Dickens w polskim dyliżansie*, "Przekrój" 1988, no. 2223 and 2224. Moreover, Dickensian motifs appear in Ficowski's texts (the poems *Niejaki Dickens* and *Sen bezsenności*, the song *Klub Pickwicka*). In Ficowski's archive, we can find a calendar in the form of a notebook "Mostostal Warszawa SA" for 1998. In the calendar under August 9, 1998, the author left a note from his stay in Obory: "I was reading the wonderful *Klub Pickwicka* for the hundredth time in my bed…" (Manuscripts Department, Library of the University of Warsaw, file 26).

18 J. Kułaga, *Zapomniany polski Dickens*, "Kuryer Literacko-Naukowy" 1937, no. 18 of April 26, p. 4–5 (supplement to IKC 1937, no. 114). In Jerzy Ficowski's archive (Manuscript Cabinet BUW, file 143) there is a clip of this article and an incomplete clip of an article by Julian Krzyżanowski *Artyzm pisarza „z płowym wąsem" (Słowo o Klemensie Junoszy)*, "Kuryer Literacko-Naukowy" 1938, no. 16 of April 17, p. 4–5 (supplement to IKC 1938, no. 107), and Ficowski's handwirtten notes regarding the positivist short story writer and novelist. Klemens Junosza is another, next to Ignacy Chodźko and Franciszek Kostrzewski, the hero of the poem "Ballada o trzech mociumpańskich".

19 See J. Ficowski, *Józef Ignacy Kraszewski*, "Młodzi idą" 1948, no. 12, p. 11; idem, preface to: J. I. Kraszewski, *Chata za wsią*, Warszawa: Ludowa Spółdzielnia Wydawnicza 1956.

world of values, should not autonomize threads, break away from the unifying fictionalization and, at times, somewhat didactic and moralistic auras. It is impossible to understand the novelisation in Schulz's biography, the kind of cognitive optimism, and a certain note of didacticism, without remembering this old school of Polish and European fiction, which influenced Ficowski's sensitivity from his early years. For the same reason, some of the takes in the reports about Schulz included in letters collected by Ficowski have been excluded and right now are gathered in the archive of the author of the *Regions*. To appreciate Ficowski's biographical choices, it is worth to mention here these testimonies, detached from specific genre axiology, written as independent, unbiased observations of eyewitnesses that arose in those people who knew Schulz personally and had no reason to discredit a figure close to them or to smooth their memory of him.

For example, the story of Michał Chajes, Schulz's friend, is characterized by verve, a specific vigour of memories that are not typical of other parts of *Regions*. This dense, factual text from 1948 was certainly greatly helpful to Ficowski. It can be called the report of a close neighbour who knows almost everything about the family. In the original, the factual nature of this story borders on bluntness, maybe even gossip, but these are the touches of reality that lend it the value of authenticity. They, of course, had to be weakened in the literary development. Chajes openly writes about the diseases of Schulz's family members (syphilis of Hoffman, the husband of Bruno's sister, Hania, as a probable reason for his suicide, and the tuberculosis of the engineer Izydor Schulz). The presentation of characters is made with complete directness and visuality:

[About Bruno:] "By nature – like his father – he was skinny and physically underdeveloped, excessively thin. He had¬ a fallen breast, a terrible pallor or yellowness of the complexion, an elongated head, sunken bony cheeks, in which large black eyes glowed with some incredible light" [20]; [about her mother and father:] "The roundness and plumpness of her shapes contrasted remarkably with the 'spiderness' of her husband Jakub" [21]; [about women:] "Szulc [*sic*] had three youthful 'crushes', but without any sensual basis in the everyday use of this word. The first was Mila Lustig, wife of a lawyer, murdered by the Germans, the next was her cousin, Tynka Kupferberg, married to Sternbach, currently living in Cracow, and finally, Fryderyka Wagner, married to Wiesenberg, wife of a doctor, currently living in Palestine"[22].

The factual clarity and descriptive bluntness of Chajes's account obviously did not fit the narrative of *Regions*, which is why Ficowski reformulated or softened

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20 M. Chajes, letter to J. Ficowski of June 7, 1948 (attachment, p. 1), typescript in the Ossolineum collection: Correspondence..., file Ce–Cze (no. 134/80 et seq.).

21 M. Chajes, letter to J. Ficowski of June 18, 1948.

22 Ibidem.

them. A similar thing happened with the topic of Schulz's masochism – present, of course, in *Regions* – which is most extensively illuminated by the account of another friend of Schulz, Tadeusz Lubowiecki (Izydor Friedman). However, Ficowski does not refer to this part of Friedman's memories and uses only the information about the last months of Schulz's life. Friedman was the key witness there. On the orders of the Judenrat and the local Gestapo, Schulz and Friedman catalogued the book collections confiscated by the occupiers. Schulz was shot in one of the streets of Drohobycz in front of Friedman, who then buried him.

The thread of masochism in Izydor Friedman's account sheds interesting light on the pre-war small-town ambience, extracting the witness himself from the merely thanatic stream of his memories. It shows him as a colourful character, and, above all, offers detail on masochism in the biography of Schulz himself. Friedman writes to Ficowski: "I am an old, obdurate bachelor and – if you will excuse the expression – a womanizer. I was once considered one of the *jeunesse dorée* of a provincial town [...] and at that stage I came into contact with Sch.[ulz]. Since, apart from women and, I emphasize, whores, I had a keen interest in literature (of course, as a consumer) and art (as a member of aestheticizing intelligentsia). We became very close friends shortly after we met in 1935. Bruno had unlimited trust in me and, sensing that I was – I flatter myself – quite intelligent and well-read, he allowed me to gain some insight into his private life, especially his sexual life. […] I am convinced that you will use the material very carefully"[23]. Ficowski used Friedman's account of Schulz's masochism only to a small extent, in the essay "Feretron z pantofelkiem" in the book *Okolice sklepów cynamonowych*. Thus, Schulz became, one might say, a virtual masochist in *Regions*, mainly a fetishist. And one more quote from Ficowski's archive, from the memoirs of a Drohobych teacher, Kazimierz Hoffmann, a young friend of Schulz, who reports on the most dramatic period of Schulz's life, when he was dependent on Felix Landau, the local Gestapo's official for Jewish affairs: "Brunon painted 'al fresco' in a palace where the head of the Gestapo lived. Plaster was removed from the walls and ceilings, scaffolding was erected and Brunon painted according to long-agreed designs, just like in a church. Brunon was playing a waiting game (that is what he told me), he was enjoying life, he was simply ebullient. His spiritual state at that time required great psychological expertise. Bruno seemed to be grateful for his talent. Despite the criminal atmosphere in which Brunon was creating at that time, his designs were probably masterpieces. Brunon owed his life to them. He was creating and he was happy that people were pleased with him. The SS men enjoyed art. Brunon walked around as if in a trance"[24].

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23 Letter from T. Lubowiecki to J. Ficowski from August 24–26, 1948, typescript in the Ossolineum collection: Correspondence..., file Lipt–Ł (no. 61/79 et seq.).

24 Letter from K. Hoffmann to J. Ficowski from March 30, 1965, typescript in the Ossolineum collection: Correspondence..., file L–Lips [as: Secondary School in Bystrzyca] (no. 61/79 et seq.).

Hoffmann signals the paradoxical nature of Schulz's behaviour, typical of victims whose torturer temporarily spared them their life and created a certain margin of freedom. At the same time, this piece does not belong to the didactic canon, assigned to the axiology of traditional realistic biographical narrative. Therefore, the fact that this fragment of the letter was not quoted by Ficowski (although another fragment of this letter, regarding the students' attitude towards Schulz, appeared in the form of a quote[25]), but reported it in a way that alleviates the demonism of the entire situation and the drastic nature of Hoffmann's account (RGH 47), is Ficowski's empathetic gesture that also confirms the existence of those quasi-novelistic axiological frameworks, unifying Schulz's world, which the author of *Regions* accepted as binding.

Also, Friedman's account contains an entry which, especially in the final part, is suspended in a significant axiological void, while being undoubtedly a faithful testimony of the victims' individual experience: "In 1942 the Drohobych Judenrat sent me and Szulc [*sic*] to work in a library that was subordinated to the Gestapo. It was a collection of all public and major private libraries, the confiscation of which was started in 1939 by the Soviet authorities and then was extended in 1941 the Germans. Its core consisted of the collections belonging to Jesuits from Chyrów. It consisted of about 100,000 volumes, which Szulc and I were ordered to catalogue or destroy. This work lasted several months, was interesting, suited our preferences and, in comparison to the work of other Jews, it was a real paradise. Schulc and I were talking for hours"[26].

Testimonies of this type – such as the quoted accounts of Hoffmann and Friedman, memories from the very bottom of hell – contain the unquestionable truth of the moment, the truth of survival, but not the truth of history understood as a story about villains and victims. Therefore, in the biography, they are blurred.

What we have characterized as a specific strategy of saving the protagonist of the *Regions of the Great Heresy* is limiting the space of Schulz's biography, denying its entropy, its gaps, and axiologically undefined places. Within the same strategy, Ficowski uses yet another technique of establishing Schulz in the real world, intensifying his existence, introducing him strongly into the circulation of his times, the network of interpersonal connections and exchange of artistic ideas. He refers to Schulz's own formula – "a partner for exploratory undertakings" (RGH 58) – that is, a person who is particularly close to him, a partner of

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25 We read, among other things: "His unusual, uncommon, inspired and delicate character elicited respect — the young people experienced his lessons, they sensed that they were dealing with an extraordinary person" (RGH 54). This is a quote from a letter from K. Hoffmann to J. Ficowski of March 30, 1965.

26 Letter from T. Lubowiecki to J. Ficowski of June 23, 1948, typescript in the Ossolineum collection: Correspondence..., file Lipt–Ł (no. 61/79 et seq.).

artistic disputes, but also a partner in writing practice[27]. Two such characters for whom the author of *Regions* later also coins the term "congenial partners"[28], played, in his opinion, a special role in Schulz's life and work: Władysław Riff (1901–1927) and Debora Vogel (1902–1942).

What turned out to be crucial for this partnership or cooperation was Schulz's intensive correspondence with both figures at various stages of his life and, of course, the spiritual and artistic format of both Riff and Vogel, who were engaged in their own writing work. It was throughout correspondence with Riff, the author of "a novel of psychic adventures" (RGH 59), that Schulz awakened as a writer in the 1920s. Later, in the early 1930s, after Riff's death, Vogel, the author of, among others, the poetry book *Manekiny* [Tailor's Dummies] and the volume of prose *Akacje kwitną* [Acacias are blooming], became Schulz's next "congenial partner". In their letters, the first fragments of *The Cinnamon Shops* were born, in the form of extended postscripts, "gradually more and more dominant over other contents of the correspondence"[29]. What makes the thesis about far-reaching borrowings and mutual inspirations particularly dramatic, is the fact that all of Schulz's correspondence with Riff and Vogel from the period of the "congenial partnership", as well as the manuscript of Riff's unpublished novel, were lost. Ficowski, not knowing the content of this correspondence and relying on indirect accounts, undertook a specific reconstruction of the letters-dialogues, as if building an epistolary quasi-reality.

It is worth quoting these fragments of *Regions of the Great Heresy*, which "mediate" over time and move us with the degree of realization of what no longer exists. This is what Ficowski says about Schulz's correspondence with Riff: "It was a long discussion, conducted in instalments, on the topic of art, any scattered references to ordinary reality were artistic transitions bearing signs of literary treatment" (RGH 59). A little later, in the same chapter ("The Prehistory and Origin of *Cinnamon Shops*"), there is a "reading" of the correspondence with Vogel: "They began to exchange letters, and over the course a year, Schulz's letters began to contain startling mythological stories developed in lengthy postscripts" (RGH 62)[30].

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27 This formula is quoted by Ficowski comes from Schulz's letter to Tadeusz Breza of June 21, 1934, [in:] B. Schulz, *Księga listów*, zebrał i przygotował do druku J. Ficowski, wyd. 3, Gdańsk: słowo/obraz terytoria 2008, p. 48.

28 J Ficowski, "W poszukiwaniu partnera kongenialnego…", op. cit.

29 J. Ficowski, "Wprowadzenie do *Księgi listów*", [in:] B. Schulz, *Księga listów*, wyd. 3, p. 13.

30 This fragment sounds very similar to Ficowski's introduction to the first edition of Schulz's *Księga listów* (1975). It is even expanded there: "[...] Debora Vogel read the magical history of Drohobych as a novel in instalments, with delight increasing from letter to letter [...]" (*Księga listów*, wyd. 1, p. 8). The fact that in the next editions of *Księga listów* (2002 and 2008) the introduction, given a new shape, seems to diminish the previously suggested scope of the first fruits of *The Cinnamon Shops*, contained in the letters to Vogel, seems to be relevant to this matter. The phrases "over the

"Somewhere", "more or less", "successively", and "extensive" – these are the words used to describe reality, they contain an element of gradation, the use of which requires a prior autopsy, which in this case is a gesture of empathy, mediation in the sphere of the author's imagination. This is also the case with the dialogue between Deborah and Bruno, opposing the non-existence of the letters, and faked by Ficowski, in which the role of letters was played by fragments of Schulz's *The Cinnamon Shops* and Vogel's *Akacje kwitną*:

"Rubbish pours over the earth", writes Vogel. – "Calico… stiff and dry, without pulp…". Schulz replies: "The demiurge fell in love with dry, perfect and complex materials – we give preference to trash" […]. Vogel is inclined to agree: "But the soul of raw materials is very delicate and fantastic. It is only necessary to release the hidden soul of matter". And Schulz agrees, too: "There are no dead, hard, limited objects. […] Lifelessness is only a facade concealing forms of life unknown to us" (RGH 65).

Ficowski does not hide this "reconstruction", he writes about these quotes "as if we are still participating in the long-ago epistolary debate between Debora and Bruno" (RGH 65). He seems to be deeply engaged in making that lost correspondence and its creators more real, putting masks of reality on these phantoms, so that their no longer existing faces and bodies regain contours. Reconstruction, let us repeat, is essentially a way of saving and rebuilding the life fabric of Schulz himself, the space of his art, which, as a spiritual biography, is situated in dialogues, relationships, and the broader trend of artistic life.

The topic of borrowings is also interesting in this respect. Ficowski closely observes this issue in the correspondence between Schulz and his "congenial partners", and even gives it a slightly sensational flavour. We learn that one of Schulz's stories contains a fragment which – "according to the testimony of people acquainted with both Riff and Schulz" (RGH 60) – is a literal quote from Riff's letter[31]. Ficowski also recalls one of the few surviving late letters of Debora Vogel to Schulz, in which she mentions old opinions of her friends, suggesting excessive similarity between the writings of both authors (RGH 67). Deciding how strong these affinities were[32] was probably of less importance to Ficowski than to observe their value as tangible evidence. Their existence means that although there are

course of a year", "in lengthy postscripts" disappear; we no longer read about the "dazzling stories" contained in the letters, but about the "beginnings of dazzling stories" (*Księga listów*, wyd. 3, p. 13).

31 In the introduction to the second edition of Schulz's *Księga listów* (Gdańsk 2002), a new clue appears in this regard. It is Halina Drohocka's account, describing Schulz's "superstitious" reaction to her question about Riff a few years after his death. Ficowski comments: "Maybe he felt the burden of a neglected debt that was too late to repay?" – ibidem, p. 12.

32 Moreover, he comments on Vogel's writing: "Her literary output – inferior to that of Schulz – is not of primary importance. Above all, Debora Vogel was the best, the most intellectually stimulating and creative muse for Bruno Schulz" (RGH 68).

no more letters, there must have been a flow of artistic ideas in them. Therefore, the very existence of these suppositions weighs immeasurably more on the scale of reality than the question of their validity. Thus, paradoxically, consideration of artistic imitation, which by definition means weakening the writer's identity, leads here – on the contrary – to the strengthening of reality and "saving" the writer's artistic existence.

Could Ficowski, in the biographical part of his book about Schulz, pose as a kind of a medium and an illusionist, deriving the content of the lost letters from the circumstantial evidence, from traces animating the past and bringing it to life? In fact, we have been close to the world of Schulz's fiction for quite a while – for example, his story "Spring" from *Sanatorium Under the Sign of the Hourglass*, in which the long-deceased figures of European history, courts and dynasties from before the great revolution and world war, rise from the dead and wake up to return to life, put into lethargic motion by Józef and brought into the world from the myth-creating Rudolf's "stamp book". The expressive ontology of time, the categories of being and non-being, are unnoticeably incorporated into the biographical chapters of *Regions of the Great Heresy*, leading us to the question of the presence of sensitivity and demiurgic nature of the poet "managing" the non-existence.

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It can be said that Ficowski is brought into the realm of poetry just by asking the question: what did everything that got lost look like? What was Schulz's lost correspondence like? One might say, that while tracing the evolution of Ficowski's introductions to the editions of Schulz's letters, started in the 1964 volume *Proza* and continued in *Księga listów* (1975; 2nd edition, revised and supplemented: 2002; 3rd edition: 2008), we can notice how the individualistic poetic figure of another space develops together with the concept of introduction as considerations of the non-existent letters. We can observe these tendencies in Ficowski's commentaries on Schulz's lost correspondence with Włodzimierz Riff, Debora Vogel, Józefina Szelińska and Zofia Nałkowska. Unprecedented in the editions of writers epistolography, this peculiar practice consists in devoting a major part of editorial commentary to stories about unpreserved letters and their senders. One has to be a poet to use such a bold and unconventional technique. Ficowski even provides guidelines to the reader on how to read, signalling the purposefulness of a construction of this kind: "We are paradoxically correct about devoting the introduction to *Księga listów* to the letters that do not exist. The remaining texts included in *Księga* are supplemented and explained with footnotes or commentary"[33].

33 J. Ficowski, "Wprowadzenie do *Księgi listów*", op. cit., p. 13.

Four chapters of Regions of the Great Heresy devoted to Schulz's work – "The Book, or Childhood Regained", "Schulzian time", "Phantoms and Reality" and "Magic and Definition" – are a poetic reading of Schulz. Or, to be more precise, two kinds of poetic reading. The narrative of these chapters has its own dense linguistic structure that is far from the biographical chapters, which, using other people's accounts, were primarily a construction of a certain continuum of events, a reconstruction of Schulz's life. The narrative is directed inwards, towards specifying, sometimes repeatedly, the rules of Schulz's writing and imagination, his ways of building worlds. In this respect, the interpretative chapters should be read against the background of the language of Schulz's fiction, because just as the entire structure of the book with its specific alternation of chapters, it is a paraphrase of the dual nature – magical and mundane – of Schulz's stories. Therefore, each of these chapters in a way paraphrases the formal characteristics of Schulz's narrative and becomes a detector of some of its stylistic features. The second context, the background that must be recalled, is Jerzy Ficowski's poetry itself. The way in which the author of *Regions* defines Schulz's prose can, in fact, also be read as his self-commentary on his own poetry. In his poems, Ficowski offers a peculiar translation of Schulz's narrative style, transferring many of its elements into the realities of contemporary poetry.

When it comes to the first matter, we find specific Schulz-like meandering syntactic structures in *Regions of the Great Heresy*. Ficowski's reflections on the language and world of Schulz's stories are governed by recurrences, repetitions and clarifications. His interpretive formulas, full of anthropomorphisms and processing, develop almost biologically. At the same time, there is the phenomenon of, as Ficowski calls it, "poetic definition" (RGH 125). The word wants to "cling" as much as possible to the described creative process, to the essence of phenomena, to multiply their characteristics, and simultaneously to be definitive and, in a way, to become the world itself. This feature of Ficowski's style of analysis is well illustrated by the description of the relationship between Schulz and Kafka, which, incidentally, is quoted by Julian Przyboś in his review of *Regions* as an example of Ficowski's poetic competence[34]: "Schulz was a builder of a reality-asylum, that was

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34 Przyboś writes: "I quoted his sentences here with satisfaction, I liked their conciseness and accuracy. They were formulated by a poet [...]" (J. Przyboś, *Ficowski o Schulzu*, "Życie Warszawy" 1967, no. 280; quote from the reprint in the collection: *Wcielenia Jerzego Ficowskiego według recenzji, szkiców i rozmów z lat 1956–2007*, selection, edition and introduction by P. Sommer, Sejny: Pogranicze 2010, p. 461). Before Przyboś's review was published, Józefina Szelińska, Schulz's former fiancée, wrote a letter to Ficowski about the poetic intuition contained in the book. It is worth quoting this fragment in full length since it corresponds to our earlier considerations about the novelistic element in *Regions*: "In your […] book, you recreated Bruno's full extremely complicated personality, while having only fragmentary shreds of material obtained from many people, which you used in a masterly way, without a trace of seams, basting, without the burden of footnotes, without visible philologist's equipment, but which remains hidden, marked with quotations from letters and re-

a marvellous 'intensification of the taste of the world'; Kafka was an inhabitant and propagator of the world of terror, an ascetic hermit awaiting a miracle of justice that never came. Schulz was a metaphysician, garbed in all the wealth of colour; Kafka was a mystic in a hair shirt of worldly denials. Schulz was a creator and ruler of the compensatory Myth; Kafka – the Sisyphean seeker of the Absolute. Schulz, the lavish creator of mundane Olympias, produced a metaphysics of an animate reality, while Kafka became the bookkeeper of the all-enveloping Abyss" (RGH 101).

And yet another example: "Gradual degeneration is always the mythological road to change, as well as the source of beauty, the mythic principle of Schulzian aesthetics. Decline is at the same time the birth of a new quality, decay accounts for new vegetation, infection stimulates generative processes" (RGH 119).

We can notice, in this intense description and naming effort, a deep interiorization of Schulz's work and essentially poetic maximalism of embracing the fullness of words and, through them, reaching the bottom of meanings. The language of Schulz's stories, for example in *The Cinnamon Shops*, is governed by words. Ficowski himself, while writing about language and words, also characterizes certain features of the narrative of *Regions of the Great Heresy*: "Language is Schulz's magic wand, we cannot imagine his world outside of verbal material. It is indissolubly and organically connected to his vision, which cannot be translated into the medium of any other art. As Schulz wrote: 'Poetry – that is a short clasp of sense between words, a sudden regeneration of primitive myths'. […] The Schulzian word is not intensified, laconic, and clearly measured as in contemporary poetry, rather it is a component in a definition, in elaborate verbal images, a living thing leading a gregarious mode of life. Carefully chosen for the greatest accuracy and precision, words combine intro apparent redundancies, each contributing to the vividness of description, to an analysis of the appearance of some new elements or point of view. Only the entire series of quasi-definitions yields the full picture, enriched with the bounty of hypotheses and propositions, but without tautological superfluity or monotony" (RGH 122–123).

This quote perfectly describes what one might feel while reading *Regions* – the sense of Ficowski "infecting us" with his critical diction on Schulz's prose. We can also follow this process in the sphere of organizing biographies or bodies of work by using specific concepts-spells that possess Schulz's provenance and fabulous

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ports collected about Schulz, so that every detail in his biography and the "artist's portrait" is documented, authentic, and legitimate because it is always supported by sources – these letters and information. This is not *Dichtung und Wahrheit*, it is the very truth, seen through the eyes of an artist and a poet, a mental organization extremely close to Bruno. Only a poet can write like that about another poet" (letter from J. Szelińska to J. Ficowski of September 5, 1967; in the collection of the Manuscript Department of the Library of the University of Warsaw, file 28).

power to establish new worlds, which are all small founding acts in themselves: "the second epistolographic era"[35], "partners in exploratory undertakings" (RGH 58) or the titular "regions of the great heresy" (taken from Schulz's story *Tailor's Dummies*, they are actually a prototype of this type of magic formulism that outlines the world).

Moreover, in this quote Ficowski calls Schulz a poet[36] more than once. He places the pre-war writer among the most outstanding Polish poets. In the light of Schulz's essays, it is fully justified. Especially in "Mityzacja rzeczywistości", Schulz shows poetry as a superior, a somehow supra-generic category, which is the touchstone of all authentic art: "Poetry discovers these lost meanings, restores words to their place, connects them according to their old meanings. […] That is why all poetry is, in a sense, mythologizing, it strives to recreate myths about the world. […] The human spirit is tireless in glossing life with the help of myths, in "making sense" of reality[37].

However, we are still interested in Ficowski's definition of 'Schulz as a poet' in the aspect of another "saving" the author of *The Cinnamon Shops*. This time I would like to point out the way Schulz's mythology turns out to be an excellent guide to some features of the poetry of Ficowski himself. I do not intend to suggest that Ficowski, writing *Regions of the Great Heresy* in the 1950s and 1960s, mediated Schulz's readings in his poetic paths, that he tuned his interpretations of Schulz's mythology to what personally inspired him most in Schulz; nevertheless, there is no doubt that his self-referential comments on Schulz is very striking. There was probably a parallelism in Ficowski's poetic reading and his critical reading of Schulz. Ficowski speaks about Schulz inspirations in his poetry: "I am convinced that the most important thing here is not content, fictionalization, metaphors, or Schulz's wonderful multitude of words that have no right to exist in my poem. A poem is what remains after eliminating everything unnecessary. Well, this essence, the 'golden core of the afternoons', as Schulz describes the fruits brought by Adela – is somewhere in my poetry. So […] I claim that I preserve the essence of Schulz's Myth, the Myth of Childhood in my poetry"[38].

In four interpretative chapters of *Regions of the Great Heresy*, Jerzy Ficowski establishes the dominant features of Bruno Schulz's work and points out those features of the poetics of *The Cinnamon Shops* and *Sanatorium Under the Sign of the Hourglass* that he finds crucial. "The Book, or, Childhood Regained" highlights

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35 J. Ficowski, "Słowo wstępne", [in:] B. Schulz, *Księga listów*, op. cit., p. 9.

36 See more mentions of Schulz as a "poet-mythologist" (RGH 98) and his prose as "metaphysics of an animate reality" (RGH 99) in the chapter "Phantoms and Reality".

37 B. Schulz, "Mityzacja rzeczywistości", [in:] idem, *Opowiadania, wybór esejów i listów*, ed. J. Jarzębski, Wrocław: Ossolineum 1998, p. 384–385

38 "W życzliwości dla cudu. Z Jerzym Ficowskim rozmawia Magdalena Lebecka [1995]" [in:] *Wcielenia Jerzego Ficowskiego*, op. cit., p. 673.

two features of Schulz's mythology – the time of childhood being the condition for the conception of the myth, the story, and the growth of a fantastic world, and simultaneously, commonness, mundanity and even campness – spheres with no sense of uniqueness "that do not suspect their mythic potential" (RGH 75) – that constitute the foundation of the conception of the myth. All established mythology is only a pathetic substitute for what grows in the mythological imagination of a child, stimulated by a wonderful 'knick-knack' – the Book-Authentic.

Ficowski's poem, in which a child's imagination turns a portrait of a bourgeois interior into an exotic hunting land, seems to be a perfect model of poetic realization of an image taken from the "age of genius" of childhood:

> Since the end of the century
> stealthily,
> dressing up with fringes,
> vital skins crawl,
> shedding hair
> of ottomanosaurs,
> trophies from the living room thickets.
> […]
> This is the epic of it all.
> Plush is running out
> with fringes.
> End.[39]

The poem echoes what Schulz wrote in 1932 in a letter to Stefan Szuman about one of his poems: "This intertwining of a generic pantheistic mythology with the individual one of children's tapestry and furniture seems, to me, legal, very apt and proper, because these two mythologies strangely interpret and complement each other"[40].

It seems, however, that the most important thing in Ficowski's poetry – if we talk about the presence of childhood as Schuz's "age of genius" – will not be the existence of a child character, someone like Joseph from *The Cinnamon Shops*. In fact, "childhood", or rather the mythological potential of childhood, is inscribed in all of Ficowski's poetry and I would characterize it, on the one hand,

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39 J. Ficowski, *Gorączka na rzeczy*, Warszawa: Państwowy Instytut Wydawniczy 2002.

40 Letter from B. Schulz to S. Szuman of July 24, 1932, quote. after: J. Ficowski, "Przyczynki do autoportretu mitologa", [in:] idem, *Regiony wielkiej herezji i okolice*, p. 208. In an essay of the same title "Przyczynki do autoportretu mitologa", which belongs to the series *Okolice sklepów cynamonowych*, Ficowski, on the example of Schulz's letters to Szuman, shows the essentially self-commentary nature of most of Schulz's critics about the works of other authors.

as extraordinary sensuality, and on the other – as something associative, combinatorial in the way of perceiving the world at all levels, i.e. images and language. The ability to take a "first look", free from established ontological and linguistic categories, undoubtedly links Ficowski to Schulz, although it probably has its origins in the pre-Schulz era, resulting from Ficowski's ability to transfer childhood sensitivity beyond the Rubicon of maturity. The author of *Regions* writes about Schulz: "The poet-mythologist both recognizes reality's laws and opposes them, suggesting new relationships with new consequences" (RGH 98–99).

This principle gives rise to, for example, Schulz's story-myth in "The Age of Genius" about the causes of the deer's timidity: the reason for it is their horns, twisted – says Schulz – "into a fantastic arabesque, invisible to their eyes, yet frightening" (quoted after: RGH 98). Several of Ficowski's poems also originate from this principle, including the series "Sześć etiud": "Since the carps have gone deaf / as a result of / being constantly in the water / they know / people are mute" ["Odkąd karpie ogłuchły / wskutek / ciągłego przebywania w wodzie / wiedzą / człowiek jest niemy"] ("Odkąd karpie", GR 95). The first examples of such "heretical" poetic plots can be found in the debut "Ołowiani żołnierze" (in the series *Bajki*).

Schulz's myth derives, as Ficowski says, from the sphere of commonness and trash. This area of reality is also an extremely important thread in his poetry. "Anti-hierarchy and obscurity", writes Paulina Czwordon, "are among the most fundamental properties of Jerzy Ficowski's poetry"[41]. If we compared Ficowski's peripheral areas, carefully sorted out by Czwordon, with those he uses in *Regions* to characterize Schulz's prose, we might not be able to find some parts of these areas in Schulz's work. We know Schulz, the poet of the province, yet deprived of the ethnography and the Gypsies; Schulz with cripples but without humanized "knock-kneed" saints and archangels; with the private family stories but with no urban folklore. Schulz's playing with the culture of authority and officialdom is more fundamental, closer to the core of hierarchical and patriarchal culture, the culture of the Book, and his forays into unofficiality somewhat a suspension of its jurisdiction, or – as Jan Błoński writes – a comment that "is made forward, complementing the old message, improving it or developing it!"[42].

A more general thing must be said, maybe quite hidden from us for all these years since the creation of *Regions*: Schulz, as "antihierarchical and hole-and-corner" as he was, with all his originality and artistic wonders, must have been, for Ficowski, the embodiment of complete and independent art and posed as (similarly – yet perhaps to the lesser extent – to Leśmian and Wojtkiewicz) a form

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41 P. Czwordon, *Empatia i obserwacja. O poezji Jerzego Ficowskiego*, Poznań: Wydawnictwo Poznańskie 2010, p. 22.

42 J. Błoński, "Świat jako księga i komentarz", [in:] *Czytanie Schulza*, op. cit., p. 82–83.

of *constans*, a point of reference, and of an area of renewal of his own creativity in this difficult post-war time of ideological discipline of art and the enforcement of doctrinal restrictions. This role of Schulz, significant especially after 1965, can be found in *Regions of the Great Heresy*, precisely in connection with the exposure of these elements of "illegitimacy", "heresy", and "degression". The author, writes the following about the terms "illegal events", "unfair manipulation", and "great heresy": "They are ironic, a purposeful manipulation of language by a writer who regularly condemned hackneyed dogmas and conducted revelatory attacks upon accepted truths" (RGH 84). A little later he also quotes a "revolting" fragment from "Spring": "[...] the prison seemed to be irrevocably shut, when the opening was bricked up, when everything had conspired to keep silent about You, Oh God, when Franz Josef had barred and sealed even the last chink so that one should not even have been able to see You, then You arose in a roaring of seas and continents and gave him the lie. You, God, took upon Yourself, the odium of heresy and exploded upon the world with this enormous, magnificent, colourful blasphemy. Oh, magnificent Heresiarch!" (RGH 84).

These fragments, as well as Ficowski's comment on the quote from "Spring"[43] must have resonated with additional, antidogmatic meanings in the 1960s. The poet, it seems, found in Schulz an ally on broader issues: creative freedom and freedom of expression, which, after the experiences of socialist realism remained a point of issue. Ficowski, who participated in the independent artistic movement, as, among others, the author of satirical songs, was well versed in the rules of the parabolic narrative, and he knew with whom the recipient of this quote in the 1960s could identify the figure of Emperor Franz Joseph from Schulz's story.

It is necessary to mention two other important components of Schulz's mythology – apart from the "the age of genius" of childhood as a source of myths, and campness and ordinariness as a myth-bearing area – to which Ficowski devotes special attention in *Regions of the Great Heresy*, and which are echoed quite clearly in his poetic practice. What I mean here is an in-depth analysis of the scientific or organic subsoil of mythical metamorphoses (chapter "Magic and Definition") and an extensive lesson on the transformations of Schulz's time (chapter "Schulzian Time") as components of Schulz's fantasy. When it comes to apparent continuities – Ficowski's elevation of the most valuable components of Schulz's art beyond time, making it a component of the post-war poetic sensitivity,

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43 "The beauty and diversity of the world emanating from the album of postage stamps contrasts with the bureaucratized version of the world of the imperial-royal monarchy, where everything is known in advance and there is no room for surprises". The God to whom this apostrophe is addressed must have had additional, anti-dogmatic meanings in the 1960s. He is a "heresiarch" – that is, a rebel against the prevailing religion of boredom; he "exploded upon the world with this enormous, magnificent, colourful blasphemy" – he dares to proclaim the truth of poetry, unpopular among the followers of the "gospel of prose" (RGH 84).

giving it new applications, most literally: giving them a second life – these two appear the most crucial. It is also because Ficowski transfers or translates these metamorphoses from Schulz's prose into poetry using the poetic means such as anthropomorphism, homonymy, and personification.

The chapter "Magic and Definition" analyses this feature of Schulz's fantasy, which places all transcendences of states of reality, and transitions to other "dimensions", initiating mythical stories, in the order of organic and chemical processes. There is always some, vegetative, empirically verifiable subsoil to these transformations. Ficowski collects Schulz's stories about "fermentation", "degeneration", "and "decomposition", which can, for example, cause the phenomenon of "second autumn", "the result of our climate having been poisoned by the miasmas exuded by degenerate specimens of baroque art crowded in our museums"[44] or conduce to spreading of "a species of beings only half-organic" and "pseudofauna and pseudoflora", which occupy "old apartments […] abounding in the humus of memories, of nostalgia, and of sterile boredom"[45]. They can also, "on the same psychochemical principle" (RGH 119), transform the inhabitants of Schulz's world into insects (the father transformed once into a fly, then into a cockroach) or into a pile of decayed matter (Aunt Perasia transformed into a flake of ash).

Ficowski claims that "in Schulz's fiction every change is a consequence of some inner tension that has reached its culmination. At this point, a new quality emerges, and new dynamics are revealed. Their hidden embryonic state is externalized, which Schulz presents as an exposition of the origins of the new phenomenon" (RGH 117).

The source of these transformations, their somewhat elementary form, are the anthropomorphisations, animisations and reifications, abundant in Schulz's prose[46]. They constitute a constant disruption of the boundary between living and inanimate matter, the crystallization of abstract concepts into material phenomena, transfers of psychic energies that acquire motor properties, and changes in states of matter.

Here, we are very close to the poetry of the author of *Regions of the Great Heresy*. The effortlessness with which objects, concepts and people are transformed

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44 B. Schulz, "A Second Autumn", [in:] idem, *The Street of Crocodiles and Other Stories*, p. 219.

45 B. Schulz, "Treatise on Tailor's Dummies. Conclusion", [in:], idem, *The Street of Crocodiles and Other Stories*, op. cit., p. 37.

46 Here are two examples, taken from the story "August": "An enormous sun flower, lifted on a powerful stem and suffering from hypertrophy, clad in the yellow mourning of the last sorrowful days of its life, bent under the weight of its monstrous girth." (B. Schulz, "August", *The Street of Crocodiles and Other Stories*, op. cit., p. 5); "My aunt was complaining. It was the principal burden of her conversation, the voice of that white and fertile flesh, floating as it were outside the boundaries of her person, held only loosely in the fetters of individual form, and despite those fetters, ready to multiply, to scatter, branch out, and divide into a family" (ibidem, p. 9).

in Ficowski's poems originates from the spirit of Schulz's prose. At the same time, these transformations penetrate another issue, become a kind of poetic instrument that allows Ficowski to name the world in a unique way, practice, for example, poetic historic-philosophical reflection, and enter the most difficult collective experiences. These are poems in which the suppression of emotions and pathos becomes a condition of credibility of poetic dignity – poems about the Holocaust, the times of Poland's national enslavement, as well as about singular forms of oppression: about old age and evanescence.

Thus, in the poem "5 VIII 1942" (from the series "Odczytanie popiołów"), the metamorphoses of Korczak and the children are as a somewhat attempt to softly enter into the reality of their last moments. The piece "rewinds" the Old Doctor's life to the time before his birth, and multiplies the children's time, giving them a whole, yet "unlived" life:

> the Old Doctor saw suddenly
> that children became
> old like him
> getting older
> so they had to catch up with the grey of the ashes
> so when he was hit
> by askar or an SS-man
> they saw that Doctor
> became a child like them
> getting smaller and smaller
> until he was not born […] (GR 181)

It is also difficult not to think about Schulz's metamorphoses and inversions of space when reading the poem "Spis abonentów sieci telefonów miasta stołecznego Warszawy na rok 1938/39", dedicated to Rafael Scharf, restoring the memory of those "who were once caught / in the act / of life", describing a space of non-existence:

> After a sudden move of exact addresses
> to general onomastics
> numbers returned to the abstraction of figures
> and flesh became a word
> in the Subscribers Armory
> These are the authenticated elect
> who are Nobody on no streets […] (GR 253)

Fairy-tale metamorphoses, in the plots of the Holocaust, restore, despite death, the shadows of the exterminated, become, in other poetic narratives, a subtle

instrument of personification of time and a distanced interpretation of history. Through these metamorphoses, inscribed in the rules of substantial changes, Ficowski establishes a type of reflection on the history of Poland, which is paradoxically far from legend-making and belongs to the purest trend of post-war poetry communicating with collective historical experience. These metamorphoses sometimes have the character personifications inserted into the poetic narrative with unusual super-semantics: "the flints turned cold in November/ January cut them down with frost" (GR 167) – a description of three noblemen travelling through the sad landscape of the partition era in "Ballada o trzech mociumpańskich"; "The congress hall was still smouldering / the sofa overstayed" (GR 92) – in a nostalgic story about the poet's grandparents ("Zaręby Kościelne"); "in the corner for the forebears / a samovar wheedled [...] / from which long ago hatched / double-headed tri-partitioned eagle" – in the poem "Apokryf" (GR 340). Or they take the form of longer stories, for example, a humorous study on national consciousness, about the self-translation of the work *Les mémoires par l'abbé Gaspard* into Polish in a larch wardrobe ("Trzy tańce polskie: I. Polonez czyli epos modrzewiowy"; GR 304–305)

Schulz's reversable time held back, and directed into side branches, penetrating Ficowski's poems in many ways and, similarly to substantial transformations, allowing the poet to find a language that is particularly apt for recording experiences that remain outside the circle of Schulz's themes. Ficowski describes the fantastic time in Schulz's stories as a response to the dictates of real-time, as a "mythic road to freedom" (RGH 89). Ficowski writes that "time obeys the precise rules of psychology, while in questioning ordinarily accepted principles, it is a mythic refuge in the face of the unavoidable passage of time" (RGH 82). He adds that it is "digging into the root of things, pursuing an actualized metaphor inevitably leads into a multileveled time that adapts to the needs of the creative imagination, instead of a dictator, time becomes a submissive servant" (RGH 88). The time in "Spring" arises from the deepest psychological needs, "the time of discovery and creation" (RGH 87) emerges from Rudolf's fabulous "stamp book", and the time of "Sanatorium Under the Sign of the Hourglass" is "perversely enlisted to counteract death" (RGH 85).

Ficowski's poetic reality is similar to Schulz's "reading" of time, but not – establishing it with complete voluntarism. It is not a "heretical", "illegal" time, a time of stories, as in Schulz's work, but rather a specific poetic over-perception of time, seeing it as changeable, distorted, held back, rushed by human emotions. The time that is arrested or appropriated while talking about social space, or problematic time, with inhuman intervals and courses – in outer space or in the microworld of insects – while discussing the scale of life and transience. The clock from the poem "Apokryf" seems to be a kind of periphrasis of the dysfunctions of social time in Ficowski's poetry:

the clock wobbled and wobbled
over cool panikhida
[…]
and gifted us after the timequakes
shards of hours, scraps of years
brass scales of customs wars
and this is our 'day before tomorrow'
which doesn't want to come
today (GR 340)

Such "shards" and "scraps" of time can be found in poems about the last war and its aftereffects, for example in "Kwatera AK", where the time taken from the fallen ones burdens their descendants and, thanks to poetic homonymy, takes on a double meaning:

they gave the old age
for the use of the living
their stooped daughters come to them, it is a real piece of time
(GR 220; emphasis mine – JK)

Animated, personified, de-linear time also appears in "Przepowiednie" and "Pojutrznie". The emotive diction of these poems, written during martial law in 1981–1982, sweeps reality into a whirlwind of transformation, takes it under poetic control, and has an increased temporality – repeated expeditions into the 19th century, animations of time. Here it is mouldable in a Schulzian way, it lengthens, with the power of an inverted "Dybicz's binoculars", making the horizon of freedom recede ("the fuse lengthens / until the day that explodes", "pales / the day after dawn / the severed head / of the wasted day"), brings it closer with the power of collective longings ("we have been in agreement for centuries / with freedom / sometimes we confuse it with spring / then again with autumn"), moves back ("this is how we follow this time / to that time / clocks are aiming at us / from the guard towers"), becomes a tool of power ("squadrons of hours are coming / until one moment, dropped from above / hits your illegal sleep"), and is a source of pain ("because we are so hurt by time / that each hour / will bring more pain")[47].

47 All quotations in this paragraph from the non-censored edition: Marcin Komięga [J. Ficowski], *Przepowiednie. Pojutrznia*, wyd. 2, Warszawa: Głos 1985.

In the very intimate perspective of passing and old age in Ficowski's late poems (the volumes *Zawczas* z *poniewczasem*, *Pantareja*), temporality intensifies – again having much in common with Schulz's fairy-tale peripheries of time – evoking circum-human times: insect, animal, and also cosmic, revealing the relativity of human time, and even the problematic nature of death. Unclear remains the moment of pseudoscorpion's departure from life ("resident of records and book collections / does not defile the folios / feeds / on easily digestible abstractions", *Glosa*, ZzP 42)[48], the multi-generational life of blacksmiths create one uninterrupted life ("I met them, blacksmiths, / on the third day of the creation of the world / with my grandparents who are no longer there / and they are with them / to this day", *Kowale kowalątka*, ZzP 57), the time of bats, created "after the sunset of genesis", and which can last for years in a state of lethargy (*Konfraternia Chiropterańska*, ZzP 36), or the "second lives" of pupating butterflies, that question the exclusivity of one measure of time[49]. We also know these lethargic, incomplete existences as the forms of survival of organisms in the "illegal" intervals of Schulz's time in the stories "Spring" and "Sanatorium Under the Sign of the Hourglass".

Thus, reading the interpretative chapters of *Regions of the Great Heresy*, we find numerous clues leading to Jerzy Ficowski's poetry. "Saving" Schulz, which we define as the main principle of this book, was achieved, to a certain extent, with mutual benefit. It was related both to giving a "new life" to Schulz's magical imagination in the area of Polish contemporary poetry and to enriching Ficowski's poetry itself, which was born and developed its most original elements in Schulz's atmosphere, with the "memory" of Schulz. It was a deeply processed memory, embedded in the living intelligence of wonder-tracking Ficowski, introducing the components of the imagination of the loner from Drohobycz into new contexts and scenes of modernity, and into the private cosmogony of the contemporary poet. This is an extraordinary case of poetic sensitivities and potencies prevailing over time. But also, in the introduction to *Regions of the Great Heresy*, Ficowski wrote: "In the following story, *The Age of Genius*, the narrator Joseph accidentally discovers that scrap of paper from childhood – the last pages of an old illustrated weekly. He confides to his friend, the town thief, Shloma: '"I have to confess to you… I found the Authentic…'. Well, I, too, have found the Authentic – in 1942. It was Schulz's first collection of stories, published in 1934, *Cinnamon Shops*. A book different from all others […] one for which no rival has ever emerged" (RGH 27).

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48 ZzP – J. Ficowski, *Zawczas z poniewczasem*, Kraków: Wydawnictwo Literackie 2004.

49 Paulina Czwordon aptly writes that in *Pantarea*, Ficowski "strengthens his position among small animals even more closely 'from the bottom' of the hierarchy, but also among 'upper' friends: insects and birds, rusting junipers and extremely common and scattered herbs" (P. Czwordon, "Podróż w czas (O *Pantarei* Jerzego Ficowskiego)", [in:] *Wcielenia Jerzego Ficowskiego*, op. cit., p. 332).

This important "founding" confession of Ficowski's essays on Schulz turned out to be not only the opening of *Regions of Great Heresy* but also an introduction to one of the most important phenomena of post-war Polish poetry[50].

Translated from Polish by Language Extreme

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50 The author of this article would like to thank Mrs Elżbieta Ficowska for kindly providing materials from Jerzy Ficowski's archive and agreeing to publish their fragments. He would also like to thank the Curator, Ewa Piskurewicz, for her valuable help during repeated inquiries at the Manuscripts Department of the Library of the University of Warsaw.

Marek Wilczyński: Polish Galician Fiction Before and After the War. Bruno Schulz in the Context of Holocaust Literature

> One day, my brother, returning from school, brought the improbable and yet true news of the imminent end of the world.
>
> Bruno Schulz

The motto of this essay comes from Bruno Schulz's short story *The Comet*, published in 1938 in the 35th issue of *Wiadomości Literackie* shortly before the infamous *Kristallnacht* of November 9-10, of which the author naturally could not have known at the time of publication, Nonetheless, he was probably aware of what had been going on in Germany for some time and, for obvious reasons, must have felt uneasy at the very least. Unfortunately, nothing he wrote after the outbreak of war, and then after the German aggression against the USSR and the establishment of the Drohobych ghetto, survived, so it would be an abuse to speculate about Schulz's artistic intentions in the face of the end of his world and himself. Still, the literary historian is dealing with a process – a sequence of texts, among which the earlier ones were written without knowledge of the later ones. Yet, their proximity in an *ex-post* perspective is not a matter without significance.

In an essay that is as concise (three pages only) as brilliant, entitled "Kafka and His Precursors," Jorge Luis Borges declares: "The fact is that each writer creates his precursors. His work modifies our conception of the past, as it will modify the future. In this correlation, the identity or plurality of men doesn't matter.[1]" Before this emphatic conclusion is made, a statement is made that follows from the preceding juxtaposition of works from different eras and countries with the fiction of the author of *The Castle*:

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1 Jorge Luis Borges, "Kafka and His Precursors," transl. Eliot Weinberger, in *Selected Non-Fictions*, ed. Eliot Weinberger. New York: Penguin, 2000, 365.

> If I am not mistaken, the heterogenous pieces I have listed resemble Kafka; if I am not mistaken, not all of them resemble each other. This last fact is what is most significant. Kafka's idiosyncracy is present in each of these writings, to a greater or lesser degree, but if Kafka had not written, we would not perceive it; that is to say, it would not exist.[2]

Not coincidentally, Borges cites T.S. Eliot's "Tradition and the Individual Talent" in a footnote. He is well aware that more than thirty years earlier, Eliot had realized the same thing: an outstanding poet not only influences his successors but also makes them look at their predecessors differently by the fact that they become his predecessors.[3] Another example of a similar line of reasoning is provided by Harold Bloom who developed an esoteric typology of the relations between "strong poets" and their rebellious heirs.[4] In this case, the direction of influence is clear: the past shapes the present. After all, what happens to the history of literature if one accepts Borges' paradoxical perspective? Can a reading of a "strong" writer, as Schulz undoubtedly was, acquire unexpected meanings when confronted with those born later?

The end of the world announced suddenly in "The Comet" does not come to pass for a peculiar reason. For no reason at all, the menacing celestial body simply goes out of fashion with time, just as Halley's Comet went out of fashion as a topic in the press in 1910. "The bolide," as Schulz writes self-consciously probably by analogy with "satellite," "was doomed, it has been outdistanced forever. […] Left to itself, it quietly withered away amid universal indifference."[5] Seemingly similar is the case in a short story by Ida Fink, a native of Zbarazh in the Ternopil province that used to border on the Lviv province, to which Drohobych belonged, titled "Mój pierwszy koniec świata" [My First End of the World]. There the news of an impending global catastrophe is brought by a servant girl:

> The news of the impending end of the world was brought by Agafia from the market. She rushed into the kitchen out of breath, pale on her face, threw the shopping basket into a corner and shouted to her mother in a frightened voice: - You know, at the market, they say that in a month there will be the end of the world![6]

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2 Borges, 365.
3 T. S. Eliot, *Points of View*. London: Faber & Faber, 1941, 25-26.
4 See, Harold Bloom, *The Anxiety of Influence*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2011.
5 Bruno Schulz, "The Comet," in *The Street of Crocodiles and Other Stories*, transl. Celina Wieniewska. New York: Penguin, 1977, 111.
6 Ida Fink, *Odpływający ogród. Opowiadania zebrane*. Warszawa: Wydawnictwo W.A.B. 2002, 277. All the quotations from this edition are translated by Marek Wilczyński and will be marked as with an abbreviation OO in brackets.

As can be guessed from the circumstances described in the text, the time of the events is summer, or more precisely, July of 1939. The impatient mother dismisses Agafia's words as "nonsense," but the neighbor, the partner of holiday entertainments, who for the narrator "was [...] a master and oracle," takes the announcement of the apocalypse surprisingly seriously: "- 'It would be a pity,' Adalbert suddenly spoke up and then took to dealing cards, but suddenly threw them on the table and, without saying a word, ran away to his house." (OO 279). Exactly one month and four days later, in August, a massive storm and downpour happen, and one of the story's characters casually refers to it as "the end of the world," which the narrator picks up with some relief as the fulfillment of a bad omen. After the storm, however, the landscape has a fantastic, unreal color scheme, associable with the canvases of El Greco: "Thunders were no longer heard, the downpour ceased, only the sky was still illuminated by silent, pale flashes. Streams of yellow water flew down the steep street, the air had a strange, pungent smell and a strange yellow color. Also the sky was gray-yellow, yellow clouds ran across it, yellow trees stood by the roadside. The world had turned yellow." (OO 281) If one remembers that Fink was a writer of the Holocaust and most of her works refer to it in one way or another, this uncommon yellow takes on an almost allegorical dimension, foreshadowing the color of the identifying armbands with the Star of David imposed on Jews shortly thereafter; a sign of death that preceded the "final solution." As it seems, Agafia knows this, or at least something yet to come, best. When, after the storm, the narrator jokingly tries to allay her fears, she responds unconvinced: "– Don't laugh," she replied sternly. – This time [the end of the world - M.W.] passed sideways, but it will still come, it will still come... you will see..."[7] The war was to break out in a dozen days at the latest.

Fink concedes Agafia's point in the short story "The Garden That Floated Away," definitely a sequel to "Mój pierwszy koniec świata." Despite the dominance of the realistic convention of representation, the piece betrays a clear affinity with catastrophic Schulzian imagery, e.g., in the opening paragraph:

> Once I saw a garden float away. It was our neighbors garden, just as beautiful and flush as ours, and there were fruit trees growing in it, just as in ours. I saw it flow away, slowly and majestically, into the distance far beyond our reach. That afternoon was warm and peaceful. I was sitting with my sister on the porch steps, and the two gardens – Wojciech's and ours – were right there in front of our eyes. They formed a single garden, for they were not divided by

7 Fink, *Odpływający ogród*, 281.

> a fence. A fence, we said, would be an intrusion. Only a row of evenly spaced currant bushes stitched the two gardens together.[8]

The setting of both stories is identical. Although there is no Agafia, who has already played her role as Cassandra, there is Wojciech, picking renette apples with his sister, which points to early autumn. Incidentally, Schulz's addressed this particular season twice: in *Sanatorium Under the Sign of the Hourglass* ("A Second Autumn") and then in 1938 in *Sygnały* ("Autumn"). There is indeed no fence in the garden, but the busyness on one side is matched by the stillness on the other. The narrator's father, instead of picking fruit, is immersed in a long conversation with Mrs. Kasinska on a subject still unknown to the reader. In Schulz's "Autumn" there is a departure from the summer resort, and in "The Garden That Floated Away" we find the same motif, though used differently:

> I watched so attentively that my eyes began to hurt from watching. The sun ignited little fires on the masts of the trees. How could I have known that this was the signal to set sail? Wojciech's garden, the garden of our childhood friend, suddenly shuddered, swayed, began to pitch and roll, and then slowly, slowly it started to float away like a huge green ocean liner. It sailed away slowly but steadily; the distance between us grew quickly, the garden got smaller and disappeared. It had floated away to an inaccessible distance, far beyond our reach. (ST 13)

Here Fink once again approached the diction of the author of "The Comet," a clear sign of which is a tinge of oneirism. After this *forte*, however, there is an abrupt transition from the world of imagination to the world of history, from fantasy to the present. To the narrator, immersed in a visionary reverie, her sister says reproachfully, "Don't squint like that. When you squint anyone can see right away that you're Jewish." (ST 13) Then the climax of the story comes soon enough: "Father called us to his office, to the animated Mrs. Kasinska, who, once the price was agreed on, promised to make *Kennkarten* for us so we could be saved, so we would not be killed." (ST 14)

The end of the world itself, or rather the end of a particular group of its inhabitants, is described by Fink second-hand in the story "A Scrap of Time." The narrator, again together with her sister, observes from a safe hiding place in the bushes at the top of a hill the course of the "action," perhaps in Zbarazh, only to learn about its finale after the war from a peasant, a chance witness:

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8 Ida Fink, *A Scrap of Time*, transl. Madeline Levine and Francine Prose. Evanston, Il.: Northwestern University Press, 1995, 11. All the following quotations from this edition will be marked with an abbreviation ST in brackets.

> The peasant [...] came back after the war and told us everything. It happened just as rumor had it, in a dense, overgrown forest, eight kilometers outside of town, one hour after the trucks left the marketplace. The execution itself did not take long. More time was spent on the preparatory digging of the grave. It took more time to dig the grave beforehand. (ST 10)

Thus, the prediction once brought from the market by Agafia is finally fulfilled, but also, if one accepts the intertextual connection between "Mój pierwszy koniec świata" and "The Comet," it confirms what Joseph's brother had heard a little earlier at school and applies to Schulz himself. It did not matter that the "bolide," an ephemeral object of newspaper interest, went out of fashion. The prophecy was soon authenticated when fashion was replaced by a well-organized program based on the principles of the Nazi race theory and eugenics.

Fink's laconic realism turns out revelatory here and there, e.g., at the moment of the strange "yellowing" of the world after the rainstorm, an allegory that gains meaning when placed in a historical context or, more precisely, in the context of a disaster attested by history. As Walter Benjamin writes in his study of the Baroque *Trauerspiel* after the disaster of the Thirty Years' War in Germany: "When, as is the case in the Trauerspiel, history becomes part of the setting, it does so as script. The word 'history' stands written on the countenance of nature in the characters of transience."[9] This is how on the face of the world in August 1939 and later on the physiognomy of the garden on the eve of the Shoah, is written the history of Eves renewed exile from paradise, along with the Adams and their offspring. Moreover, Fink's poetics surprisingly corresponds to an observation quoted by Benjamin, referring to the local Baroque iconography:

> It has been quite correctly observed, by Hausenstein, that, in in paintings of apotheoses the foreground is generally treated with exaggerated realism, so as to be able to show the remoter, visionary elements more reliably. The attempt to gather all the worldly events into the graphic foreground is not undertaken only to heighten the tension between immanence and transcendence, but also to secure for the latter the greatest conceivable rigour, exclusiveness and inexorability.[10]

In Fink's case, of course, "rigour, exclusiveness and inexorability" have nothing to do with transcendence, but their impact, future or present, lends a certain

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9 Walter Benjamin, *The Origin of the German Tragic Drama*, transl. John Osborne. London – New York: Verso, 1985, 177.

10 Benjamin, 183.

excess of meaning to the seemingly elementary descriptions of a familiar world. As it turns out, the narrator's gaze is in fact a melancholic gaze, under which things take on new meanings:

> If the object becomes allegorical under the gaze of melancholy, if melancholy causes life to flow out of it and it remains behind dead but eternally secure, then it is exposed to the allegorist, it is unconditionally in his power. That is to say it is now quite incapable of emanating any meaning or significance of its own; such significance as it has, it acquires from the allegorist. He places it within it and stands behind it; not in a psychological but in an ontological sense In his hands the object becomes something different; through it he speaks of something different and for him it becomes a key to the hidden knowledge; and he reveres it as the emblem of this.[11]

Again: in the case of Fink, "hidden knowledge" is the knowledge of the fate of the Jews in Galicia after the Nazis invaded it in June 1941. In Schulz's fiction, we find a certain symbolism, in relation to which Fink's stories can function as a kind of pragmatic, conditioning filter for reception.

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In Schulz's "Second Autumn," the father delivers a fantastic apotheosis of this season around the town as a wandering theater:

> That second autumn of our province is nothing but a sick mirage projected through an expanse of radiation into our sky by the dying, shut-in beauty in our museums. Autumn is a great touring show, poetically deceptive, an enormous purple-skinned onion disclosing ever new panoramas under each of its skins. No center can ever be reached. Behind each wing that is moved and stored away new and radiant scenes open up, true and alive for a moment until you realize that they are made of cardboard. All perspectives are painted, all the panoramas made of board and only the smell is authentic, the smell of wilting scenery, the smell of theatrical dressing rooms, redolent of greasepaint and scent. And at dusk there is great disorder and chaos in the wings, a pileup of discarded costumes, among which you can wade endlessly as if through yellowed fallen leaves. There is a great confusion: everybody is pulling at the curtain robes, and the sky, a great autumnal sky hangs in tatters and is filled with the screeching of pulleys. And there is an atmosphere of feverish haste,

11 Benjamin, 183-184.

> of belated carnival, a ballroom about to empty in the small hours, a panic of masked people who cannot find their real clothes.[12]

In the short story "Cyrk" [Circus] by another Polish resident of pre-war Galicia, Zygmunt Haupt, who, though a native of Podolia, spent quite a few years in Zhovkva and Lviv, the spectacle of the "second autumn" from the Drohobych area is replaced in September 1939 by a fairground drama, closely related to the itinerant, and therefore highly shoddy theater:

> The circus was a third-rate traveling circus: carts painted in crawling, bright colors, with big 'CIRCUS' signs, curtains in the windows, with a few miserable animals in smelly cages, even the skin of the old elephant seemed worn out like the leather of an old suitcase, the washed and greased faces of the clowns and their most trivial, fairground numbers, the clavicles of the equestriennes sticking out through the skin and the tattered leotards of the acrobats. [...] There was also a display of acrobatic riding on bicycles, velocipedes, tricycles, on caricatures of wheels, on elliptical wheels, on fantastic combinations of wheels, on their rims describing some evolutions, and epicycles, monsters, masquerades, clowns, pierrots, butterflies, strange creatures, bears, monkeys, birds, insects, giraffes, whatever teratology has in store, some fantasies like from Bruegel's paintings or the Temptations of St. Anthony, harpies, stomach-people and candlestick people, leopard snakes and utter fantasies unlike anything else, and this crowd of ghouls and freaks went around in a mad carousel, *merry-go-round*, a whirlwind, a malstroem of absurdity under cascades of light, as if the world from *Alice in Wonderland* had suddenly filled the miserable tent of a provincial circus. And in the morning I was woken up by an aide and called out to me: 'Carry out 390! Help me, for God's sake, phone the batteries'.[13]

Haupt's "Cyrk," with its bravura stylistic enumeration, not far from Schulz's enumeration in terms of atmosphere, refers to the 1939 September campaign, in which the author took part as an artillery officer, and, as in Fink's fiction, the pendulum of the representational convention swings in it either in the direction of the fantastic or in that of a reporter's testimony of combat. The campaign soon came to an end on the border with Hungary, which is described by the writer in the story titled "Polonez na pożegnanie ojczyzny. Opowiadanie ułana

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12 Schulz, 221-222.

13 Zygmunt Haupt, "Cyrk," in *Baskijski diabeł. Opowiadania i reportaże,* ed. Aleksander Madyda, Wołowiec: Czarne, 2016, 527-528. All the following quotations from this edition will marked with an abbreviation BD in brackets.

Czuchnowskiego" [Farewell to the Fatherland (A Story by Uhlan Czuchnowski)], where the poetics of the accumulation of objects is exemplified in a paragraph that is as concise as it is decidedly more melancholy:

> In Rachov a huge encampment of people, equipment, burning piles of rifles, thrown in a heap, lying strewn in the ditches are sacks of coffee, crates of canned goods, anti-gas masks are crumbling, defunct cars, a motor-pump with a huge inscription entertains the eye with its cheerful color and brass parts: "Fire Brigade of the City of Bydgoszcz." (BD 534)

For a variety of reasons – ethnic, fortuitous – for Haupt the war was a different kind of disaster than for Schulz or Fink. With his unit, the writer crossed the Hungarian border and then went successively to the Polish army in France and Great Britain, eventually marrying an American woman and settling in New Orleans. In 1975 he died in the United States. After September 19, 1939, Haupt was not allowed to return to Galicia or Podolia, so he became a classic exile – an emigrant who, through literature, tried to recreate the lost space of his "small homeland" in his memory and imagination. One of the most successful results of this effort is the long short story "Lutnia" [Lute], entirely focused on the town of Zhovkva and its founder by that name, Crown Field Hetman Stanisław Żółkiewski. The final part of the story, situated on the borderlines between fiction, memoir, and essay, is a return to Haupt's last visit to Zhovkva a few days before leaving Poland forever:

> The turn of the war took me unexpectedly as far as the town limits of Zhovkva. [...] It was strange to find myself there in such unusual circumstances, but there was little time to wonder. It was necessary to find positions for the battery, dig in the cannons and finally rest. It was only possible to sleep at the battery, so I couldn't go to the parents' house, where I had not been for a long time. But since it was just below the castle, at a spare moment I went there to wander around a bit [...]. (BD 263-264)

The narrator walks through the deserted former Sobieski castle, turned into a municipal office and archive, visits the once hard-to-reach rooms of officials, and finally arrives at the library warehouse:

> On the shelves, along the walls, on the floor, under the vault, piles of volumes, books are piled up. No one has stepped here for years, for decades, everything covered with a virgin layer of dust, on which no finger wanders. These books lie dormant in some kind of daydream, the leather on the spines of the volumes is peeling, the bindings are ruined, the letters are gilded, blackened and concave: antique, italics, the parchment shines brightly with its membrane

> all the way to transparency, the paper has yellowed, but it's still a great paper of those times, it has crumbled at the edges, but it holds on. Volumes, folios, laboriously stitched copybooks, folders from which the contents are spilling out. (BD 264)

Immediately afterwards, the reader is presented with an enumeration of the chapters of the randomly opened book, *Skład abo Skarbek znakomomitych Sekretów Oekonomiey Ziemiańskiey,* a real *tour de force* of Old Polish, but what seems really important, decisive at this point, is the author's awareness that the library, forgotten by all, is essentially a figure of disaster.

That Haupt wrote his stories *ex post*, on the other side of the Atlantic, is evidenced by another reminiscence of the same, last stop in Zhovkva included in the story "O Stefci, Chaimie Immerglücku i o scytyjskich bransoletkach" [On Stefcia, Chaim Immerglück, and the Scythian Bracelets] from the volume *Pierścień z papieru*, published in 1963 with Jerzy Giedroyc in Paris. There the writer, or rather his *porte-parole*, meets in the Zhovkva market square, modeled on the market square in Zamosc, an acquaintance, the owner of a local ironmonger's store, Chaim Immerglück, about whom, eighteen years after the war, everything is more or less well known: the name – *immer Glück*, in German "always lucky" – sounds ironic, because Chaim probably did not turn out to be a lucky man, gassed in the nearby extermination camp at Belzec, or shot together with Jews from Lviv in the Janow Forest. The narrator describes the meeting as follows:

> He met me with some kind of gleam of understanding in his eyes. His acceptance of me, coming down with this war, to some extent I brought this war here with me, I was one of its co-makers, its gods. [...] It seemed to me as if he suddenly realized that we were taking part in a carnival, that he recognized me in disguise, that he understood, that he had no grudge against me, that it was even kind of comical: me in this disguise, with a steel helmet on my head and a bunch of hand grenades hooked to my belt, with a layer of dust on my shoes, on the flaps of my pockets, on my cheeks, on my nose, up to my eyebrows. (BD 48)

Suddenly, for a few September days on the threshold of this really possible "third autumn," the "great wardrobe" and "lipstick and incense" from Schulz's "Second Autumn" served as props in another performance, in which makeup is done not with powder but with dust, and blood is real, instead of the raspberry juice given by the father to the firemen. Moments later, in the eyes of Second Lieutenant Haupt, the transformation of a familiar world under the influence of new circumstances is finally completed:

> Maybe the glimmer of understanding in Chaim Immerglück's eyes is an illusion, or maybe it's meant to contrast, to say that nothing is important anymore. That the people I see in the marketplace; a gathering of dull faces, their breath mixed with the air – and no matter if I bring them bad or good news, there is no appeal for them. They are as impersonal as the scrabbling, scurrying of rats behind the wall of the house, the impersonal and lifeless sloshing of water crashing against the stones of the stream, the creaking of branches bent by a gust of wind . (BD 48-49)

This process culminates when Zhovkva freezes under the suddenly alien gaze of its recent inhabitant into an emblem, like a posthumous mask of the city and its war-traumatized community:

> As I walk slowly, slowly through the streets of the town, it's as if I don't want to muddle what is here, what I no longer belong to. Although there are some people around, it seems empty. Some of these people are like flies on the face of a dead person. They swoop up with a buzz from the corners of the mouth, from the corners of the eyelids and immediately sit back down, "*mooches*" on the powdered face, swoop up and sit down. (BD 49)

The stories "Lutnia" and "O Stefci, Chaimie Immerglücku i o scytyjskich bransoletkach" are records of the world just before the catastrophe, made afterwards with full knowledge of its consequences. Perhaps coincidentally, Haupt, immersed in the melancholy of the emigrant, used in them tricks of Baroque provenance – as Benjamin wrote, "the only pleasure the melancholic permits himself, and it is a powerful one, is allegory."[14] Hence, in "Lutnia", the image of the library appears as a vestige of "the baroque ideal of knowledge: the process of storing to which the vast libraries are a monument."[15] Benjamin also points out that "in the *Trauerspiel* of the seventeenth century, the corpse becomes quite simply the pre-eminent emblematic property."[16] This is also the case in the story of the farewell of Zhovkva which transforms into a figure of a corpse, an anticipation and at the same time an epitaph for the many corpses – Jewish, Polish, Ukrainian, German, Russian – that were soon to replace most of the town's hitherto living population. Thus, things that had served the living for work or entertainment were abandoned and accumulated in useless piles or lay scattered disorderly, at best to form the basis of calculations, inventories, and registers.

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14 Benjamin, 185.
15 Benjamin, 184.
16 Benjamin, 218.

Inventories in imagination, carried out at a distance in time and space by nostalgia-driven survivors.

The last writer on the agenda is Leopold Buczkowski, born in Nakwasa in Podolia. Before the war, he lived in Podkamien near Brody, on the border of Galicia and Volhynia, and then, from mid-1943, in Warsaw and nearby Konstancin. Buczkowski's first three novels, *Wertepy*, written in the 1930s and published in 1947 (an excerpt appeared in 1937 in *Sygnały*), 1954's *Black Torrent* [*Czarny potok*], and *Dorycki krużganek* [Doric Cloister], published three years later, refer to Galicia shortly before or during World War II.[17] The post-war novels tell in a peculiar and twisted way about the fate of groups of armed Jews trying to survive the German occupation in forest concealment and occasionally, in cases of absolute necessity, taking up arms against regular and auxiliary enemy formations, or liquidating dangerous informers. A parallel thread in *Dorycki krużganek* is Wehrmacht Major Osnabrick's absurd attempt at a cinematic reconstruction of life in pre-war Brody, where Jews were the largest ethnic group. Trouble is, the Jews are almost gone, having been displaced and exterminated, and the only source of information about the past remains old Cukier, showering the major with a multitude of details that do not add up to any meaningful whole. Jerzy Stempowski, who reviewed Buczkowski's novel in *Kultura*, defended the writer against repeated accusations that his fiction was incomprehensible:

> His vision of the drowning world of Brody is supposed to be first of all true, authentic, direct. Why should the reader understand me? I don't understand any of it myself. I stand like St. John on the island of Patmos and see. Whoever is looking for things that are clear and understandable, let him read Molière. (transl. Marek Wilczyński)[18]

The remedy for the magnitude and incomprehensibility of the unfolding catastrophe turns out to be, as in Haupt's work, enumeration, which sometimes reaches a truly Schulzian level of verbal mastery:

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17 Arkadiusz Kalin distinguishes three basic approaches of critics to Buczkowski's fiction: mimetic, epistemological, and formal, united by the common denominator of "chaos." See A. Kalin, „Problem spójności prozy Leopolda Buczkowskiego", in Sławomir Buryła, Agnieszka Karpowicz, Radosław Sioma (eds.), *...zimą bywa się pisarzem... O Leopold Buczkowskim*. Cracow: Universitas, 2008, 27-59. In the present essay I have adopted, following Jerzy Stempowski, the mimetic perspective, in which Buczkowski's wartime novels are treated as testimonies of a historical catastrophe.

18 Jerzy Stempowski, „Kaprysy kosmiczne i ich konsekwencje literackie. Trzy powieści Leopolda Buczkowskiego", in *Klimat życia i klimat literatury 1948-1967*, ed. Jerzy Timoszewicz. Warsaw: Więź, 2001, 147-148.

> [...] brought out were foragers, shepherds, milkmaids, witches, innkeepers, barbers, thieves in spectacles, circus performers with hernias, grumblers, retired officers with spurs and reeds in their hands, jockeys, birders, hucksters, slime men, toll collectors, wiremen with upturned mandibles, factotums, love letter scribblers, widows, gaudy organists, weather heralds, and old men. A special platoon led out of town hunting dogs, law clerks in count's clothes, obese and infertile women, land commissioners, councilors in brand-new underwear, firemen band conductors, dance teachers, flunkeys, enforcers, sharps, proxies, beer salesmen, cologne sprays in movie theaters, carousel owners, caretakers of baths, junk traders, cutters from the theater, gravediggers, taxidermists, custodians, upholsterers, stucco makers, jewelers, umbrella makers, the last two organ grinders, breeders of lice for a certain doctor, panders, butlers, waiters, porters, washerwomen, embroiderers, photographers, glassblowers, stove makers, furriers, dependents, and *schadchens*. (transl. Marek Wilczyński)[19]

All of them probably faced the same fate that befell the orchestra playing to the workers who "in the spring of the year forty-three" were building the Southern Road: "The orchestra, having played the last eroica to the workers' battalions, slouched in procession to the quarries to be shot."[20] (transl. MW) The tension between this laconic sentence and the rampant polyphony of the list of "led out" (it goes on even longer in the text) reflects the basic dilemma of Holocaust literature, or more broadly, the literature of total catastrophe: how to represent an event whose simplest verbal form is "all were killed." What does "all" actually mean? How to escape the leveling power of such a generalization?

In *Dorycki krużganek*, Buczkowski reverses the procedure of negative, apophatic theology applied in the first century A.D. by Pseudo-Dionysius in the famous one-page fifth chapter of his treatise "On Mystical Theology."[21] This chapter, a single, densely packed page, deals with the impossibility of defining the essence of God by means of affirmative terms, turned by the author into a series of negations. Since the enumeration of everything that God is not allows one to get as close as possible to what He is, then perhaps a complete list of those who were expelled from Brody and murdered will allow one to fill in the meaning of the word "all"? In this way, it may be possible to approach the experience of the catastrophe (Shoah) as a negation of experience, since, as Maurice Blanchot

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19 Leopold Buczkowski, *Dorycki krużganek*. Cracow: Wydawnictwo Literackie, 1977, 41-42.
20 Buczkowski, 7.
21 See http://esoteric.msu.edu/VolumeII/MysticalTheology.html

writes in *L'Ecriture du désastre*, it is a *de facto* "excess" not usable, as is usual with experience, in later life:

> An experience that is not a lived event and that does not engage the presence of present is already non-experience [...]. It is just an excess of experience, and affirmative though it be, in this excess no experience occurs; it cannot posit itself in the instant and find therein repose […] or bestow itself lavishly in some point of incandescence: it marks only the exclusion of such a point. We feel that there cannot be any experience of the disaster, even if we were to understand disaster to be the ultimate experience. This is one of its features: it impoverishes all experience, withdraws from experience all authenticity. It keeps its vigil only when night watches without watching over anything. **22**

Therein lies perhaps the difference between Schulz's enumerations – for example, the one in "A Second Autumn" – and those of Haupt or Buczkowski. In Schulz's case, the dynamic of the process and the multiplicity of details are governed by metaphor, the embodied life force which transforms itself into power, even if it is a power at its decline. The cases of Buczkowski and Haupt are different: their equally rich, and sometimes even overwhelming enumerations are metonymic, based on adjacency without energy necessary to bring together individual pieces of the puzzle, often with no progression, unless it is progression toward imminent death. However, the speeding Schulzian machinery irrevocably loses momentum, freezes – its feverish productivity ends in a static *tableau*, a kind of graveyard. And yet without this machinery "Lutnia," "O Stefci, Chaimie Immerglücku i o scytyjskich bransoletkach" or *Dorycki krużganek* might not have come into being, or at least they would have been quite different. Without Schulz, perhaps some stories by Ida Fink might have also been written differently.

Polish Galician fiction, a phenomenon of the interwar period and the three or so decades after World War II, includes, of course, not only the work of the four writers mentioned above, but also the output of other authors who can hardly be linked to Schulz in terms of both poetics and motifs that foreshadow or attest to catastrophe. To the same geocultural circle belonged Julian Stryjkowski, born in Stryj, after the war in Poland; Andrzej Chciuk, a native of Drohobych, after the war in exile in Australia; Herminia Naglerowa, who came from Zaliska near Brody, after the war in London; Andrzej Stojowski from Lviv, or the infamous Andrzej Kuśniewicz from Kowienice near Sambor, both of them living in Poland after the war. Stryjkowski described in a cycle of four novels the crisis of

22 Maurice. Blanchot, *The Writing of the Disaster*, transl. Ann Smock. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1986, 50-51.

the traditional Jewish community in Galicia within the framework of a realistic convention of representation, while in two others presented the autobiography of a devout and later disillusioned communist. Chciuk drew in his two non-fiction memoirs a rather idyllic picture of Lviv and Drohobych, although, which is rare in Polish Galician literature, Ukrainians are portrayed there in greater numbers than in anywhere else. Naglerowa wrote about Galicia before the war, while her postwar short stories and novels dealt mainly with the experiences of Poles in Soviet prisons and Siberia. Stojowski and Kuśnewicz, each in his own way, gave expression to stylized nostalgia.[23] It may be worth writing a monograph on this trend, especially since the relatively recent developments in literary studies offer a methodological and conceptual frame of reference for it.

Translated from Polish by Marek Wilczyński

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23 An attempt to describe the Galician trend in postwar Polish fiction was made by Ewa Wiegandt in her monograph *Austria felix, czyli o micie Galicji w polskiej prozie współczesnej* (Poznań: Wydawnictwo Naukowe UAM), published in 1988 (second edition 1997). Unfortunately, due to state censorship, it lacked a discussion of the works of émigré writers, and moreover, the author was mainly interested in the mythologization of the Austro-Hungarian empire. The merit of Wiegandt's study is the thesis put forward in the conclusion about the influence of Schulz's poetics on postwar writers.

Zofia Ziemann: *It's a writer's book*. English-language authors reading Schulz (a great deal)

On the back cover of Madeline G. Levine's new English translation of Schulz's fiction, Stanley Bill's endorsement reads: "Her fidelity to the original text ensures that her translation will make a significant contribution to the reception of Bruno Schulz in English".[1] While this is probably true with regard to the academic readership, it is harder to predict the popularity of Levine's translation among 'ordinary' readers, not necessarily interested in recommendations by Schulz scholars.[2] The history of literary translation provides ample evidence that the readers' favours are uncertain and that faithfulness does not always pay off. Having read Levine's translation, I keep my fingers crossed for its success; may the appreciation of a wide readership make up for its thorny road to publication.[3] The first press reviews[4] have been very positive, although surprisingly scarce so far; it almost seems as though Levine's translation, long awaited by critics of

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1 B. Schulz, *Collected Stories*, trans. M. G. Levine, Evanston, Illinois 2018. [Author's note 2024: A yet newer translation came out in 2022, by Stanley Bill himself: *Nocturnal Apparitions: Essential Stories* (Pushkin Press). This article was originally published in Polish in 2018, presenting the results of the research project "Bruno Schulz in English 1958–2016: A comparative analysis of translations, their history and reception" (National Science Centre; 2014/15/N/HS2/03913). I would like to use this opportunity to thank my wonderful students, Kacper Cymbor and Karol Krzaczyński, for their editorial assistance in preparing this slightly altered and abridged English version.]

2 This is not to say that they are insensitive to nuances of translation – as demonstrated by a recent online discussion comparing Celina Wieniewska's and John Curran Davis's versions (http://www.ligotti.net/showthread.php?p=145455), it is not only Schulz scholars or translation researchers who are prepared to study translations in detail and argue about their quality (I would like to thank Branislava Stojanović for sharing this link in her "Bruno Schulz" Facebook profile).

3 The process of finding a publisher and finalizing the publication took twice as long as the actual translation work, which Levine had completed in early 2014. I discuss the prolonged "prenatal life" of this text from a translation studies perspective in the article "Extratextual Factors Shaping Preconceptions about Retranslation: Bruno Schulz in English," in: *Perspectives on Retranslation: Ideology Paratexs, Methods*, ed. Ö. Berk Albachten, Ş. Tahir Gürçağlar, New York – London 2018, pp. 87–103.

4 R. Franklin, "Review of Bruno Schulz's „Collected Stories": Return to the Street of Crocodiles," *The Wall Street Journal*, https://www.wsj.com/articles/review-of-bruno-schulzs-collected-stories-return-to-the-street-of-crocodiles-1521144828 (accessed: 15/3/2018); B. Paloff, "Real fantasist: A new translation of a Polish giant," *The Times Literary Supplement*, 4/4/2018, p. 16; R. Looby, "Beyond the Laws," *Dublin Review of Books*, http://www.drb.ie/essays/beyond-the-laws (accessed: 1/7/2018).

Celina Wieniewska's old version and enjoying the patronage of the Polish Book Institute, was more widely publicized prior to publication. Either way, Levine's work will certainly be discussed in *Schulz//Forum* and elsewhere, as it is doubly important: as a literary text in its own right – I agree with Bill that this translation is not only "courageous" (or even risky, precisely in its fidelity to Schulz's original), but also "impressive" – and as a testimony to and basis for the next stage of the reception of Schulz in English.

Before looking for signs of this new quality in the English-language reception of Schulz's fiction, however, let us consider whether we have a full picture of its development to date. There seems to have been no systematic research, either in Poland or abroad, into the reception of Schulz in English; the few articles on the subject concentrate on the American scholarly contexts.[5] Meanwhile, general-interest press, ordinary newspapers – whose analysis, while still laborious, is infinitely easier to carry out today than in the past, thanks to electronic databases – can reveal arguably relevant facts unknown to Schulz scholars. Example: In 1996, in the early days of the commercial use of the Internet, Steve G. Steinberg of *Wired* magazine wrote in his column "Innovations" in *Los Angeles Times*: "Search engines such as Alta Vista (http://www.altavista.digital.com) or Deja News (http://www.dejanews.com) allow users to find documents and messages that contain specific keywords. That's wonderful in some cases – if you're, say, just looking for messages about the writer Bruno Schulz. But it's not much help if you're interested in more general topics that can't be described with just a few words."[6] Now, isn't *that* wonderful? Schulz's name spontaneously mentioned in passing in a context that has nothing to do with literature (or Polish culture, or Jewish culture) in many ways constitutes a more authentic reception testimony – evidence that he left a trace in the minds of English-speaking readers – than an academic article in *The Polish Review* or *Slavic and East European Journal*. Newspaper archives are a treasure trove; it is time that we, as researchers, use them more widely than 'only' in reconstructing Schulz's biography and his early reception in Poland.

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5 T. Robertson, "Recepcja Schulza w Ameryce. Wstępne rozpoznanie," trans. M. Wacławek *Kresy* 13/1993, pp. 39–43; R. E. Brown, "Bruno Schulz Bibliography," *The Polish Review* 39 (2)/1994, pp. 231–253; K. Kaszorek, "'Polish Kafka' w Ameryce, czyli co o Schulzu pisali pierwsi amerykańscy badacze jego twórczości," *Schulz/Forum* 9/2017, pp. 56–66. The only exception I am aware of is David A. Goldfarb's overview of Schulzian inspirations in English-language writers (Cynthia Ozick, Philip Roth, Salman Rushdie, Nicole Krauss, and Jonathan Safran Foer): "Appropriations of Bruno Schulz," *Jewish Quarterly* 58(2)/2011, pp. 42–47 (updated 21/8/2014), https://jewishquarterly.org/2011/06/appropriations-of-bruno-schulz/ (accessed: 14/6/2011).

6 "Advances Offer Hope for Truly Useful Filters," *LA Times*, 25/3/1996, p. D6.

As an appendix to my doctoral dissertation,[7] I have compiled an annotated bibliography of over four hundred press articles in English that mention "Bruno Schulz", dating from 1963 to 2018. Their analysis revealed some interesting regularities, including a surprisingly large representation of artists – mainly writers and poets, but also film and theatre makers, musicians, painters, and photographers – among the most ardent admirers of Schulz. Their fascination with his work has remained virtually unknown; only a select few have been commonly associated with Schulz. Isaac Bashevis Singer, Philip Roth, and Cynthia Ozick as the Jewish-American patrons of his transatlantic career in the 1970s and 80s (perhaps also John Updike as the author of the paratexts to English-language editions), the Quay Brothers as the authors of the acclaimed 1986 film animation *The Street of Crocodiles* (to a lesser extent, London's Théâtre de Complicité with its award-winning theatre adaptation from 1992), J.M. Coetzee as the author of an influential essay on Schulz from 2003,[8] and Jonathan Safran Foer as the author of *Tree of Codes*, a literary-artistic homage from 2010 – and that would be it. To expand this short list, in what follows, I will present a chronological outline of the reception of Schulz's fiction by English-speaking writers[9], briefly mentioning household names and focusing on authors who have not been discussed in this context.

The presence of writers among the reviewers of Schulz's fiction in English translation is, of course, related to the practice of combining creative writing with literary criticism: press reviews often promote not only the books they discuss, but also the reviewer's own newly published or forthcoming work (in a note along the lines of "[Name of reviewer] is the author of [book title]"). The first edition of *The Cinnamon Shops and Other Stories* (Celina Wieniewska's translation of *Sklepy cynamonowe*), published in the UK in 1963[10], was reviewed for *The Spectator* by the postmodern writer B. S. Johnson (1933–1973).[11] The review reflects his

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7 *Bruno Schulz w języku angielskim 1958–2018. Historia i recepcja przekładów z elementami analizy porównawczej* [Bruno Schulz in English 1958–2018: Translation History and Reception with Elements of Comparative Analysis], supervisor: Prof. Marta Gibińska-Marzec, Jagiellonian University 2019 (unpublished thesis [defended 2020 – author's note 2024]). The present article draws on the chapter discussing the reception of Wieniewska's translation.

8 I have discussed this text in: "Dobry zły przekład. O angielskim Schulzu Celiny Wieniewskiej" (*Schulz/Forum* 9, 2017, pp. 50–51) and "The Inner and Outer Workings of Translation Reception: Coetzee on (Wieniewska's) Schulz," in: *Travelling Texts*, ed. B. Kucała, R. Kusek, Frankfurt am Main 2014, pp. 79–91).

9 To even just cite the names of representatives of other arts who expressed appreciation for Schulz in reviews, interviews, or through intertextual references in their own works would exceed the limits of a single article, hence the narrowing-down to authors of various literary genres.

10 The book appeared in the same year in the US under the changed title *The Street of Crocodiles*, which has been reproduced in all subsequent editions of this translation both sides of the Atlantic Ocean.

11 Life dates have been provided throughout this text as a brief indicator of generational affiliation, particularly useful with lesser-known authors.

interest in literary form, praising *The Cinnamon Shops* as "a beautifully shaped collection of short stories, an organic whole which for form alone is a great pleasure to read"; Johnson calls the author "one of the finest writers of the century in this notoriously difficult form" and notes that his writing, unlike Kafka's, to whom Schulz is often compared, is characterized by lyricism.[12] Schulz's stories were also praised upon publication by the writer, poet, and philosopher Kathleen Nott (1905–1999), who in 1963 had three novels and three volumes of poetry to her credit. She emphasized his "painter's eye" and "wonderful dramatisations of inanimate or non-human nature".[13]

As regards the US premiere of Schulz's fiction, one of its first enthusiasts was Isaac Bashevis Singer (1902–1991), who had not come across it as Icek Hersz Zynger (pen name: Warszawski) in 1930s Poland, but only after emigrating, through Wieniewska's translation. His extensive review of *The Street of Crocodiles* first appeared in Yiddish (in New York's סטרעוראָפּ [*The Forward*]), and then, slightly abridged and modified, in English.[14] Singer, who particularly appreciated Schulz's humour and sense of parody, would continue to promote the fiction of his fellow Polish Jew for the next two decades.

While there is no reason to doubt that Johnson, Nott, and Singer had a genuine appreciation for Schulz, they wrote their reviews in the professional capacity of literary critics, possibly upon commission, and, in any case, for publication. An even more telling trace of the early reception of Schulz in English comes from Ian McEwan (b. 1948). An interview from 2010, promoting his latest novel, informs: "In 1967 McEwan went to the University of Sussex to read English. There, an innovative course saw him exposed to a new road map of the modern European mind that led from Virgil and Dante through to Kafka and Bruno Schulz."[15] This brief mention is nevertheless significant: the Polish author must have made an impression McEwan if his name was remembered, alongside unquestionable European classics, after more than four decades.

Despite positive reviews in both the UK and the US (apart from the above-listed, by writers, there were many more) and the fact that, if we trust McEwan's memory, *The Cinnamon Shops* was included in at least one European literature syllabus only a few years after publication, the early reception of Schulz in English can be described as dawdling or indeed dormant – there was little going on in this regard for a dozen years or so. This changed radically when Schulz was

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12 "Short Stories from Four Countries," *The Spectator*, 29/3/1963, p. 30.

13 "New (Translated) Novels," *The Encounter*, No. 116, May 1963, p. 88–90.

14 "Burlesquing life with father," *Herald Tribune* and *The Philadelphia Inquirer* 22/12/1963.

15 N. Wroe, "Ian McEwan: 'It's good to get your hands dirty a bit'," *The Guardian*, 6/3/2010, https://www.theguardian.com/books/2010/mar/06/ian-mcewan-solar (accessed: 23/3/2018). The article was reprinted by *The Sydney Morning Herald*; I am mentioning this to signal the global reach of such reception testimonies and, consequently, their importance for promoting Schulz.

discovered by another writer, and thus re-discovered for America and for the English-speaking world. Philip Roth (1933–2018) learnt about Schulz in 1974 on his visit to Prague; he made friends with Czech dissident writers, who introduced him to the literature of Central and Eastern Europe. The following year, he launched his popular publishing series "Writers from the Other Europe" at Penguin. Schulz's *The Street of Crocodiles* was reissued within it in 1977. Had Roth's endorsement not gone beyond this publishing initiative, he would still have been Schulz's most important (i.e., successful) promoter in the history of his reception in English. But Roth's fascination was lasting; he referred to Schulz on many occasions, and more than four decades after first reading *The Street of Crocodiles*, he listed it (as the only title from his the seventeen-volume publishing series) among fifteen most important books of his life.[16]

The 'second premiere' of Schulz's fiction in English, arranged by Roth, met with a much wider response than the first, from 1963. *The Street of Crocodiles* was reviewed by Cynthia Ozick (b. 1928) in *The New York Times Book Review*.[17] In her sophisticated, rather dark interpretation, Ozick compared him to Kafka, Isaac Babel, and Singer, reinforcing the paradigm established by Singer and dominant in the US reception to this day: Schulz as primarily a representative of the Jewish literary tradition. This does not mean, however, that his work was not discussed in other contexts. Writing for *The New York Review of Books*, the English author and critic V. S. Pritchett (1900–1997) followed Singer in praising Schulz's "comic genius", adding that "the deepest roots of the comic are poetic and even metaphysical".[18] In the character of Jacob, he saw Quixotic melancholy and an affinity with Uncle Toby from Laurence Sterne's *The Life and Opinions of Tristram Shandy, Gentleman*.

The enthusiastic response to *The Street of Crocodiles* encouraged publishers to proceed with the second volume of Schulz's stories. In 1978, *Sanatorium Under the Sign of the Hourglass*, also translated by Wieniewska, was published by Walker & Co. As early as August of that year, Susan Sontag (1933–2004) included "Hourglass or The Book" in "An Ideal Story Anthology" envisioned in her journal.[19] Singer, who was awarded the Nobel Prize in 1978, ultimately reinforced Schulz's link with the author of *The Trial* by publishing on the front

16 T. Zax, "At His Library in Newark, Philip Roth Names 15 of His Favorite Books", *The Forward*, https://for-ward.com/culture/352704/at-his-library-in-newark-philip-roth-names-15-of-his-favorite-books/ (accessed: 26/10/2016).

17 "The Street of Crocodiles," *The New York Times Book Review*, 22/2/1977, p. 2. The same issue features Roth's interview with Singer about Schulz.

18 "Comic Genius," *The New York Review of Books*, 4/4/1977, pp. 6–8.

19 S. Sontag, *As Consciousness Is Harnessed to Flesh: Journals and Notebooks, 1964–1980*, ed. D. Rieff, Farrar, Straus and Giroux 2012 (journal entry: 28/8/1978).

page of the *NYTBR* a long review titled "A Polish Franz Kafka".[20] The following year, *Sanatorium* came out in Roth's "Writers from the Other Europe" series, with an introduction by John Updike (1932–2009). Full of praise and further literary references (Borges, Beckett, Blake), Updike's text was reprinted on the front page of the *NYTBR* under the title "Bruno Schulz, Hidden Genius".[21] Meanwhile in the UK, Angela Carter (1940–1992) reviewed the Hamish Hamilton edition of *Sanatorium*, focusing on Schulz's affinity with German Romanticism (Novalis and Hoffmann) and concluding that he wrote "like Borges, perhaps, but with heart".[22] Schulz's name was made in English: the late 1970s marked the beginning of a series of new editions, reprints in magazines and anthologies, reviews, essays, etc., which continues to this day.

In 1981, the Canadian-born American poet, essayist and translator Mark Strand (1943–2014), future US Poet Laurate and Pulitzer Prize winner, said that it was after reading Schulz that he first tried his hand at fiction, seeing that prose, too, could be lyrical.[23] In a 1985 interview, the American writer of fiction and poetry Russel Banks (b. 1940) also mentioned Schulz among his literary influences.[24] In an article portraying the British novelist Emma Tennant (1937–2017), Schulz's work is named as the "model" for her 1979 book *Wild Nights*.[25]

Apart from Sontag's imaginary anthology, Schulz's stories were also included in several actual collections, some edited by writers. In 1983, "Father's Last Escape" was reprinted in the impressive volume (almost 1,000 pages) *Black Water. The Book of Fantastic Literature*[26] curated by the Argentine-Canadian essayist, novelist, editor and translator Alberto Manguel (b. 1948), who had also discovered Schulz thanks to Roth's publishing series. Bringing together fantastic fiction from across the globe – alongside literature originally written in English, Manguel featured a number of translations from Spanish, as well as a handful of texts from Japan, Germany, Austria and Russia – the anthology was quite popular, with several editions in the US (1984), Canada (1984, 1992), and the UK (1994).

The 1980s also brought literary tributes. Roth and Ozick not only publicized Schulz's work, but also offered creative variations on his biography in their own books: *The Prague Orgy* and *The Messiah of Stockholm* (1987), respectively. Roth's novella, which constitutes the epilogue to his novelistic trilogy about Nathan

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20 I. B. Singer, "A Polish Kafka", *The New York Times Book Review* 9/7/1978, p. 1, 34.
21 "Bruno Schulz, Hidden Genius", *The New York Times Book Review* 9/9/1979, p. 1.
22 "Deadly serious lives," *The Guardian*, 1/3/1979, p. 16.
23 "The Education of a Poet: A Conversation between Mark Strand and Nolan Miller," *The Antioch Review* 1981, vol. 39 (1), p. 114.
24 *The Miami Herald*, 14/4/1985, p. 1E.
25 N. Shakespeare, "Lifting the lid on Britain's upper crust," *The Times*, 18/1/1986.
26 "Father's Last Escape," trans. C. Wieniewska, in: *Black Water: The Book of Fantastic Literature*, London 1983, p. 430–434.

Zuckerman, follows the narrator on his journey to Prague in search of unpublished manuscripts of a Yiddish writer, who worked as a schoolteacher and was killed by the Gestapo. Ozick's novel is dedicated to Roth – in honour of his literary craft, but perhaps also of his 'discovery' of Schulz for the American reader. It features a long motto from "Treatise on Tailors' Dummies", and the plot abounds in Schulzian references. The protagonist, Lars Andemening, believes himself to be Schulz's son, the fruit of the writer's (historically true) brief visit to Stockholm in 1936. These two books constitute not only testimonies of the reception of Schulz's work in the mid 1970s, showing how deeply impressed the authors were by Wieniewska's translation, but also, especially in the case of Ozick's critically acclaimed novel, important vehicles of his further publicization. *The Messiah of Stockholm* was discussed in dozens of reviews and critical essays; naturally, each such text involved a more or less detailed reference to the novel's literary paragon. In the English-language periodicals consulted within my PhD project, Schulz received more mentions in connection with Ozick's book than in the whole period 1963–1986.[27]

Not only Jewish-American authors were inspired by Schulz. Salman Rushdie (b. 1947) alluded to "The Street of Crocodiles", "Cinnamon Shops", and "Sanatorium Under the Sign of the Hourglass", and evoked a generally Schulzian atmosphere (the concept of time, imagery), in *The Moor's Last Sigh* (1995), whose narrator visits the "Street of Parasites": "Physically, too, I felt as if I were in some sort of interregnum, in some timeless zone under the sign of an hourglass in which the sand stood motionless, or a clepsydra whose quicksilver had ceased to flow. . . . I wandered down sausage-festooned streets of bakeries and cinnamon shops, smelling, instead, the sweet scents of meat and pastries and fresh-baked bread, and surrendered myself to the cryptic laws of the town".[28] This rather subtle reference was only clear to readers already familiar with Schulz. But even if it did not win Schulz new fans, Rushdie's gesture reinforced Schulz's status as an element, albeit still peripheral, of the constellation of 20th-century world literature. It also showed that Schulz's fiction resonated with the creative imagination of English-speaking authors with very diverse cultural and ethnic backgrounds – as will be further evidenced in the 21st century.

The 1990s also brought new anthologies. In 1997, Joyce Carol Oats (b. 1938) included "Father's Last Escape" in *Telling Stories: An Anthology for Writers*, a collection

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27 An important role in promoting Schulz around that time, especially in the U.S., was also played by the English translation of David Grossman's novel *See Under: Love* (originally published in Hebrew in 1986, it came out in English in 1989 and enjoyed considerable popularity), with "Bruno Schulz" as the main protagonist of one of the book's four parts. Grossman read Schulz's stories in Hebrew translation (by Uri Orlov, Rachel Kleimann, and Yoram Bronovsky).

28 S. Rushdie, *The Moor's Last Sigh*, G.K. Hall 1996, p. 564.

intended for her students of creative writing at the University of Windsor and Princeton University.[29] Comprising more than seven hundred pages, the anthology followed a thematic and genre rather than chronological arrangement; Schulz's story was featured in the first section, "Miniature Narratives", between texts by Katherine Mansfield and Jean Rhys. The following year, Alberto Manguel included the same story in his thematic anthology *Fathers and Sons*.[30]

Schulz's work was mentioned more and more often among various writers' favourite books. In 1995, the American poet James Tate (1943–2015), winner of the National Book Award and the Pulitzer Prize, included *The Street of Crocodiles* as one of the books he would take to a desert island – at number four, as the first work of fiction and the first translation (his top three being poetry collections by John Ashbery, Wallace Stevens, and William Carlos Williams).[31] In 2001, the Dutch-born Australian-Scottish author Michel Faber (b. 1960) listed *The Street of Crocodiles* among his five favourite books, glossed as follows: "Comparable to Kafka, but quirkier, less bleak. Schulz understands dysfunction and madness, but never loses his gentle sense of humour".[32] It is worth mentioning the other four items: 1. The King James Bible, 2. John Berger, *Ways of Seeing*, 4. C. S. Lewis, *The Lion, the Witch and the Old Wardrobe*, 5. Oxford Complete Wordfinder. When I asked Faber (on his visit to Kraków in 2016, as a guest of the Conrad Festival) about his first encounter with Schulz, he didn't have to think twice; he immediately remembered hearing an excerpt of Schulz's fiction on the radio in the 1990s.[33]

Faber's example shows that for many English-speaking writers, Schulz was a truly important, memorable discovery. Another such case is the American novelist Rick Moody (b. 1961), who, in two press publications, reminisced about his college years at Brown University, where he first encountered Schulz thanks to Angela Carter[34]. The most personal account of this kind, which deserves an extensive quotation, came from Nadeem Aslam (b. 1966), a British writer

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29 "Father's Last Escape," trans. C. Wieniewska, in: *Telling Stories: An Anthology for Writers*, New York – London 1997 (2nd ed. 1998), pp. 20–23.

30 "Father's Last Escape," trans. C. Wieniewska, in: *Fathers and Sons: An Anthology*, Vancouver 1998, pp. 99–104.

31 *The Republican*, 19/11/1995, p. F1.

32 "My Top 5," *The Herald*, 14/7/2001.

33 Indeed, in April 1995, Simon McBurney, the founder, artistic director, and leading actor of Théâtre de Complicité, London, which staged an adaptation of *The Street of Crocodiles*, read Schulz's stories in four instalments on BBC Radio 3 (https://genome.ch.bbc.co.uk/schedules/radio3/1995-04-03). Faber told me that he heard Schulz on the ABC; either his memory failed him there, or the Australians (re)broadcast BBC's programme.

34 D. Ryan, "Interview with Rick Moody", *Mississippi Review* 1999, vol. 27 (3), pp. 112–128; R. Moody, "Writers and Mentors", *The Atlantic*, 1/8/2005, https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2005/08/writers-and-mentors/304101/. As mentioned above, Carter reviewed *Sanatorium* for *The Guardian* in 1979. Teaching at Brown in 1977–1981, she must have decided to share the book with her students.

of Pakistani origin: "One of the most memorable moments of my life is opening this book for the first time. A university student standing in a secondhand bookshop, I remember reading the first page and my heart beginning to beat faster, as though – suddenly, somehow – I was holding a handful of priceless jewels. A minute later I bought the book, for 50 pence, and I still own the copy. Sometimes I think that one aspect of my outlook on life is the direct result of this magnificent book – it's my love of the physical world; or, more precisely, the physical world transformed through the use of words."[35]

To reiterate Schulz's appeal to writers with different backgrounds, *The Street of Crocodiles* was also listed, as the only book by a non-African author, among the favourite books of the Kenyan writer and LGBT activist Kenneth Binyavanga Wainaina (1971–2019), named by *Time Magazine* as one of the 100 most influential people of 2014. Wainaina read Schulz in his twenties, presumably as a student of creative writing at the University of East Anglia: "it's a small book, but it made a huge impression on me. . . . The story is surreal and hard to describe; it's a writer's book."[36]

The reception of Schulz in English in the 21st century also involved new intertextual references. In *History of Love* (2005), a novel by the American author Nicole Krauss (b. 1973), who has expressed her admiration for Schulz on a number of occasions,[37] the lost pre-war manuscript of a book by a Polish Jew who emigrated to New York is found in a Spanish edition and translated into English; fragments of this 'translation of a translation' form part of Krauss' 'novel within a novel'. *The Street of Crocodiles* is among the 37 volumes of European classics translated into Arabic – secretly, not for publication – by the isolated protagonist of *An Unnecessary Woman* (2014), a National Book

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35 N. Aslam, "Book of a lifetime: The Street of Crocodiles, By Bruno Schulz", *The Independent*, 22/2/2013 (https://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/books/reviews/book-of-a-lifetime-the-street-of-crocodiles-by-bruno-schulz-8505174.html). Another version of this story is reported a few weeks earlier in *The Guardian* (Aslam's increased media presence was related to his new book coming out): "In Britain as a teenager, his self-imposed crash course in a language he could barely speak was to copy out entire novels by hand. He lists Nabokov's *Lolit*a, Gabriel García Márquez's *Autumn of the Patriarch*, Bruno Schulz's *The Street of Crocodiles*, Toni Morrison's *Beloved* and Cormac McCarthy's *Blood Meridian*. 'That's how I learned English, looking at the sentences', he says." (M. Jaggi, "Nadeem Aslam: a life in writing", *The Guardian* 26/1/2013, https://www.theguardian.com/culture/2013/jan/26/nadeem-aslam-life-in-writing).

36 The other books mentioned are by Guinea's Camara Laye, Ghana's Kojo Laing, Nigerian American Teju Cole, and Nigerian Noo Saro-Wiwa. The interview was published in the South African edition of *Oprah Magazine*, unfortunately, it is no longer retrievable under the original link (http://www.oprahmag.co.za/books/news-interviews/binyavanga-wainaina%27s-favourite-books). Schulz in also mentioned as one of Wainaina's favourite authors in an article at *The Huffington Post* (https://www.huffingtonpost.com/2014/01/28/binyavanga-wainaina-lgbt-rights-_n_4677847.html).

37 For example, chosing to read "Father's Last Escape" on *The New Yorker*'s "Fiction Podcast" in 2012 (https://www.newyorker.com/podcast/fiction/nicole-krauss-reads-bruno-schulz).

Award-nominated novel by the Lebanese-American writer Rabih Allamedine (b. 1959). The English writer Adam Thirlwell (b. 1978), who mentioned Schulz in his erudite book on translation and literature titled *Miss Herbert* (2007), went a step further: for his second, similar patchwork volume, *The Delighted States: A Book of Novels, Romances & Their Unknown Translators...* (2007), in addition to texts by other authors, he actually translated two stories by Schulz based on existing French and English translations, although he eventually used only an excerpt from "August".

A singular literary tribute to Schulz, widely publicized and better known than the above examples, is *Tree of Codes* (2010)[38] – an "erasure book" by Jonathan Safran Foer (b. 1977)[39]. Foer cut out words and phrases from each page of *The Street of Crocodiles*; the remaining text – all Schulz's and Wieniewska's, with Foer's subtractions, but not additions – forms a new story (or, rather, a poetic image), and the trace of what has been removed is still visible as gaps in the new openwork book. The idea preceded the choice of material; Foer considered using an encyclopaedia or one of his own novels, but ultimately settled on Schulz. He had known and admired Schulz's fiction for some time; he also authored the foreword to the 2008 Penguin Classics edition of Schulz's collected stories[40].

In the twenty-first century, a reception trend already initiated by Manguel's anthology of fantastic literature has gained momentum, namely the popularity of Schulz among authors of weird fiction. The British writer China Miéville (b. 1972) used a motto from *Cinnamon Shops* – translated by John Curran Davis, not Wieniewska – in his well-received fantasy crime novel *The City and the City* (2009): "Deep inside the town there opens up, so to speak, double streets, doppelganger streets, mendacious and delusive streets." Two anthologies by American authors also place Schulz in this context: "Sanatorium Under the Sign of the Hourglass" was reprinted by Jeff (b. 1968) and Ann VanderMeer (b. 1957) in their anthology *The Weird: A Compendium of Strange and Dark Stories*,[41] and

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38 In 2015, *Tree of Codes* was adapted for ballet as part of the biennial Manchester International Festival. Co-funded by the Paris Opera Ballet and the European Capital of Culture Aarhus 2017, among others, the production was prepared by famous artists, with choreography by Wayne McGregor, stage design by Olafur Eliasson, and music by Jamie xx. Despite rather cool reception from critics, its publicity further expanded the range of contexts in which Schulz's name appeared, potentially attracting the attention of new readers.

39 See K. Szymanska, "Peeping through the Holes of a Translated Palimpsest in Jonathan Safran Foer's *Tree of Codes*", *Contemporary Literature* 2020, vol. 61(1), pp. 32–65.

40 Between 2004 and 2014, Foer was married to Nicole Krauss. Rather than as a piece of literary gossip, I am mentioning this to signal the popularity of Schulz, perhaps inherited from the triumvirate of Singer, Roth, and Ozick, among a new generation of New York's Jewish-American authors in the 21st century.

41 "Sanatorium Under the Sign of the Hourglass," trans. C. Wieniewska, in: *The Weird: A Compendium of Strange and Dark Stories*, ed. A. & J. VanderMeer, London 2011, p. 248–259.

"The Birds" (in Davis's translation) in a similar collection by Marjorie Sandor (b. 1957).[42]

Recent years saw further interviews and newspaper articles with declarations of appreciation for Schulz from authors representing different generations, genres, cultures, and countries. These include the Canadian poet Anne Michaels (b. 1958), the American novelist Nell Zink (b. 1964), the British crime author Harry Bingham (b. 1967), and writers of the younger generation: the British poet Anna Woodford and the American playwright Annie Baker (b. 1981), winner of the Pulitzer Prize.[43] Within the timeframe of my research, the most recent intertextual reference, in turn, can be found in Sam Shepard's (1943–2017) psychological novel *The One Inside* (2017). In one of the short chapters (titled *Sheet of White Paper*, a Schulzian borrowing), the first-person narrator is reading *Sanatorium* in a roadside diner; across two paragraphs, he recounts the author's story (not entirely accurately). The chapter concludes as follows: "I ordered a short stack of buckwheat flapjacks with extra wild blueberries, a side of bacon, and black coffee. I turned to the chapter called 'Fathers Last Escape', where Bruno describes his dead dad as having metamorphosed into a scorpion. 'A new age began – empty, sober, and joyless, like a sheet of white paper'. (Schulz, after his sister had been lost at on a voyage to America)."[44] With or without license (it was the fictitious maid Adela who was rumoured to have thus disappeared), the fact that Schulz made it to that American diner is a clear sign of a properly deep and robust reception of his work in English.

Let me complement this litany of names and references with a piece of anecdotal evidence. In 2014, at the Conrad Festival in Kraków, I translated Paul Auster's (1948–2024) brief introductions at two screenings of his co-authored films (*Smoke, Blue in the Face*). When, by way of small talk, he politely asked about my studies, I recited my somewhat tired phrase: "I am working on a dissertation about English translations of the Polish-Jewish modernist author [a moment of hesitation] Bruno Schulz, perhaps you might have heard of him?" "Of course I know Bruno Schulz!", Auster replied emphatically, almost as though it was offensive to assume otherwise.

This is not to claim that promoting Schulz in the English-speaking world is no longer necessary, that those who should meet him already have. What I wanted to demonstrate is that our (scholarly/academic) vision of the readers' reception of

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42 "The Birds," trans. J. C. Davis, in: *The Uncanny Reader: Stories from the Shadows*, ed. M. Sandor, New York 2015, p. 165–170.

43 The relevant press mentions have appeared in *The Observer* (22.12/2013), *The New Yorker* (18/5/2015), *The Daily Record* (8/2/2014), *The Journal* (26/2/2013), and *The New York Post* (9/7/2015), respectively.

44 S. Shepard, *The One Inside*, New York 2017, p. 28.

Schulz in English (and probably in other languages as well) is rather limited and thus simplified, because we rarely reach for sources in which his name appears only marginally, for example, when various authors promote their own work. It is not true that only Jewish-American writers of the older (Singer, Roth, Ozick) and younger (Foer, Krauss) generations knew and loved his work. He is widely read by authors of high-brow and popular literature across English-speaking countries. Three of the *The Times*' forty greatest British contemporary writers appreciated him.[45] Some would still say that this is not much, that Schulz deserves to be on a par with Kafka in the canon of world literature. Either way, the evidence amassed above strongly suggests that, thanks to Wieniewska's and, to a lesser extent, John Curran Davis's translations, Levine's new English version can tread on firm ground.

Madeline G. Levine is well aware of the role of Wieniewska's translation: "I fell in love with Bruno Schulz's stories through the undeniable magic of Wieniewska's English version . . . . I was not alone. Wieniewska's translations have been enchanting readers ever since they appeared."[46] Levine deserves great credit not only for her translation endeavour, but also for not trying to promote it by diminishing the achievement of her predecessor. One should hope that the new version, apart from serving English-speaking Schulz scholars as a better, i.e. more faithful, basis for academic interpretations or as designated reading for students in Slavic or CompLit departments, will also, like Wieniewska's, simply delight readers, including the most sensitive and demanding readers: writers.

Translated from Polish by Zofia Ziemann

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45 Angela Carter ranks 10th, Rushdie 13th, McEwan 35th (https://www.the-times.co.uk/article/the-50-greatest-british-writers-since-1945-ws3g69xrf90).

46 M.G. Levine, "Translator's Note", in: B. Schulz, *Collected Stories*, trans. M.G. Levine, Northwestern University Press 2018, p. xiii.

Paweł Sitkiewicz: Phantasmagorias. Some Thoughts on Bruno Schulz's Cinematic Imagination

Did Bruno Schulz go to the cinema? Did he like films? What did he most enjoy watching? Has cinema left its mark on his work? The surviving letters, memories of the writer, and his literary texts will not help us find a clear-cut, let alone exhaustive, answer to these questions. From the fragmentary accounts and by reading between the lines one can, however, make a few assumptions. But do we even have the right to speculate that far? And if so, to what end?

The life and work of Schulz have been subject to hermeneutic experiments for the past several decades. Scholars fascinated by the author's literary and artistic tastes—not to mention those who seek to understand his thoughts and emotions—must rely on snippets of memories and, above all, texts and drawings. In my opinion, the fascination with the Drohobych writer, who left behind a rather modest body of work in terms of quantity, is like deciphering a forgotten language or reconstructing a lost culture. Therefore, any element that allows for a better understanding of the Schulzian work in progress—such as accounts of his contemporaries, recovered letters and artworks, as well as interpretations and hypotheses—brings us closer to solving the ultimate mystery of this elusive oeuvre. At the end of this journey, of course, awaits the legendary novel *The Messiah*, which—as numerous schulzologists presumably believe—would provide answers to all these questions.

Schulz's generation, not excluding his fellow writers, was almost unanimously fascinated by cinema, though it was not appropriate to speak about it overtly at the time. Most poets and prose writers of the interwar period were to some extent involved with the Seventh Art. Słonimski wrote film reviews, Kaden-Bandrowski—novels that were later adapted for the screen, Irzykowski focused on film theory, Witkacy appeared twice on camera, while Anatol Stern wrote screenplays. The list goes on. "Given the ubiquity of film screenings themselves and the variety of venues, it must be assumed that […] by around 1907 it was simply impossible to avoid an encounter with cinema"[1], wrote Małgorzata Hendrykowska.

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1 M. Hendrykowska, *Śladami tamtych cieni. Film w kulturze polskiej przełomu stuleci 1895–1914*, Poznań 1993, p. 219.

A dozen or so years later, during the interwar period, the ritual of going to the cinema became widespread, especially among the middle class, urban residents, administrative staff, children and young people. When the first film screenings were taking place on Polish soil, Schulz was of school age. As established by Jerzy Ficowski, Bruno's brother, Izydor, ran the "Urania" cinema in Drohobych at the beginning of the 20th century, where the future writer must have spent many an evening[2]. As a result, he gained a solid film education. He later included descriptions of these screenings in the volume *Sanatorium Under the Sign of the Hourglass*. "I spent the evenings of that summer in the town's only cinema, staying there until the end of the last performance"[3], says the narrator of *A Night in July*. Due to the deeply autobiographical nature of Schulz's literary work, this confession may be viewed as a kind of creed. Ficowski openly calls Schulz a film buff [*kinoman*] adding that cinema influenced his "imagination and work", and that his older brother's picture house, along with his father's shop, constituted the "mythological fodder and poetic infatuation" of his youth[4]. He also mentions Halina and Józef Wittlin, who recall Schulz expressing his "enthusiastic interest" in Walt Disney's animated films.

And here we encounter a problem. Even in the film passage in *A Night in July*, the cinema impressions focus mainly on the lobby and the cashier's box instead of the repertoire or the magic of moving images. The narrator mentions "the cinema hall, with its fleeting lights and shadows" and "the fantastic adventures of the film". There is a sense of detachment or even disregard in these words. Moreover, in Schulz's other short stories, his brother's cinema is nowhere to be found, instead, his father's shop serves as a symbolic centre in the private mythology of Drohobych. This one brief reference is hardly enough for an avid film enthusiast. In Schulz's prose, a much more significant role is played by literature, painting drawing, and even circus.

In my opinion, Schulz's attitude towards cinema may have been somewhat schizophrenic. This affliction was common to the entire generation of that time. The problem is best illustrated by the case of Stanisław Ignacy Witkiewicz, a close friend of Schulz, whose film preferences we are more familiar with. "Witkacy enjoyed cinema but didn't hold it in esteem", wrote Katarzyna Taras, "he made use of its techniques but spoke of it unfavourably (as did his characters), despite being aware of the role of cinema in 20th-century culture"[5]. Witkacy's taste in films was by no means refined. From a letter written by

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2 J. Ficowski, *Regiony wielkiej herezji i okolice. Bruno Schulz i jego mitologia*, Sejny 2002, p. 130.

3 B. Schulz, *A Night in July*, trans. C. Wieniewska, in: id., *The Collected Works of Bruno Schulz*, ed. J. Ficowski, London 1998, p. 177.

4 J. Ficowski, op. cit., pp. 133–134.

5 K. Taras, *Witkacy i film*, Warsaw 2005, p. 99.

Jadwiga Witkiewiczowa, we learn that her husband was especially fond of Disney cartoons (!), as well as films featuring Rudolf Valentino, Chaplin and Keaton, i.e. trivial, genre-specific things[6]. While shaving, he liked to impersonate popular actors, and afterwards he would seamlessly return to his theory of Pure Form. It may have been similar in Schulz's case. In private conversations he would praise the Micky Mouse cartoons yet remained cautious about using film references in his literary work.

For those growing up in the ambiance of Young Poland and the reverence for traditional art, embracing cinema required some effort. However, Schulz was not an old-fashioned sage in an ivory tower, lost in "spiritual heights". He was a humble teacher uncertain of his own talent. He enjoyed striking a theatrical pose, as evidenced by his self-portraits in countless arrangements and roles, as well as photographs—especially the famous masquerade with Witkacy, Jan Kochanowski and Roman Jasiński, and the carefully staged portrait in slippers. He had a weakness for anything low and degraded. In a letter from Paris, he did not marvel at the architecture or cultural life, but rather the Parisian women, ease of manners, "coquettes" and pace of life, essentially the urban landscape, of which the cinema was a constant element at that time[7]. Before the Great War, the cinema was frequently likened to a prostitute, as it shamelessly exposed what should remain hidden and enticed passers-by with cheap allure[8]. A trip to a small, shabby cinema offered a thrill comparable to visiting a cabaret or perhaps even a strip show. Maybe Drohobych's cinemas could be found on the Street of Crocodiles in the district of "modernity and metropolitan corruption".

When reflecting on Bruno Schulz's film experience, one could take a shortcut and disregard how many times he bought a cinema ticket and whether he did indeed leave only after the final screening. As has been written many times before, the entire culture of the interwar period was imbued with film, which influenced the style of novels, trends in painting and graphic art, theatrical performance as well as poetic language. Film created a new kind of visual experience. Paradoxically, it freed prose from the necessity of a realistic portrayal of the world. One may call it a model symbiosis between the two arts: on the one hand, cinematic imagery brought new life to narrative strategies in novels, while on the other hand, Polish cinema of the interwar period was heavily influenced by literature, drawing inspiration from it to an excessive degree[9]. Marshall

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6 After: ibid., p. 96–97.

7 B. Schulz, *The Collected Works of Bruno Schulz*, op. cit., p. 442.

8 See: Y. Tsivian, *Early Cinema in Russia and Its Cultural Reception*, trans. A. Bodger, London––New York 2005, p. 27.

9 An exhaustive description of this relationship is given by A. Madej, *Między filmem a literaturą. Szkic*

McLuhan argued that the medium is never neutral. Its "message" transforms the entire culture.

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Even if we agree with Ficowski, we will still not get answers to the key questions: in what way did cinema influence the imagination and work of Bruno Schulz? What does it mean to write in cinematic style?

When examining this question, it is easy to make a mistake. Film critics and literary scholars unfortunately tend to attribute cinematic fascination to people who could not have been acquainted with cinematography, as they died before its debut. The second common mistake is defining the essence of cinematic imagination according to the experiences of someone brought up in the second half of the 20th century. From this perspective, the cinematic quality of prose mainly refers to: dynamic composition, image editing, rhythmisation, a fast pace of events, a kaleidoscope of parallel threads, as well as references to popular genre and plot conventions. However, Schulz's prose has little in common with such a definition of cinematicity and may even contradict it. The matter unfortunately turns out to be more complex.

It is true that cinema in the 1920s and 1930s, particularly after the silent era, was already a mature art form fully equipped with means of expression. Nevertheless, the experiences of viewers—especially in Poland, pieced together from three partitions—could vary greatly. This was indeed a period of abundant revolutionary changes in the approach to cinema: from a scientific tool to so-called cinema of attractions, to a social phenomenon and a new artistic language. The generation born in the 19th century and growing up in the early 20th century was fascinated by a novelty that bore little resemblance to modern-day film. A visit to a makeshift picture house, not to mention a travelling cinema, involved a different scale of attraction compared to a feature-length screening at a Warsaw or, especially, Parisian picture palace. In short, during the interwar period "cinematic quality" was a concept understood more broadly than it is today, and the range of on-screen pleasures was richer and more intricate.

Moreover, the nature of film inspiration was dependent on the writer's social circles. Publicists of the interwar period understood these nuances and were able to distinguish between different strains of "film fever". Fascinated by the "city, mass and machine" the literary avant-garde regarded cinema differently to, say, prose writers growing up in the culture of Young Poland, such as Władysław

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o powieści filmowej, in: *Film polski wobec innych sztuk*, ed. A. Helman, A. Madej, Katowice 1979. The present article refers to her conclusions.

Reymont, Stanisław Przybyszewski or Stefan Żeromski. The attitude towards "moving pictures" was different for the modernist Witkacy compared to Dołęga-Mostowicz, whose readers likely enjoyed hanging out at picture houses. The "mad rush" of cinema was something entirely different from what Stefania Zahorska described as the cinematic interweaving of different layers of reality and "exuberant sensualism" in the experimental prose of the 1930s[10].

Stefania Zahorska, one of the most prominent essayists and film critics of the interwar period, argued that cinema influenced how the fictional world is described in novels. As a result, writers can no longer rely on straightforward comparisons or epithets. Young literature, "analytical and sensuous", uses metaphor in a dynamic way. According to this concept, cinematic quality implies a specific model of visual imagination and has nothing to do with either genre conventions, editing ellipsis or fast-paced narrative. It can be identified by a particular type of description that makes images materialise in the imagination in a tangible and vivid yet seamless manner: one scene transitions into another, and a single word sets off a whole cascade of images. "In a slow-motion photo that the writer moves before his reader's eyes, all the features of the objects described are exaggerated. They become individual, singular, one-time, sensuous, tangible [..]"[11], wrote Zahorska in 1934. As an example, she used "the young author, Bruno Schultz [!]".

If one follows Zahorska's line of thought, then a writer raised in a film culture, especially one who liked to experiment with form, could not, at the time, have written: "Mother and I walked through the Market Square. The heat was unbearable." That is why Bruno Schulz unravels a dreamlike vision before us: "Thus my mother and I ambled along the two sunny sides of Market Square, guiding our broken shadows along the houses as over a keyboard. Under our soft steps the squares of the paving stones slowly filed past—some the pale pink of human skin, some golden, some blue-grey, all flat, warm and velvety in the sun, like sundials, trodden to the point of obliteration, into blessed nothingness"[12]. By weaving together images of the walk in the blinding sunlight, great shadows flitting across the buildings, and the sight of cobblestones that seem to come alive in the heat of the air, the narrator transcends the boundaries of conventional description, bringing to life a world composed of sensory experiences.

This kind of quality should be traced back to the origins of the cinema. Even the first essayists and film critics were seduced by the animistic and analytical traits of the Lumière brothers' invention. They discovered that, while the cinematograph might seem to merely capture reality in motion, it actually allows one to look at it from a distance, breaking down space, and even time, into individual

10 S. Zahorska, *Co powieść zawdzięcza filmowi?*, "Kurier Literacko-Naukowy" 1934, no. 29, p. 3.
11 Ibid.
12 B. Schulz, *August*, trans. C. Wieniewska, in: id., *The Collected Works...*, op. cit., p. 10.

elements. It was not until cinematograph that people noticed how much poetry was hidden in trivial images: leaves blowing in the wind or the sea waves hitting the shore. Despite appearances, admiration for the sensory aspects of the world captured on film was not limited to early cinema. It continued to play an essential role during the interwar period. "One must understand that visibility, visual richness, saturation with visual impressions, their novelty and approach to the spectacle of life itself—in cinema all of this is *everything*"[13], wrote Pavel Muratov in 1925. Many more similar statements can be found in anthologies about early film theory.

One does not need to do thorough research to confirm Zahorska's observation about the "cinematic" reception of Schulz's works before 1939. This means that *The Cinnamon Shops* and *Sanatorium*... were already defined according to the experience of the contemporary viewer, who was most familiar with silent cinema of attractions. Reviews often highlighted the dynamic and sensuous nature of the diegetic world. When trying to figure out Schulz's style, many referred to the photographic or quasi-cinematic metaphor. A "Tygodnik Ilustrowany" critic described it as a "bizarre vision", "a dream filled with delusions and horrors"[14]. A columnist from "Dziennik Poznański" wrote about the "phantasmagority" and "phantomness" in the prose of the Drohobycz writer (note that back then films were called "phantasmagorias"), as well as "visions" (suggesting that *The Cinnamon Shops* are perceived visually like cinema)[15]. Henryk Vogler dubbed Schulz a sensualist, noticing how he "catches the external, sensuous side of reality [like a camera—P. S.], from this reality there exists for him only an orgiastic dance of colour, light and sound"[16]. Moreover, in Vogler's view, Schulzian drawings "bear witness to author's pursuit of a greater, optical, sensuous representation of the world". Although Vogler does not mention the word "cinema", the optical capturing of reality in motion evokes clear associations, not only for film experts. As for Emil Breiter writing for "Wiadomości Literackie", he compared Schulz's work to a kind of shadow play or magic lantern—spectacles belonging to film prehistory. "The ability to exaggerate the details", wrote Breiter, "to give them new colours and extraordinary possibilities is a special kind of distortion of reality. It is a reality of shadows, cast by small objects onto the screen of a wall, illuminated by the final flicker of dying candle"[17].

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13 P. Muratow, *Kinematograf [1925]*, in *Cudowny kinemo. Rosyjska myśl filmowa*, transl. and comp. by T. Szczepański, B. Żyłko, Gdańsk 2003, p. 91.

14 J. J., *Sen pełen zmor…*, "Tygodnik Ilustrowany" 1934, no. 19, p. 385.

15 K. Troczyński, *'Sklepy cynamonowe' B. Szulca*, "Dziennik Poznański" 1934, no. 101, p. 2.

16 H. Vogler, *Dwa światy romantyczne. O Brunonie Schulzu i Witoldzie Gombrowiczu*, "Skamander" 1938, n. 99/101, p. 247.

17 E. Breiter, *'Sanatorium pod Klepsydrą' Schulza*, "Wiadomości Literackie" 1938, no. 23, p. 4.

In Bruno Schulz's biography we will also find arguments confirming his cinematic way of constructing the fictional world. Schulz revealed in a survey for "Wiadomości Literackie" that the starting point in his creative process was a snapshot, a singular form which, I assume, must grow, swell, transform into sensuous images and keeps evolving. The first seed of *Birds* was supposedly "a certain flickering of the wallpaper, pulsating in a dark field of vision"; as for *Spring*: "the image of a stamp album, radiating from the center of vision, winking with unheard-of power of allusion"[18]. It proves that Schulz, as a prose writer, was a visualist, a sensualist; he valued "a certain dynamic state" more than a conventional plot. His sensitivity to moving images (on the verge of abstraction) and to the play of colour, light and coincidental forms even brings him closer to the filmmakers of the avant-garde circle, who were interested in escaping from a realistic representation of the world. (As a side note, we should add that Feliks Kuczkowski, a theorist of the so-called synthetic-visionary film, referred to abstract cinematic painting as moving wallpaper)[19].

Schulz's dynamic imagination has been repeatedly discussed by scholars of his work, as well as by filmmakers who have dared to adapt his work. Here, I would like to point out a few accurate observations. In his text on the visual narration of the Drohobych writer, Zbigniew Taranienko highlighted the fluidity of the created world, the numerous metamorphoses, and the "plasticity of matter"; he also wrote about "the animisation of inanimate objects and the anthropomorphisation of animals accompanied by reification of fragments from the organic world"[20]. The spirit of animism was also observed by Jan Gondowicz, writing about "blinking matter" (it is no coincidence that his text appeared both in "Kwartalnik Filmowy" and in the volume on the grey areas of Schulzology). Gondowicz also discovered the instability of Schulz's drawings[21]. He noticed in them the "art of inversion"—the transformation of images viewed from different perspectives. According to Gondowicz, the drawings conceal seemingly invisible meanings. They are transformed before our eyes: for example, a cat when viewed upside down turns into a dog, and a Hasid transforms into Mephistopheles. Images of this kind, i.e. inversions, anamorphoses, hidden figures, are sometimes regarded as the prehistory of cinema, as they perform a function similar to that of optical toys—using

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18 *W pracowniach pisarzy i uczonych polskich [ankieta]*, "Wiadomości Literackie" 1939, no. 17, p. 5. An excerpt from this interview was translated in: J. Ficowski, *Regions of the Great Heresy*, trans. T. Robertson, New York—London 2003, pp. 146—147.

19 F. Kuczkowski, *Wspomnienia o filmie przyszłości*, typescript in Filmoteka Narodowa archive, signature A-129.

20 Z. Taranienko, *Narracja plastyczna w prozie Schulza*, in: *Teatr pamięci Brunona Schulza*, ed. J. Ciechowicz, H. Kasjaniuk, Gdynia 1993, p. 46.

21 J. Gondowicz, *Mrugająca materia*, in: *Białe plamy schulzologii*, ed. M. Kitowska-Łysiak, Lublin 2010. See also: "Kwartalnik Filmowy" 2009, no. 65.

simple measures they attempt to convey the illusion of movement. Schulz's drawings sometimes seem like avant-garde film projects—with endless variations on the same themes, obsessively recurring motifs (especially self-portraits), which often emerge from a tangle of forms only to get lost again in the chaos of lines.

Krzysztof Miklaszewski, fascinated by the cinematic quality of Schulz's prose, referred to his short stories as "shooting scripts written in poetic prose", but at the same time noticed something important: "an excess of possibilities, resulting from the graphic saturation of the image"[22]. It is precisely this "saturation" that lies at the heart of the problem. It is what makes the short stories from *The Cinnamon Shops* and *Sanatorium Under the Sign of the Hourglass* seem cinematic, yet difficult to adapt. If someone wanted to use such a storyboard they would be doomed to fail. "This extraordinary world cannot be depicted", wrote Wojciech Grabowski. "It exists only as you read. Only those who realise this have a chance to make creative use" of Schulz's literary oeuvre[23]. The Quay Brothers, whose *The Street of Crocodiles* (1986) is considered one of the most successful adaptations of the Drohobych writer's fiction, rejected his family mythology and characters, simplified the events, but—according to the filmmakers themselves—remained faithful to the idea expressed in *The Treatise on Mannequins* (also known as *Treatise on Tailors' Dummies*): "We tried to find that borderland of fragility, where in the semi-darkness one can peek at the vibrations and trembling of things, as if trying to resurrect, re-animate themselves"[24]. It seems that they instinctively guessed the essence of the cinematic nature of *The Cinnamon Shops*. Paradoxically, this kind of cinematic nature is almost untranslatable into the language of contemporary cinema, as it refers to the original, animistic qualities of the Seventh Art, rejecting fast-paced action or filmic narrative techniques. Directors who, in their adaptations of Schulz's prose, focused more attention on ideas than poetics, have without exception failed artistically.

So if one were to look for cinematic inspiration in Bruno Schulz's work, it would certainly not be in the elegant film theatres and not in the 1930s. Bruno Schulz's literary imagination seems more in line with the poetics of early cinema (or perhaps even its prehistory!) than with the formally mature film of the classical period, such as Walt Disney's cartoons. Schulz set great store by the "iron capital of the spirit" deposited in childhood, writing that creativity consists in the exegesis of "the secret entrusted to them at the outset"[25]. Perhaps, then, the

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22 K. Miklaszewski, Zatracenie się w Schulzu. Historia pewnej fascynacji, Warszawa 2009, pp. 148–149.

23 W. Grabowski, Schulz w Krakowie, "Kino" 1993, no. 1, p. 33.

24 *Gabinet Braci Quay. Z Braćmi Quay rozmawiają Kuba Mikurda & Michał Oleszczyk*, in: *Trzynasty miesiąc. Kino Braci Quay*, ed. K. Mikurda, A. Prodeus, Kraków–Warszawa 2010, p. 97.

25 *Bruno Schulz: An Essay for S. I. Witkiewicz*, in: *The Collected Works of Bruno Schulz*, op. cit., p. 368.

cinematic inspirations (or even fascinations) were instilled unconsciously, during his first visits to the local picture house [*iluzjon*], or maybe they stemmed from his youthful admiration for the magic of moving images, which he so beautifully described in his short story *A Night in July*? The aura of film screenings before the First World War seems to confirm this hypothesis, which, it should be noted, has already been formulated by Jerzy Ficowski.

Early audiences were rarely interested in the films themselves, as their plots were mostly petty and formulaic (which is why the narrator in *A Night in July* does not mention the repertoire at all). They were more excited by the very atmosphere of the cinema, likened by contemporaries to an "underwater realm", a place both mysterious and threatening, as well as the creation of a non-existent world in the image and likeness of off-screen reality. The small provincial cinema was dark and warm (the apparatus would heat up significantly, it was stuffy, as the rooms had no ventilation), and there was a strange smell, since gas burners were often used as a source of light. The projector light had a yellowish hue, the silver-plated screens and the monotonous sound of the rattling cinematograph intensified the sense of unreality. Whatever appeared on screen would still arouse the enthusiasm of the audience, who were fascinated by the dynamism of forms, the movement of something that should have remained lifeless. Many screenings began with a still photograph which, after turning the crank, suddenly came to life, arousing a mixture of awe and amazement. The simplest tricks, from a train heading towards the screen to Meliesian magic of disappearances and transformations, unsettled the audience. It is this kind of experience that film theorists inspired by psychoanalysis compare to a waking dream, a Platonic cave or even fetal life. In all three states, the subject perceives phantasmagorias—distorted images of the real world. Exactly as in the short story *A Night in July*, where the cinema theatre is an unreal place and "time stood still". The spell only breaks when the protagonist crosses the glass doors of the waiting room and walks out all alone into the immensity of a July night.

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Defining Bruno Schulz's cinematic imagination according to the nature of early cinema allows us to perceive his literary work somewhat differently. It is not only about the language or the narration style, but also the sense of those ambiguous images. Can we thus consider poetic visions in *The Cinnamon Shops* and *Sanatorium…* as variations on films seen as a child in his brother's picture house? I do not think we have the right to do that. It is a shame that the famous letter to Witkacy did not start with something like: "The origins of my writing get lost in a mythological haze. I could not yet write well when I was already covering the pages with my first stories. At first, they were just film stories". If this were

the case, interpreting Schulz's vision through a cinematic lens would have solid grounds.

Ultimately, it is the readers who decide which interpretive framework to use. Perhaps the cinematic sensibility of contemporary viewer, more common than before the war, allows us to better understand why these two volumes of short stories were such a success in the history of Polish literature. To the generation raised on audiovisual culture from an early age Schulz spoke convincingly and up front—his poetic prose revealed hidden meanings for both literary experts and all the readers sensitive to the "plasticity of matter". Schulz's biography at least gives us the right not to hastily dismiss filmic tropes in his short stories. And there are a lot of them. Unfortunately, the majority are hidden away under multi-layered metaphors. It is a true paradise for psychoanalytic film critics who could easily prove that numerous phantasmagorias are literary processed and heavily mythologised memories from early XX-century cinematography. The power of mythologising causes film screenings to acquire characteristics of the prehistory of cinema.

The short stories repeatedly feature the motif of the sky becoming a screen, once even decorated with curtains; fantastic and even abstract images are projected onto it, made up of either celestial bodies or a flock of birds. An equally frequent motif is shadow play, generally incidental, evoked by an "oil lamp with a spotlight" or a dying candle. Allusions are made several times to the camera obscura, the oldest projector in human history. In *The Age of Genius*, a "flood of paintings" flows in through an open window, creating a quasi-film show on the wall: "That dark room came to life only by the reflections of the houses far beyond the window, showing their colours in its depth as in a camera obscura"[26]. A similar effect can be found in *The Cinnamon Shops* and *Visitation*.

Cinematic associations are also evoked by animated drawings (*The Age of Genius*); the wind rustling the pages of The Book, "merging the colours and shapes", and "the crystals hanging from the lamp" refracting light and casting rainbow colours onto the walls of the room (*The Book*); a photoshoot with dream-like decorations (*Spring*); the lenses through which the protagonist observes the world (*Dead Season*); "a kind of enormous bellows", a combination of a telescope, camera obscura and automobile (*Sanatorium Under the Sign of the Hourglass*); and countless "illuminations" and "reflexes" on walls, wallpapers and vaults.

The most cinematic story is, in my opinion, *The Comet* published in "Wiadomości Literackie". It can even be interpreted as a sequence of night film screenings projected onto the sky illuminated by the comet filtered through Schulzian. The magic tricks of Georges Méliès with multiplicated rabbits,

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26 B. Schulz, *The Age of Genius*, in: ibid., p. 120.

burlesque cyclists, the transformation of a flickering and blinking sculpture into Aunt Wanda ("true image"), and especially a chimney which is neither a telescope, nor a microscope, nor a camera. In its lense the Moon turns into a brain, and then an embryo. Perhaps Schulz was referring to a technique popular at the time known as the "cat's eye" (the aperture obscures the edges of the frame so that the image has a circular shape; it was mainly used for large close-ups, for example to create a magnifying glass or microscope effect, but also to isolate a critical part of the frame). Near the end of the story, as the comet disappears over the horizon, the narrator announces that "the cosmic perspectives were hurriedly rolled down" (meaning the screen's sheet) and everyday activities were resumed.

The study of film tropes in Schulz's prose may help answer the question posed at the outset: if Izydor's cinema supposedly had the same function as his father's shop, why does cinema appear only once in the short stories, and that in his early work, published almost a decade after it was written? In my opinion, cinema appears much more frequently, but it is impossible to separate the individual treasures within this "iron capital of the spirit". Schulz undertook an interesting process in his imagination. He decided to recount blurred memories of early cinema—an extraordinary and ethereal phenomenon in itself—in a "cinematic" and poetic style, and then rewrote them into the language of a private mythology, once again deforming the already faded images, and finally blending them with other threads. What has emerged from all this is a phantasmagoria with a cinematic power of expression, but how far were they from the original fascination with "the fantastic adventures of the film". This explains why something like a faithful film adaptation of Schulz's prose—inspired by the atmosphere of early cinema, difficult to reconstruct, and written in a cinematic style that, after all, refers to film prehistory—seems like an impossible task.

Cinematicity can sometimes be far from cinematic. In Schulz's short stories everything is possible.

Translated from Polish by Natalia Dore and Kamil Walczak

Paweł Sitkiewicz: The Cabinet of Dr. Gotard. Bruno Schulz and German Expressionist Film

Sanatorium Under the Sign of the Hourglass resembles, in terms of plot, Robert Wiene's most famous German Expressionist film, *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari* (1920). The similarities do not end with the storyline. They also extend to the expressionist creation of the diegetic world, characters, atmosphere of mystery and many significant details which I will refer to further on in this essay.

Is it plausible that Bruno Schulz saw a film about a demonic hypnotist and his medium, and was then inspired by the unusual plot when writing a story about Dr Gotard's sanatorium? Of course—a realist would say. After all, many poets and writers of the interwar period made reference to cinema in their work. It is nevertheless difficult to prove such a claim. A sceptic would say that the analogy is at best superficial or even coincidental, at worst delusional.

However, I am not the first to ask about the affinity between Schulz's prose and German Expressionist Film. It was pointed out by Janusz Rudnicki in his lecture *Fabryka waty cukrowej i kino 'Urania'* [The Candyfloss Factory and the 'Urania' Cinema], delivered during the Schulz Festival[1]. Interestingly, Rudnicki arrives at—in my opinion—extremely accurate conclusions (I will cite them at the end) despite following the wrong track. He finds seemingly solid proof: a poster featuring Asta Nielsen in the short story *A Night in July*, which he attributes to Georg Wilhelm Pabst's expressionist film *Joyless Street*, screened at Izydor Schulz's picture house [*iluzjon*] in Drohobych. This argument is, unfortunately, easily refuted. Firstly, the film is from 1925, while *A Night in July* describes a child's experience of visiting his brother's cinema operating before the First World War. Secondly, of various known posters for *Joyless Street,* none of them resemble Schulz's description. Thirdly, aside from big cities, original posters were rarely imported from the producer; more often they were made by a local artist, or even a printer, based on materials from the distributor. Finally, *Joyless Street* has little in common with German Expressionism: it was the first in a series of celebrated realist films of the 1920s, categorised as part of the New

1 J. Rudnicki, *Fabryka waty cukrowej i kino 'Urania'*, lecture during Bruno Schulz. Festiwal 2015, Wrocław, 15 X 2015.

Objectivity movement, which told a story of post-war poverty and hopelessness without Caligarian stylisation.

In my opinion, Schulz had in mind one of the famous melodramas with Asta Nielsen, who was the most popular actress in Europe on the eve of the Great War. The investigation must therefore be carried out with greater diligence. Unfortunately, we are further forced to rely on circumstantial evidence. Schulz does not say a word about either *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari* or any other film in any of the surviving letters.

The only clue in the correspondence is a meeting in 1938 with Siegfried Kracauer, a brilliant writer, essayist and film critic who began writing a book during the war with the telling title *From Caligari to Hitler* (published in 1947). It was in this book that he included his most famous interpretation of German Expressionist Film as a barometer of the social sentiment of Germany fleeing from freedom towards tyranny. "Perhaps it would be best if you wrote to him immediately from Paris and asked him for a *rendez-vous*"[2], Maria Chazen advised Schulz, giving Kracauer's address and telephone number. He seized the opportunity. A surviving postcard proves that they had arranged a meeting, so it is possible that they discussed contemporary culture, including film, which was at the forefront of the German author's interests at the time.

We know that Schulz could have seen Wiene's masterpiece, if not in Drohobych, then in nearby Lviv. The film was distributed by the Cinematographic Film Rental Office "Gladyator", which had exclusive rights to Małopolska (Lesser Poland) and Galicia. Based on press reports, *Caligari*, subtitled *A Madman Among Madmen*, was screened in Lviv from 7 March 1921 by as many as two theatres: "Marysieńka" and "Kopernik" (in towns and villages, as a rule, care was taken not to duplicate the repertoires). Since the office had two copies of the title, the film most likely reached Drohobych. *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari* returned to the screens two years later, but probably only in Warsaw.

Bruno Schulz may also have seen other German films from this period. They were quite popular in interwar Poland, as the figures show. In the 1920s, repertoire imported from the western neighbour accounted, at its peak, for nearly 60 per cent of imports, especially in the former Prussian and Austrian partitions, where the influence of German-language culture was strong despite the objections of censors[3]. For example, in 1923, 181 German films were purchased, in 1924—194, and three years later—as many as 217. As a result, all the classics of German expressionism were shown in Poland, including: *Metropolis*, *Destiny*, and *Doctor*

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2 B. Schulz, *Księga listów*, collected and prepared by J. Ficowski, Gdańsk 2008, p. 297.

3 Data quoted from the article: W. Jewsiewicki, *Filmy niemieckie na ekranach polskich kin w okresie międzywojennym*, "Przegląd Zachodni" 1967, no. 5.

Mabuse the Gambler by Fritz Lang, *Raskolnikow* by Wiene, *The Golem* by Paul Wegener, *The Student of Prague* by Henrik Galeen, *Waxworks* by Paul Leni, as well as films loosely related to the movement, among them *The Last Laugh* and *Phantom* by Friedrich Wilhelm Murnau[4]. Films classified as New Objectivity were also screened, including Pabst's *Joyless Street*.

Given the statistics, there is a high probability that Schulz was well acquainted with German film of the 1920s, especially as he enjoyed going to the cinema. According to Jerzy Ficowski, he was an outright cinephile who caught the film bug as a child in his brother's picture house. Ficowski places Izydor Schulz's "Urania" cinema on par with Jakub's shop, considering it a valuable source of literary inspiration, or even "mythological fodder"[5].

Even before the war, cinematic elements were noticed in *The Cinnamon Shops* (also known as *The Street of Crocodiles*) and *Sanatorium Under the Sign of the Hourglass*. The first to draw attention to this was Stefania Zahorska, who wrote that the cinematic nature of Schulz's stories implies a particular model of visual imagination: the images he creates are tangible and at the same time flowing and sensuous[6]. It is a literature of dynamic metaphor, pulsating and undergoing continuous transformations. Ignacy Fik wrote in a similar vein, based on the general assumption that cinema has influenced the construction of time in contemporary prose. It is no longer limited to the present and past tense but explores "all illusions, inaccuracies of perception, side associations, mistakes, and sensory anomalies, fighting for their equality with real reality"[7]. These reflections were inspired by his reading of *The Cinnamon Shops*. According to Fik, Schulz "mimics cinematic reality" and "actualises the imagination [...] of abnormal people". Many critics were not so literal,ring the Drohobych writer's work to phantasmagoria, a magic lantern or shadows cast on a screen.[8] Therefore, as has been shown, the filmic nature of Schulz's prose was perceived as inherently expressionist and was associated neither with photographic realism nor with dynamic montage of images.

Besides, Schulz was always seen as an expressionist writer, rooted in the tradition of E.T.A. Hoffmann and Gustav Meyrink. One gets the impression that before the war this was treated as an accusation, a sign of epigonism, especially since Expressionism in literature and theatre was no longer in fashion and was associated with Young Poland's effusiveness. "He lays down his paints coarsely

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4 Based on pre-war press and advertisments.

5 J. Ficowski, *Regiony wielkiej herezji i okolice. Bruno Schulz i jego mitologia*, Sejny 2002, pp. 133–134.

6 S. Zahorska, *Co powieść zawdzięcza filmowi?*, "Kurier Literacko-Naukowy" 1934, no. 29, p. 3.

7 I. Fik, *Co za czasy!*, "Nasz Wyraz" 1938, no. 7/8, pp. 1–2.

8 More on this issue in the following text: *Phantasmagorias. Some Thoughts on Bruno Schulz's Cinematic Imagination*, "Schulz/Forum" [current volume].

and excessively, smears them, dabbles in them, showing a complete incapacity for refinement"[9], Stefan Napierski wrote about *Sanatorium Under the Sign of the Hourglass*, accusing Schulz of excess, "sloppiness" and decadence, and even form over substance. Instead of the real world, the critic saw only "puppets, marionettes, fetishes that have slipped out of the waxworks cabinet", as well as an abundance of costume, which reminded him of Meyrink's panopticon and thus—to put it bluntly—with the type of sensibility that is the root of German Expressionist Cinema.

Schulz's association with Expressionism as an art movement probably dates back to the period before the Great War. In those days he was studying in Vienna, which was still regarded as a breeding ground for artistic innovations in European art. This movement, being in its heyday, had a strong influence on the intellectual climate of the time. As Witold Nawrocki writes, "Generationally Bruno Schulz could have belonged to the younger group of expressionists, had he ever wished to associate with any artistic group. However, one thing cannot be ruled out: he must have looked upon their activity with interest [...]"[10]. According to Nowicki, Jakub's lecture on mannequins "sounds like a quotation from an expressionist manifesto". Thus, a fascination with Expressionist cinema would have been a natural complement to Schulz's youthful interests.

Although *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari* was released in Polish cinemas in the summer of 1921 with much fanfare—as the cultural event of the season and one of the most renowned films of the decade—it did not attract mass audiences. "*The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari* left the screens after a couple of days", wrote Adam Ważyk in his memoirs. "I managed to watch it at the last screening. There were only a handful of viewers in the theatre, foreign cars from the diplomatic corps were parked outside the cinema"[11]. Ważyk's account corresponds to the mentions in the press. It was a bad time to show masterpieces. On 18 March 1921, a peace treaty was signed with Bolshevik Russia. The war that put the newly reborn Poland's independence at stake, had only just ended. In a devastated country mired in crisis, an eccentric film by an unknown director without any big names on the posters could not elicit the emotions it deserved. The audience apparently preferred light and escapist repertoire to the dark depths of Expressionism.

Nevertheless, *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari* was a film that had such a great impact on Polish prose writers and poets that it cannot be ignored, as Leon Trystan noted as early as 1923[12]. There was even an informal club of writers fascinated by

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9 S. Napierski, *Dwugłos o Schulzu*, "Ateneum" 1939, no. 1, pp. 156–163.

10 W. Nawrocki, *Bruno Schulz i ekspresjonizm*, "Życie Literackie" 1976, no. 43, p. 7.

11 A. Ważyk, *Kwestia gustu*, Warszawa 1966, p. 29.

12 L. Trystan, *Wznowienia: Gabinet Dr. Caligari*, "Film Polski" 1923, no. 1, p. 27. It was also pointed out in later years by W. Otto (*Literatura i film w kulturze polskiej dwudziestolecia międzywojennego*,

Film still from **The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari**, directed by Robert Wiene, 1920.
Bruno Schulz, **Joseph and Dr. Gotard**, ca. 1933.

Film still from **Raskolnikow**, directed by Robert Wiene, 1923.
Bruno Schulz, **A two-horse carriage driving through the city, geometric drawing**, before 1930
Bruno Schulz, **A woman and two men against a geometric city landscape**, before 1930

The Cabinet. Among them were Antoni Słonimski, Stanisław Ignacy Witkiewicz, Karol Irzykowski, Adam Ważyk, Tytus Czyżewski, Leon Trystan, Anatol Stern and, more broadly, the milieu of the avant-garde enthusiasts.

In an enthusiastic review written in poetic style in 1920, Słonimski praises Wiene's film, the work of a madman and genius, calling it the beginning of a new artistic discipline and, at the same time, a sensation—a "poisonous hothouse flower" that grew out of Expressionism[13]. "All that was a dream is in fact real life. Oneiric, unsettling nightmares, the terrifying logic of events that could not take place, the realness of phantasmagoria shamelessly brought to the silver screen, the horror of unfamiliar yet forefelt phantasmata—the hideous and swooning beauty of dreams. All of this walks together in a morbid, somnambulic procession enchanted by the dreamlike glow of the cinematograph projector", Słonimski wrote in *Kurier Polski*. The motif of cinema infected by Caligarian imagination would return in other reviews of that time, thus providing a framework for interpreting the film.

That same year, Słonimski wrote the poem *Negatyw* [The Negative], which he included in the collection *Godzina poezji* [An Hour of Poetry] and which contains many references to Wiene's masterpiece. The speaker first adopts Caesar's perspective, stooping over Jenny's sleeping body with a knife and murderous intent, and moments later—the perspective of Caligari, who awakens his medium "sleeping in a trance". In the culminating moment of the poem, the hypnotist gives the order to kill:

> Into the bed's reflected, twisted black depths
> Where awaits me the pallor of sheets
> Strike, drive the knife![14]

Negatyw is a tribute to the power of film images that captivate, unleash dreams and see through into the depths of consciousness like a somnambulist Caesar.

Ważyk and Czyżewski also wrote poems inspired by *The Cabinet*. For Irzykowski, *Caligari* became an expression of the alliance between cinema and painting, and even a turning point in the history of the correspondence in the arts. "Artificial decorations in *Caligari* are already entering the field of animated film, that hitherto embryo from which the great, proper film of the future

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Poznań 2007, p. 78–79); E. & M. Pytasz (*Poetycka podróż w świat kinematografu, czyli kino w poezji polskiej lat 1914–1925*, in: *Szkice z teorii filmu*, ed. A. Helman, T. Miczka, Katowice 1978).

13 A. Słonimski, "Kurier Polski" 1920, no. 101; quote: id., *Romans z X Muzą. Teksty filmowe z lat 1917–1976*, selection, introduction and editing: M. Hendrykowska, M. Hendrykowski, Warszawa 2007, pp. 51–52.

14 Id., *Negatyw*; quote: id., *Romans z X Muzą*, pp. 54–58.

will one day emerge"[15], he wrote in *Dziesiąta muza* [The Tenth Muse]. In turn, Anatol Stern wrote in a review published in "Skamander" that *Caligari*, "having unleashed a storm of psychologism in cinema, turned the screen into an arena of the most morbid psychic perversion"[16]. Years later, he shared with the readers of "Wiadomości Literackie" the spiritual transformation he experienced after watching Wiene's film. Although eight years had passed since its Polish premiere, the demonic doctor would not leave the poet's head. He had aroused a longing for "an image showing a creative re-evaluation of the world of things and psyches—reality"[17]. Stern, bored with photographic realism, was awaiting the return of Caligari, who had crossed the dividing line between reality and fantasy before disappearing. He was not waiting alone. He wrote the column in the plural, as if wanting to speak on behalf of a generation.

Leon Trystan, the critic, screenwriter, actor and director, and brother of Adam Ważyk, was also clearly afflicted by the expressionist infection of the imagination. He wrote about the birth of a new style in the arts: Caligarisme, which is characterised by "perversion of line" and "lack of undertones", mocks the "canons of symmetry", geometrises the world, and breaks with the rules of Euclidian space.[18] It allows us to reject the laws of physics, to blur the lines between perception, dreams and imagination. This mode of perception must have captivated Stanisław Ignacy Witkiewicz, who, according to Janusz Degler, held in esteem *The Cabinet* and other films by the German expressionists.[19] The author of *The Shoemakers* was, after all, considered an expressionist. Moreover, the catalogue of an exhibition of Witkacy's work in Poznań features two paintings of Dr Caligari (from 1922, types E and D, thus heavily deformed, "without copying nature")[20]. Witkacy was fascinated by film, despite officially disdaining it. A letter dated 23rd April 1938 addressed to Bruno Schulz clearly indicates that they were at the cinema together[21].

Could a film buff writer fascinated by German art who followed cultural trends at home and abroad, studied in Vienna then engulfed in an expressionist fever, used a filter in his writing to distort the banality of everyday life, and did not fear perversion in any shape or form miss a film that initiated the most important movement in the history of German cinema that was reported in the daily and cultural press long before the premiere? Common sense does not allow us to end

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15 K. Irzykowski, *Dziesiąta muza. Zagadnienia estetyczne kina*, Kraków 1924, p. 210.
16 A. Stern, *Kino*, "Skamander" 1922, n. 25/26, p. 527.
17 Id., *Gdzie jesteś Caligari?*, "Wiadomości Literackie" 1928, no. 13 (221), p. 3.
18 L. Trystan, op. cit., p. 27. See also: id., *Fotogeniczność*, "Ekran i Scena" 1923, no. 10–11, p. 2.
19 J. Degler, *Witkacy i kino*, "Dialog" 1996, no. 3, p. 132. The source of this information is not provided.
20 *Wystawa obrazów Stanisława Ignacego Witkiewicza oraz Firmy Portretowej "S. I. Witkiewicz"* [catalogue], Poznań 1929.
21 B. Schulz, *Księga listów*, p. 287.

the investigation process here. Someone like Bruno Schulz, a loner and oddball, could not have missed *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari* without good reason. From the chronology of the writer's life and work, we know that he was then suffering from poor health and was unsure about taking up a job at a secondary school. He must have had a lot of free time. All the facts, publications and recollections cited above bring together reasons why he should have taken an interest in the expressionist world of somnambulists, hypnotists, wax figures, golems, madmen, or at least feel a spiritual kinship with this type of sensibility. Bruno Schulz, like no other writer of the interwar period, fits into the Club of Caligarists.

The final evidence that we have is prose and drawings.

Sanatorium Under the Sign of the Hourglass is a short story in black and white, or alternatively in various shades of grey like in an old film. In several places, the narrator emphasises the lack of colour, the "greyness of the aura", and the fact that the world is seen "through black glasses"[22]. The way the space is created brings to mind the expressionist techniques of the set designers in *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari*: Jakub rides a demonic train that winds like a labyrinth; the sanatorium, that resembles a hospital for the mentally ill, has distorted proportions (a wall-length buffet, an enormous dog kennel, dark corridors with a labyrinth of doors, doorframes, and nooks and crannies); the nearby town is almost abstract—it's the "otherwise complete darkness", that provides a backdrop for the window that "shone, like a grey rectangle". "Trees, houses and people merge", as if the film were losing its sharpness or drowning in too high a contrast of black and white. The sanatorium staff behave like puppets. The patients, in turn, are like somnambulists—they either wander around the town, or sleep in their beds. The father oscillates on the verge of life and death. He lies hibernating in his room, yet at the same time he reigns in the dining hall, strangely animated, like Caesar who simultaneously rests in a box as a wax puppet and runs around town murdering people.

At the head of the institution is a demoniac doctor with a foreign-sounding surname. We do not know if he is a charlatan, a hypnotiser or perhaps a genius. His sanatorium also holds a secret. Somnambulic behaviours, as Anton Kaes reminds us in his book about cinema in the Weimar Republic, was regarded in those days as one of the symptoms of madness, a way to shut oneself away from the world, migrating inward under the influence of trauma[23]. That is why they were so readily used by German expressionists, who, according to Kaes, translated extreme psychological states, such as suffering, madness or nightmares into a visual language replete with violent means of expression.

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22 Id., *Sanatorium Under the Sign of the Hourglass*, trans. C. Wieniewska, in: id., *The Collected Works of Bruno Schulz*, ed. J. Ficowski, London 1998. All short stories by Schulz are quoted from this source.

23 A. Kaes, *Shell Shock Cinema. Weimar Culture and the Wounds of War*, Berkeley 2011, p. 66.

The influence of film expressionism or, more broadly, of German cinema from the period of the Weimar Republic, including New Objectivity, can also be found in other short stories by Schulz, particularly in *The Street of Crocodiles*, where the literary "set design" is ostentatiously fake and deformed ("betrays with all its cracks its imitative character") and on top of that devoid of correct proportions, monochromatic ("as in black-and-white photographs"). Crocodile Street vividly resembles Melchiorgasse from *Joyless Street* or the town from Rahn's *Tragedy of the Street* (1927). It is riddled with decay, inhabited by an "inferior species of human being" including prostitutes and "scum".

The most fascinating evidence, however, is to be found in Bruno Schulz's drawings[24]. *Księga obrazów* [The Book of Artworks] contains several works that resemble sketches of expressionist set design or exaggerated stills from such films as *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari* or *Raskolnikow.* The most interesting works in this set are two pencil drawings: *A woman and two men against a geometric city landscape,* and *A two-horse carriage driving through the city, geometric drawing* (both created before 1930*).* The first of these portrays a man wearing a disproportionately tall top hat who looks like Werner Krauss playing Dr Caligari. As a side note, it is worth mentioning that Dr Gotard in Schultz's illustrations for *Sanatorium Under the Sign of the Hourglass* is making the same famous gesture as his film counterpart. In addition, he has an equally demonic expression on his face.

The cityscapes are not so much geometrised, as deliberately deformed: the walls and streetlamps are not at right angles, the windows and chimneys appear in unexpected places, stairs lose their orderly perspective. Human figures remain nonetheless realistic. In Robert Wiene's most famous films, the same concept was the basis for the set design, or more broadly, the artistic concept that became the hallmark for the Caligaric style in cinema. Comparing the drawings with the film stills reveals a striking and probably not coincidental resemblance. The subject matter is also analogous: prostitutes, demonic psychiatrists, mannequins, wax figures, hypnotised men, a city by night.

It is hard to believe that all these convergences are due to chance.

And even if Schulz did see *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari* or other German films from the same period, does this mean anything? —the sceptic would ask. In my opinion, the captivation with German expressionism and the poetic references to the films of the Weimar Republic are further evidence of Bruno Schulz's cinematic imagination, and equally—one of the keys to understanding his style and sources of inspiration.

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24 B. Schulz, *Księga obrazów*, ed. J. Ficowski, Gdańsk 2012. All drawings have been referenced based on this edition. [The English titles referenced in the present translation may be found in: idem, *The Drawings of Bruno Schulz*, ed. J. Ficowski, Evanston 1990.]

According to Janusz Rudnicki, in expressionist cinema and in Schulz's short stories the actors are reduced to "elements of the overall composition of the image". Other common traits include the dynamisation of space, dreamlike reality, the montage of frames that undergo constant transformation, or "freedom from a definitively imposed form"[25]. Schulz and German filmmakers of the 1920s, as well as expressionist painters and poets, were eager to use fantasy themes. They had a penchant for deformation of reality and strong means of expression. According to Jerzy Speina, what distinguishes Schulz's prose is "a maximised force of expression, an extreme dynamisation of the image, expressed in an ecstatic scream, not only figuratively but also literally—in short, the extremism of artistic expression, the most significant characteristic of the expressionist method"[26]. In my opinion, this "extreme dynamisation" is best explained by the influence of cinema.

What may raise doubts is that Schulz did not explicitly indicate the sources of his cinematic inspiration (according to the principle that for something to be significant, it must be visible). The only solid point of reference is the poster with Asta Nielsen. It would have been enough to call the doctor "Gotardari" or to add the distinctive glasses to the illustration of him, and everything would become clear for both readers and literary historians. A writer of Schulz's calibre, who had the ambition to invent an original language to write The Book, could not accept such a simplistic solution. For his fascination with film did not exclude a detachment from all external influences.

May an episode from Witkacy's biography serve as indirect evidence. When the decorations for the staging of *The Pragmatists* were created without respecting his recommendations, he became outraged that they had been made into a "some kind of subpar imitation from Caligari's set"[27]. He did not appreciate the deformation and geometrisation of space. And yet he liked Wiene's film and had painted the character of the demonic doctor several times! In my opinion, Witkacy thought that the theory of Pure Form, to which he dedicated all his talent as an artist and philosopher, was something more than Caligarisme. He did not want to be perceived as a derivative writer who steals from a muse considered inferior. Schulz's prose may be viewed in a similar way. Being an aficionado did not justify referencing films, let alone writing variations on them. Images from expressionist masterpieces melted with fantasy, memories, the mythology of his native Drohobych, literature of the period as well as other elements to form a solid

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25 J. Rudnicki, *Fabryka waty cukrowej…*

26 J. Speina, *Bankructwo realności. Proza Brunona Schulza*, Warszawa–Poznań 1974, p. 98.

27 S. I. Witkiewicz, *Z powodu krytyki „Pragmatystów" wystawionych w Elsynorze*, in: id., *Nowe formy w malarstwie i wynikające stąd nieporozumienia. Szkice estetyczne*, ed. J. Degler, L. Sokół, Warsaw 2002, p. 138.

alloy – a noble one, precisely because of this. However, scholars of Schulz's work have no doubts that he was susceptible to various external influences – from painting (Kubin, Rops, Goya), literature (Mann, Kafka, Rilke), and philosophy (Jewish mysticism, the Bible).

The comparison of Schulz's prose and German Expressionist cinema can also be seen as an opportunity to explore the broader influence of 1920s German cinema on Polish interwar culture. For this very reason, I have extensively quoted texts from the Club of Caligarists. German Expressionism inspired individuals in theatre, screenwriters, poets, prose writers, graphic designers and filmmakers in Poland and in the world—from both arthouse and genre cinema (horror, thriller, fantasy)[28]. In many countries German Expressionism was assimilated, integrating it with local art movements that also advocated moving away from *mimesis* towards the subjectification of perception. Bruno Schulz was in good company alongside Jean Cocteau, Sergei Eisenstein or Bertolt Brecht. At the same time, this movement provoked a wave of controversy. There was debate about whether directors like Wiene and Lang had infected European culture with the disease of Caligarisme that puts effect above content.

German Expressionist cinema proved to be an important argument for those seeking affirmation that cinema was an art form. They enjoyed references to Romanticism and opposed a realistic representation of reality—whether in novels, theatre, cinema or painting. They preferred a different type of representation: the external world as a projection of the protagonist's psyche.

There is also no doubt that cinema of the Weimar Republic was compelling in terms of plotlines: it told fantastic stories, featured demonic characters, and held the audience on the edge of their seats throughout the entire screening. It was also a mine of reusable characters and motifs. At that time, it was already recognised that Expressionist décor and dark stories concealed a commentary on contemporary issues. "Former German production during the post-war period […] was undoubtedly the reflection of the psyche of an environment disturbed and disoriented by defeat and revolution"[29], wrote Leon Brun in 1937, a decade before Siegfried Kracauer's thesis.

Even if Bruno Schulz did not watch *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari*, there is a lesson to be learned from this experiment. The interwar period was, as its name suggests, an interlude between the two acts of the Great War, the period from Caligari to Hitler. It begins with chaos: the disintegration of the old world and

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28 For the influence of German Expressionism on mass culture of the interwar period, from the USA to France to the USSR, see: O. Brill, *Der Caligari-Komplex*, Munich 2012; J. Ziwjan, *Caligari in Rußland. Der Deutsche Expressionismus un die sowjetische Filmkultur*, in: *Die engewöhlichen Abenteuer des Dr. Mabuse im Lande der Bolschewiki*, ed. O. Bulgakowa, Berlin 1995.

29 L. Brun, *Spojrzenie na świat przez ekran*, "Srebrny Ekran" 1937, no. 9, p. 7.

Film still from **Joyless Street**, directed by Georg Wilhelm Pabst, 1925.
Bruno Schulz, **Two women and two men in the street**, before 1932.

concludes with the hecatomb that marks the ultimate end of an era dating back to the 19th century. In the interwar decades, Expressionist tendencies in art, sometimes explicitly named, and other times hidden under artistic projects, deriving from individual experiences, gained particular significance despite the reluctance of many critics. These tendencies allowed for a sense of disillusionment, breaking with the constraints of *mimesis* and, using metaphor to explore the essence of human experience, reaching its metaphysical core. "In some sense we derive a profound satisfaction from the loosening of the web of reality; we feel an interest in witnessing the bankruptcy of reality"[30], wrote Schulz in a quasi-letter to Witkacy.

Translated from Polish by Natalia Dore and Kamil Walczak

30 *Bruno Schulz: An Essay for S. I. Witkiewicz*, in: *The Collected Works of Bruno Schulz*, p. 369.

Eliza Kącka: Geometry of Imagination. On Shaping Space in Schulz's Works

Jerzy Stempowski wrote to Czesław Miłosz on January 14, 1966: "I once wanted to write down the history of 15–20 literary practices – for instance, how to describe a person, scenery, action and movement. I was thinking about fiction, of course. There were formulas for each of these things, replaced by new ones every now and then. Who invented them and put them into use? This question is the most difficult to answer […]. Anyone who intends to write something and sits in front of a piece of paper must, first of all, answer the question of how to write such a thing. Hence, formulas and procedures have persisted for centuries. The most fascinating task is to explain why and under what circumstances new formulas replace old ones"[1].

This excellent essayist is right. Creating spatial images and spaces imagined in a literary text is one of the basics of writing and is subject to historical changes. Bruno Schulz turns out to be a great, perhaps one of the greatest, renovators of these "formulas and procedures". The factor triggering his imagination was nothing else than what was then called "the need to create visions". This term, coined by Stefan Themerson[2], places Schulz within the avant-garde community.

Homogeneous and ambiguous spaces. Elusive and hidden, empty and overflowing, discontinuous and deceptive, transparent and riven, flickering and blinding, lasting and momentary. Shallow and uninvolved. Addictive and repulsive. Visually and internally contradictory. The stock of adjectives available in language can barely cope with the variety of Schulz's spatial evocations. The writer wants to never repeat himself and, instead, to exhaust all possibilities. Such an approach bears all the hallmarks of an experiment. While the outline of a system can be read from Schulz's concepts of time and non-linear deformations to which it is subjected in this prose – the variations of spatial situations

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1 Letter from Jerzy Stempowski to Czesław Miłosz of January 14, 1966, [in:] J. Stempowski, *Listy*, wybór i red. B. Toruńczyk, Warszawa: Zeszyty Literackie 2000, p. 117.

2 S. Themerson, *O potrzebie tworzenia widzeń*, Warszawa: CSW Zamek Ujazdowski 2008, passim. Themerson published an early version of the essay under the same title in his magazine "fa" ("film artystyczny") 1937, no. 2.

and events seem spontaneous, subjected to non-discursive logic. They bring to mind "Outline of the General Systematics of the Autumn", which is impossible to exhaust phenomenologically[3].

What do Schulz's drawings mostly depict? Partially or fully naked women. What is the most common in Schulz's fictions? Spatial phenomena. This multitude of two non-converging manifestations, constituting the expression of one creative personality, allows us to formulate an unstraightforward hypothesis that a hidden symmetry should be found between one and the other. In the theological vision of the world, femininity is a scandal. In Euclidean geometric space, what is considered a scandal, is a phantasm. These are gaps in reality, perhaps not exactly the "iron capital of the spirit", but its working capital, which could be called the promise of transcendence. However, not everything that is noticed can be examined – this could be an example of such an issue.

Significantly, the term *przestrzeń* [space] in *Słownik schulzowski* covers only its forms present in Schulz's artistic *œuvre*[4]. When ten years ago, the scientific fashion for research called by Western practice geocriticism exploded[5], the reflection on Schulz could already be found in the studies of Jerzy Jarzębski[6], Władysław Panas[7], Vera Meniok[8], and before all of them – Jerzy Ficowski[9]. However, Schulzology perceives the techniques of creating imaginary spaces

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3 B. Schulz, "A Second Autumn", [in:] idem, *The Street of Crocodiles and Other Stories*, translated by Celina Wieniewska, London: Penguin Books 2008, p. 219.

4 M. Kitowska-Łysiak, *Przestrzeń*, [in:] *Słownik schulzowski*, ed. W. Bolecki, J. Jarzębski, S. Rosiek, Gdańsk: słowo/obraz terytoria 2000, p. 292–295. That is a lot anyway – the word "time" is missing in this lexicon.

5 Geocriticism is a discipline of literary studies popularized in 2007–2008 in France by Bertrand Westphal and in the USA by Robert Tally, who drew on earlier works by Gaston Bachelard, Maurice Blanchot and Michel Foucault. It mainly concerns the relations of specific fiction with real cartographic space. In European science, it has a long tradition of reflection on the works of Fyodor Dostoyevsky, Marcel Proust, James Joyce and Franz Kafka. See E. Rybicka, *Geopoetyka. Przestrzeń i miejsce we współczesnych teoriach i praktykach literackich*, Kraków: Universitas 2014, p. 69–72.

6 I am thinking especially about the study: "Czasoprzestrzeń mitu i marzenia w prozie Brunona Schulza", [in:] J. Jarzębski, *Pomieście jak autokreacja*, Kraków 1984, p. 170–226. From Jarzębski's other texts, see, for example: "Prowincja centrum", [in:] idem, *Prowincja centrum. Przypisy do Schulza*, Kraków: Wydawnictwo Literackie 2005, p. 109–129; and idem, *Schulzowskie miejsca i znaki*, Gdańsk 2016, p. 95–102.

7 I am thinking especially about the essay: W. Panas, *Willa Bianki. Mały przewodnik drohobycki dla przyjaciół (fragmenty)*, przyg. do druku i nota P. Próchniak, Lublin: Wydawnictwo UMCS 2006.

8 I am thinking especially about the sketch: W. Meniok, *"Bezimienna i kosmiczna" mapa Drohobycza według Brunona Schulza*, Lublin 2009 (Meniok's text fills almost the entire brochure published by the Hieronim Łopaciński Municipal Public Library in Lublin).

9 I am thinking especially about the chapter: *Fantomy a realność*, [in:] J. Ficowski, *Regiony wielkiej herezji i okolice. Bruno Schulz i jego mitologia*, Sejny: Fundacja "Pogranicze" 2002, pp. 65–74, and about this entire book, starting from the first edition (1967).

mainly in terms of labyrinths[10]. The lone pioneer of these investigations is Krzysztof Stala[11].

While mentioning the latter, it is worth reaching for testimony that he has not come across. The testimony was written by a scientist whom physicists considered a psychologist, psychologists considered a philosopher, and philosophers considered a physicist. I am talking about a book that Schulz probably knew because it was required reading in the spheres he aspired to[12].

"I am acquainted with all manner of sight-phantasms from my own experience. The mingling of phantasms with objects indistinctly seen, the latter being partly supplanted, is probably the most common case. […] During miscellaneous work in physics, I witnessed analogous phenomena of 'sense-memory'. More rarely, images of things which I have never seen before, have appeared before my eyes in the daytime. Thus, years ago, on a number of successive days, a bright red capillary net (similar to a so-called enchanted net) shone out upon the book in which I was reading, or on my writing paper, although I had never been occupied with forms of this sort. The sight of bright-colored changing carpet patterns before falling asleep was very familiar to me in my youth; the phenomenon will still make its appearance if I fix my attention on it. One of my children, likewise, often used to tell me that he 'saw flowers' before falling asleep. Less often, I see in the evening, before falling asleep, various human figures, which alter without the action of my will. On a single occasion I attempted successfully to change a human face into a fleshless skull [...]. It has often happened to me that, on awaking in a dark room, the images of my latest dreams remained present in vivid colors and in abundant light"[13].

The cases of spontaneous half-wake hallucinations, which Ernst Mach analyses here for the first time as belonging – whatever that may mean – to the "visual substance", in research practice, turn out to be an aporia. How can you see something that is not there? A physicist dealing with optics will refer at this point to physiology, a physiologist – to psychology, a psychologist – to metaphysics, Jungian perhaps. In other words, the only frame of reference for these phenomena is language. Only in speech do these intermediate states of consciousness, or rather their products, become objectified. This allows us to

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10 While talking labyrinths in connection with Schulz's prose, we should also remember the text by Elżbieta Rybicka, "Błądzić w czytaniu: proza Brunona Schulza", [in:] idem, *Formy labiryntu w prozie polskiej XX wieku*, Kraków: Universitas 2000, p. 102–127.

11 Cf. K. Stala, *Na marginesach rzeczywistości. O paradoksach przedstawiania w twórczości Brunona Schulz*, Warszawa: IBL 1995, p. 68 et seq.

12 Similarly, Witkacy, Leon Chwistek, Karol Irzykowski and Tadeusz Peiper certainly knew Ernst Mach's *Die Analyse der Empfindungen* (1885).

13 E. Mach, *The Analysis of Sensations and the Relation of the Physical to the Psychical*, translated from the first German edition by C.M. Williams, Chicago and London: Open Court 1914, p. 203–204.

conclude that this process can be reversed. This is, in brief, the genealogy of Schulz's "creating visions".

This genealogy can be recognized through a discreet stylistic indication. Here, for example, is the first of the spaces created in Schulz's work. The mother and son in the story "August" go for a walk on Saturday afternoon: "Market Square was empty and white hot, swept by hot winds like a biblical desert. The thorny acacias, growing in this emptiness, looked with their bright leaves like the trees on old tapestries. Although there was no breath of wind, they rustled their foliage in a theatrical gesture, as if wanting to display the elegance of the silver lining of their leaves that resembled the fox-fur lining of a nobleman's coat. The old houses, worn smooth by the winds of innumerable days, played tricks with the reflections of the atmosphere, with echoes and memories of colours scattered in the depth of the cloudless sky. It was as if whole generations of summer days, like patient stonemasons cleaning the mildewed plaster from old facades, had removed the deceptive varnish, revealing more and more clearly the true face of the houses, the features that fate had given them and life had shaped for them from the inside"[14].

As the description of the place evolves into a description of a space governed by its own laws, as a single observation slowly turns into a synthesis of many Saturday walks in August, the characteristics of the scenery give way to the exposition of the meanings it conceals, the real expanse of the market square reveals its metaphysical essence. The stages of this metamorphosis of actual space into imaginary space are marked by the double use of the phrase "as if", which serves as a spell here. Here, I bring you, the reader of the story, from the literal to the non-literal, and from the non-literal to the phantasmagoric. It is nearly dreadful to think what would happen to the houses in the market square if the narrator cast the spell for a third time. After all, the place has already faded away, replaced by a mental space, surrounded by half-liberated miasmas of bourgeois vegetation. Who knows what could be hidden under the "deceptive varnish"?

Fortunately, as we read further, at this time of the walk, the houses are sleeping, tired of the heat, and do not impose their authority on passers-by.

This entire process results from the use of the phrase "as if", converting the description into a conditional mood. Namely: if this was not the case, the market would not provide passers-by with any special experiences. And in the conditional mood, lo and behold, everything is possible, and especially spaces in this mood can provide quite a surprise. So how can you see something that is not there? By the means of the conditional.

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14 B. Schulz, "August", [in:] idem, *The Street of Crocodiles and Other Stories*, translated by Celina Wieniewska, London: Penguin Books 2008, p. 4. Unless noted otherwise, highlights are made by the author of this article.

What unleashes the powers of the spell in "August" is its second, decisive paragraph: the incomparable description of the contents of the food basket scattered onto the kitchen table. The plethora of reality, the "raw material of meals", disturbing with its accumulated excess, as an overgrown Flemish still life, disturbs the peace of the shady apartment and pushes the mother and son outside, into a world lined with, as we already know, the unreal. Thanks to Adela, an expert in these matters, there was an invasion of the outside into the inside, described almost as if the profane had invaded the sacred. The invasion was so brutal that space seemed better than the place desecrated by the "wildness". The visit paid to the aunt is an excuse for escape and the reader learns about the purpose of the walk at the end. Unfortunately, the escape is futile – even there lurks the fleshy, autogenous, physiological reality.

However, an opposite process is also possible, when the place appropriates and defiles the space. This is what happens at the beginning of the story "The Gale":

> "During that long and empty winter, darkness in our city reaped an enormous, hundredfold harvest. The attics and storage rooms had been left cluttered up for too long, with old pots and pans stacked one on top of another, and batteries of discarded empty bottles.
>
> There, in those charred, many-raftered forests of attics, dark ness began to degenerate and ferment wildly. There began the black parliaments of saucepans, those verbose and inconclusive meetings, those gurglings of bottles, those stammerings of flagons. Until one night the regiments of saucepans and bottles rose under the empty roofs and marched in a great bulging mass against the city.
>
> The attics, now freed from their clutter, opened up their expanses; through their echoing black aisles ran cavalcades of beams, formations of wooden trestles, kneeling on their knees of pine, now at last freed to fill the night with a clatter of rafters and the crash of purlins and crossbeams.
>
> Then the black rivers of tubs and watercans overflowed and swept through the night. Their black, shining, noisy concourse besieged the city. In the darkness that mob of receptacles swarmed and pressed forward like an army of talkative fishes, a boundless invasion of garrulous pails and voluble buckets.
>
> Drumming on their sides, the barrels, buckets, and watercans rose in stacks, the earthenware jars gadded about, the old bowlers and opera hats climbed one on top of another, growing toward the sky in pillars only to collapse at last.
>
> And all the while their wooden tongues rattled clumsily, while they ground out curses from their wooden mouths, and spread blasphemies of mud over the whole area of the night, until at last these blasphemies achieved their object.

> Summoned by the creaking of utensils, by their fulsome chat ter, there arrived the powerful caravans of wind and dominated the night. An enormous black moving amphitheater formed high above the city and began to descend in powerful spirals. The darkness exploded in a great stormy gale and raged for three days and three nights…"[15].

There is so much going on in this formidable and grotesque legend that we must begin with a single word. The tone of the conditional mood is introduced in the second sentence of this passage by the word "snadź" [which has no equivalent in Wieniewska's translation – translator's note] oscillating around the modern meaning of "it seems likely" or "apparently". This word is often used to talk about rumours, and quite aptly so, because the genesis of catastrophic events is not so much the visual manifestation, but the vocalization of dead objects – the visuals and the auditory are mutually amplifying. Therefore, this is the fragment (in Schulz's entire work) most clearly permeated with syllable instrumentation – all these "gurglings of bottles", "stammerings of flagons", "garrulous pails and voluble buckets", "blasphemies of mud", and finally the inconceivable "attics, now freed from their clutter" [Polish "strychy wystrychnięte ze strychów"], worthy of Białoszewski's *Obroty rzeczy*, make the impression of true autogenesis of a vision born in unarticulated, deaf clamour. This is the case of linguistic-based spatial creation. This happens not without certain violations of the logic of everyday life – the place of empty barrels is not in the attic, but in the basement, and the water jars are not made of clay, but they contain it.

"Snadź" therefore refers to economic carelessness, the result of stagnation of long winter. Tidy attics prevent the anarchy of clutter – a maxim worth remembering. But what actually happened? The legend interweaves two actions with two separate collective protagonists: pots and attics. For the first one, it is clear that as the winter lasted longer and longer, more empty dishes and burnt pots were moved from the pantry to the attic. They all had empty bellies and wide throats – this is what revealed that Schulz's entire apocalyptic vision stems from the saying: "the pot calling the kettle black". What did the pot mean? That the kettle was even more sooted. And since it is dark in the attic, this accusation is undecidable. Having filled the attic darkness to the core, quarrelling and rattling, the pots, filled with anger – we read – boiled out of the attics to pour out their rage on the city. But this fuss, this flood of dark emotions is implicit: a shoal of pots swims over the city like "talkative fishes", and fish are, of course, mute.

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15 Bruno Schulz, "The Gale", [in:] idem, *The Street of Crocodiles and Other Stories*, translated by Celina Wieniewska, London: Penguin Books 2008, p. 77.

At this point the partita of wooden instruments begins, so to speak. Empty attics reveal their architecture, filled with echoes of the great dispute, and after the vessels have defected, the attics contain nothing but darkness, the essence of emptiness. Eventually, even this darkness, contaminated by the wickedness of the pots, begins to ferment until it undergoes a howling transition. The wooden structures of the attics distort, turn inside out and, without ruining the building, break free to spread turmoil in the clouds of concentrated darkness, amid the creaks and groans of tired-out wood. And that is the last straw. Like any provoking neighbouring powers, the chaos brings in an army, ready to intervene. One morning, the political and atmospheric situation, under the occupational power of the winds, completely changed. It is bright, a newly introduced, rigour-based order reigns: "The sky was swept lengthwise by the gusts of the wind. Vast and silvery white, it was cut into lines of energy tensed to breaking point, into awesome furrows like strata of tin and lead. Divided into magnetic fields and trembling with discharges, it was full of concealed electricity. The diagrams of the gale were traced on it which, itself unseen and elusive, loaded the landscape with its power"[16]. In the evening it turns out that there is a curfew, and you cannot leave your house. This is how the gale fought the garboil.

The spatial structure of the legend is therefore concentric. The attics are in the centre, undercut by the revolt, surrounded by the "sururban" area hanging over the city, soon to be besieged by the externality, formed into a black bank of clouds. These three subsequent spaces therefore are the place, the afterplace and the non-place[17]. Accordingly, three states of darkness can be distinguished: the one wired by the riots, yet domesticated, the tame but infected "sururban", and the wild, untamed urban darkness. The spatial movement, which in Schulz's works is always penetrative, leads from one space to another, as in the story "August".

The sceptics shall be reminded of the fate of Pensioner.

Admittedly, still spaces also exist. One of them can be found in the story "Dead Season". It is an impenetrable space, an anti-space: "The night behind the door was leaden—close, without a breeze. After a few steps it became impassable. One walked without moving forward as in a dream, and while one's feet stuck to the ground, one's thoughts continued to run forward endlessly, incessantly questioning, led astray by the dialectical byways of the night. The differential calculus of the night continued. At last, one's feet stopped moving, and one stood riveted to the spot, at the darkest, most intimate corner of the night, as in front of a privy,

16 Ibidem, p. 78.

17 See M. Augé, *Non-Places: An Introduction to an Anthropology of Supermodernity*, transl. John Howe, London: Verso 1995. See also D. Czaja, "Nie-miejsca. Przybliżenia i rewizje", [in:] *Inne przestrzenie, inne miejsca. Mapy i terytoria*, wybór i wstęp D. Czaja, Wołowiec: Czarne 2013, p. 7–26.

in dead silence, for long hours, with a feeling of blissful shame. Only thought, left to itself, slowly made an about-turn […]"[18].

This is one of purely male experiences: the urinal wall is the ultimate *limes*. It is impossible to enter this space – I mean the night of the dead season – not only physically, but even through intuition. Schulz did not care to indicate whether the night of the dead season stretched beyond the threshold of the store or the apartment – because, as we know from the text, to open the store door, one had to leave the house. Both spaces are separated by a threshold as radically liminal as the one between the illuminated vestibule of the cinema and the labyrinth of a night in July in the story of the same title – only much less friendly. Also, in *A Night in July*[19] comes a moment when "night lowers the curtain on what is happening in its depth"[20], but beforehand it sets up a stunning performance.

As we know, "no one has ever charted the topography of a July night"[21]. Therefore, Schulz's bold intention is put through the acid test of four questions: "A night in July! What can be likened to it? How can one de scribe it?" And further: "Shall I compare it to the core of an enormous black rose, covering us with the dreams of hundreds of velvety petals?". And further: "Shall I compare it to the black firmament under our half closed eyelids […]?". And further: "Or perhaps to a night train, long as the world […]?". More questions could be asked because July night is a phenomenon extending far beyond the question mark. Why is that? The introduction to the description explains it precisely: "It remains unrecorded in the geography of one's inner cosmos". Therefore, it is a space created by sight, as misled by darkness as the one trapped behind eyelids; a heterotopia, in which the distinction between exterior and interior loses its meaning – a ground prepared for the work of imagination. The narrator falls into its depths directly from the cinema, not at all by accident; everything brought by the audience, the scenarios of romantic dreams of a schoolboy, is thrown on the screen – this time a dark screen of desires. Under the question mark, the space of a July night can suddenly condense into a furtive kiss, into someone's umbrella strewn with fallen stars and meteors, into a glimpse of an assassin's hand holding a cane with a hidden skewer. A similar, questioning, triggering secret temptations, space with uncertain identity, is the Street of Crocodiles, resembling film decorations; the forgotten room where the father admires the lush flora straight from Art Nouveau prints, known from the continuation of "Treatise on Tailor's Dummies"

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18 B. Schulz, "Dead Season", [in:] idem, *The Street of Crocodiles and Other Stories*, translated by Celina Wieniewska, London: Penguin Books 2008,

19 See P. Bursztyka, "*Szczeliny w nieskończoność…* Brunona Schulza metafizyka śladu", [in:] *Schulz. Między mitem a filozofią*, pod red. J. Michalik i P. Bursztyki, Gdańsk 2014, p. 143.

20 B. Schulz, "A Night in July", [in:] idem, *The Street of Crocodiles and Other Stories*, translated by Celina Wieniewska, London: Penguin Books 2008, p. 210.

21 Here and further: ibid, p. 208.

is no different. Nevertheless, there is always something in that space, reminding us about reality: passers-by in the dark, the tawdry tinsel of run-down shops, and even a mouldy wall.

However, it would be impossible to ignore the stunning vision of a completely improbable space, the atopy introduced by the famous chapter 17 of "Spring". It is the culmination of Schulz's creationism, the pinnacle of insinuating strategies of which he was capable, and a masterpiece of narrative treachery. The narrator plays the part of both a guide and mystagogue, Virgil and Mephistopheles, and holds the readers' hand and leads them right to the gist. And he monologues as if he is trying to address the fear of those under his care: "Have we now reached the crux of the matter, and is this the end of the road? […] For it is getting dark, our words lose themselves among unclear associations: Acheron, Orcus, the Underworld... Do you feel darkness seeping out of these words, molehills crumbling, the smell of cellars, of graves slowly opening? […] You dip your face into that fluffy fur of dusk, and everything becomes impenetrable and airless like under the lid of a coffin. Then you must screw up your eyes and bully them, squeeze your sight through the impenetrable, push across the dull humus—and suddenly you are at your goal, on the other side; you are in the Deep, in the Underworld. […] But we have not finished yet; we can go deeper. There is nothing to fear. Give me your hand, take another step: we are at the roots now, and at once everything becomes dark, spicy, and tangled like in the depth of a forest. […] We are on the nether side, at the lining of things, in gloom stitched with phosphorescence. […] We are here at the very bottom, in the dark foundations, among the Mothers"[22].

The guide's persuasions and explanations, which soon turn into a lecture, precisely because they constitute instruction and encouragement, build a narrative situation that develops in the future imperfect. When a mountain guide says: "Oh, you have to grab hold of it here, put your foot here, don't look down" – it does not mean that the tourist has already grabbed the buckle, put his foot on the step, and obediently looked where they told him to. He will, hopefully, do it. Similarly, "we" – conventional people delegated to go deeper into the plot – are guided by the one who knows how to complete the route. But it still is to be completed. Thanks to the trick in question, the internalized reader explores the depths of Schulz's mythology step by step, feeling an appropriate sense of dizziness, an impression that replaces vision. He notices – or thinks he does – what the guide prompts him to notice, and thus the entire expanse of the Underworld takes place in the sphere of suggestion. In this strategy, "our" guide is no different from the sly Edgar, who in the sixth scene of the fourth act of *King Lear,* on a flat

22 B. Schulz, "Spring", [in:] idem, *The Street of Crocodiles and Other Stories*, translated by Celina Wieniewska, London: Penguin Books 2008, p. 162.

stage, convinces the blind Gloucester, who would like to jump into the abyss, that they are on the edge of the dizzying cliff of Dover. Even if Schulz did not remember Shakespeare, he had to remember Słowacki, like everyone else at that time:

> Come! this is the top, stand still... It will make you dizzy,
> When you look into the abyss below your feet…
> Crows flying in the middle of the abyss
> Little bigger than beetles…[23]

"It will make you dizzy" – this is the imperfect future tense, or rather the insinuated future tense, capable of creating the deepest abysses, borderless spaces. It is a hallucination made up of suggestion and mystification. Which finally calls for drawing a certain classic thread out of the "misty boughs of stories". In the XXIII chapter of the second volume of *Don Quixote,* a sad-faced knight, hanging on a rope, penetrates the bottomless cave of Montesinos, and when he returns to the surface, he talks about the wonders he witnessed there. In chapter XLI, Sancho Panza talks about the things that he saw in heaven when he flew there on a wooden horse. When the master and servant are left alone in the evening, Don Quixote whispers in Sancho's ear: "Sancho, as you would have us believe what you saw in heaven, I require you to believe me as to what I saw in the cave of Montesinos; I say no more."[24].

This rule applies to all imaginary spaces.

Translated from Polish by Language Extreme

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23 J. Słowacki, *Kordian: część pierwsza trylogii. Spisek koronacyjny*, red. M. Inglot, Wrocław: Ossolineum 1986, p. 55.

24 M. de Cervantes Saavedra, *Don Quixote*, chapter XLI.

Wojciech Owczarski: Schulz and Dreams[1]

In the works of Bruno Schulz, you can find a surprising number of characters falling asleep, snoring, and struggling in a bedding "warm and sour from sleep"[2]. His texts are full of humorous descriptions of "unknown impasses of sleep"[3]. In the cluster of metaphors showing the "complicated world of dreams"[4], Schulz's ingenuity seems inexhaustible, although it is almost always a struggle, a scuffle, a tussle. The extraordinary frequency with which the motif is explored suggests that the author of *Sanatorium Under the Sign of the Hourglass* associated something extremely important with the sphere of sleep.

This statement may seem like a truism, as there are very few examples in Polish literature of prose considered more oneiric than Schulz's. However, I do not intend to deal here with Schulz's oneiric poetics. I am interested in a much more specific issue, namely the question of which areas of experience the writer associated with sleep. Not what he dreamed, or what he thought about dreams, but what he talked about whenever he told his characters to "scrambling laboriously up some hill of snoring"[5]. To put it another way: I am interested in Schulz's dream phantasm.

Schulz's views on dreams can be reconstructed quite easily. Jerzy Jarzębski did it a long time ago, pointing out the clear connections between Schulz's beliefs in this area and the teachings of Freud and Jung. The writer used the concept of "the subconscious"[6], he was also familiar with the notions of suppression, repression and censorship[7]. Perhaps the most Freudian ending is the ending of "Spring", when to Joseph's statement: "I cannot answer for my dream", the feldjeger officer replies: "Yes, you can"[8]. Schulz knew very well that dreams were never innocent.

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1 The text was created as part of the project "Polish Dream Book. Literature, Imagination and Memory." The National Science Center financed the project under decision number DEC-2011/01/B/HS2/04911. The original version of the text was presented at the „Schulz. Between myth and philosophy" conference, organized by the Institute of Philosophy of the University of Warsaw, Warsaw, June 25–27, 2012.

2 B. Schulz, "The Old-Age Pensioner", [in:] idem, *The Street of Crocodiles and Other Stories*, translated by Celina Wieniewska, London: Penguin Books 2008, p. 291.

3 B. Schulz, "A Night in July", [in:] idem, *The Street of Crocodiles and Other Stories*, op. cit., p. 209.

4 Ibidem, p. 206.

5 Ibidem, p. 209.

6 J. Jarzębski, *Schulz*, Wrocław: Ossolineum 1999, p. 245–253.

7 Ibidem, p. 128–129.

8 B. Schulz, "Spring", [in:] idem, *The Street of Crocodiles and Other Stories*, op. cit., p. 203.

However, Jarzębski is right when he claims that "Schulz was clearly more fascinated with Jung and his version of depth psychology than with Freud (although there are no literal traces of this fascination)"[9]. The crowning proof of this is the famous fragments of "Spring" dealing with the descent to the underworld: "Likewise, when we sleep, severed from the world, straying into deep introversion, on a return journey into ourselves, we can see clearly through our closed eyelids, because thoughts are kindled in us by internal tapers and smolder erratically. This is how total regressions occur, retreats into self, journeys to the roots"[10].

If Jung had Schulz's writing talent, he would probably write in this way. However, knowing what Schulz thought about the nature of dreams brings us only slightly closer to answering the question of what role dreams played in his imagination. It is similar with knowledge about the writer's actual dreams. In fact, we only know one of his dreams – the dream about a cut-off penis – described in a letter to Stefan Szuman[11] (assuming, of course, that the account was not made up). There is also a fragment in the letter to Tadeusz Breza, but it does not refer to any specific dream, it only contains a mention of "one of those dreams when we dream that someone who has long and irreversibly left has returned and is in our city, and we, due to a strange delay, due to incomprehensible absent-mindedness, we have not yet visited him, although he is someone close and dear to us"[12]. And that is probably all – at least I have not been able to find any traces of Schulz's other dreams. I devoted a lot of attention to the dream about the penis, trying to show how much this early childhood dream influenced the shape of Schulz's imagination and how – in a disguised way – it constantly returned in his works[13]. Now, however, I would like to go the opposite way – not from a specific dream towards the rules of imagination, but from regularly recurring ideas towards the meaning of a specific phantasm.

Włodzimierz Bolecki, author of the entry on "Sen" ["sleep" or "dream"] in the Schulz dictionary, states that "at the narrative level, 'dream' is the name of

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9 J. Jarzębski, *Schulz,* op. cit., p. 126.

10 B. Schulz, "Spring", op. cit., p. 163.

11 "I dream that I am in the forest, at night, dark, I cut off my penis with a knife, make a hole in the ground and bury it. This is, as it were, an antecedent, a dream sequence without emotional intonation. The actual dream comes: I come to my senses, I realize the monstrosity and terribleness of the sin I have committed. I don't want to believe that I have really committed it, and I still realize with despair that it is so, that what I have done is irrevocable. I am as if already outside of time, in the face of eternity, which for me will be nothing else than a terrible awareness of guilt, a feeling of irreparable loss for all eternity. I am eternally damned and it looks like I have been locked in a glass jar from which I will never come out. I will never forget this feeling of endless torment, eternity of damnation" (B. Schulz, *Księga listów*, zebrał i przygotował do druku J. Ficowski, Gdańsk 2002, Gdańsk: słowo/obraz terytoria 2002, p. 34–35).

12 Ibidem, p. 55.

13 See W. Owczarski, *Miejsca wspólne, miejsca własne. O wyobraźni Leśmiana, Schulza i Kantora*, Gdańsk 2006, p. 102–148.

a state or situation that allows the narrator of the stories to talk about crossing the boundaries of normality"[14]. It is hard to deny it, but at the same time almost everything allows the narrator to talk about "crossing the boundaries of normality" – the time turned back in the sanatorium, the sudden and unexpected shrinkage of Aunt Perasia, or even the furious buzzing of flies during the "dead season." Dreams and sleep are no exception in this matter. Schulz does not have to refer to dreams to go beyond "normality" in his works. In Schulz's world, dreams and sleep play a much more important and much more specific role. To understand this role, we will be forced – along with Schulz – to climb into bed and dig through monstrous piles of bedding.

"Beds unmade for days on end, piled high with bedding crumpled and disordered from the weight of dreams, stood like deep boats waiting to sail into the dank and confusing labyrinths of some dark starless Venice"[15]. This short fragment from "Tailor's Dummies" perfectly describes the nature of the fantasy we are interested in. Dreams have "weight", the bedding is "crumpled and disordered", and at the same time, the sleeper seems to be immersing himself in the water element. The dynamics of Schulz's dream image are determined by "heaviness" and "ebb".

As I have already mentioned, Schulz's sleeping characters are usually forced to fight, or at least to struggle with the resistance of matter. This is said most literally in "Dead Season" – the father and the black-bearded man fight each other in a dream like the biblical Jacob with the angel: "At some still more distant mile of sleep—had the flow of sleep joined their bodies, or had their dreams imperceptibly merged into one?—they felt that lying in each other's arms they were still fighting a difficult, unconscious duel. They were panting face-to-face in sterile effort. The black-bearded man lay on top of my father like the angel on top of Jacob. My father pressed against him with all the strength of his knees and, stiffly floating away into numbness, stole another short spell of fortifying sleep between one round of wrestling and another. So they fought: what for? For their good name? For God? For a contract? They grappled in mortal sweat, to their last ounce of strength, while the waves of sleep carried them away into ever more distant and stranger areas of the night"[16]. Similarly, the following passage appears in "Eddie": "And those in their beds who have already caught sleep will not let go of it; they fight with it as with an angel that is trying to escape until

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14 W. Bolecki, "Sen", [in:] *Słownik schulzowski*, pod red. W. Boleckiego, J. Jarzębskiego and S. Rośka, Gdańsk: słowo/obraz terytoria 2003, p. 346.

15 B. Schulz, "Tailor's Dummies", [in:] idem, *The Street of Crocodiles and Other Stories*, op. cit., p. 26.

16 Idem, "Dead Season", [in:] idem, *The Street of Crocodiles and Other Stories*, op. cit., p. 237.

they conquer it and press it to the pillow. Then they snore intermittently as if quarreling and reminding themselves of the angry history of their hatreds"[17].

Most often, however, in the absence of an angel, sleepers struggle with the bed linen or their own snoring. They clearly need these struggles for something, since they do not intend to "let go" of the dream once "captured". "In all the beds people lie with their knees drawn up, with faces violently thrown to one side, in deep concentration, immersed in sleep and given to it wholly"[18]. What is the purpose of this clinging to sleep and the duvet? Was the goal to win a fight for a blessing like the biblical Jacob? In his descriptions of sleep and sleeping, Schulz enjoys evoking religious allusions. Dr. Gotard's dream is "a great pathetic ascension on waves of snores and voluminous bedding"[19]. So, could persistent tussling with a duvet cover or a pillow be the way to heaven? Not necessarily. Although in one of the fragments of "Spring" a sky as huge as a featherbed appears[20], it is, however, a sky "gray, sultry […] enmeshed in the black net of tree branches"– a sky that "lay heavily on human shoulders"[21]. It is hard to reach such a sky in your sleep. Yet Schulz's sleeping heroes are certainly striving for something. So what are they trying to achieve? What kind of blessing are they fighting for?

The key to answering this question seems to be the fact that in the vast majority of cases, Schulz's ideas of sleep are immersed in the depths of dirt, waste, secretions and all kinds of abject things. The bedding is usually dirty and has not been changed for a long time. Sleepers sweat profusely and have open mouths, often drooling. They are bothered by flies ("The shop assistants, bothered by flies, winced and grimaced, stirring in an uneasy sleep")[22]. Even Adela's flawless body loses its charm in sleep and is exposed to the invasion of night intruders:

> Without putting on the light, Adela goes to bed and sinks into the tired bedding of the previous night […]. Adela is fast asleep, her mouth half open, her face relaxed and absent […]. Adela is […] completely limp, completely surrendered to the deep rhythm of sleep. She has no strength even to pull up the blanket over her bare thighs and cannot prevent the columns of bedbugs from wandering over her body. These light and thin, leaflike insects run over her so delicately that she does not feel their touch. They

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17 Idem, "Eddie", [in:] idem, *The Street of Crocodiles and Other Stories*, op. cit., p. 284.
18 Ibidem.
19 B. Schulz, "Sanatorium Under the Sign of the Hourglass", [in:] idem, *The Street of Crocodiles and Other Stories*, op. cit., p. 260.
20 Polish: "niebo […] ogromne jak pierzyna". The passage from the original Schulz text is omitted in Wieniewska's translation.
21 B. Schulz, "Spring", p. 156.
22 Idem, "Dead Season", p. 227.

> are flat receptacles for blood, reddish blood bags without eyes or faces, now on the march in whole clans on a migration of the species subdivided into generations and tribes. They run up from her feet in scores, a never-ending procession, they are larger now, as large as moths, flat red vampires without heads, lightweight as if cut out of paper, on legs more delicate than the web of spiders[23].

Schulz clearly revels in hyperbolizing these parasites. But the playfulness of the description proves even more the importance of dream phantasms. As Julia Kristeva says, "laughing is a way of placing or displacing abjection"[24]. And sleep, for Schulz, is precisely the domain of abjection. The heroes of his prose, entering the sphere of sleep, immerse themselves in impurities, jeopardizing their own identity, but at the same time gaining a chance to consolidate purification.

Let us look at the situation of Uncle Charles, who, in his wife's absence, indulged in debauchery and returned to his unclean apartment only for a few hours of sleep. Then – as we read,

> "The crushed, cool, disordered bedclothes seemed like a blissful haven, an island of safety on which he succeeded in landing with the last ounce of his strength like a castaway, tossed for many days and nights on a stormy sea. Groping blindly in the darkness, he sank between the white mounds of cool feathers and slept as he fell, across the bed or with his head downward, pushing deep into the softness of the pillows, as if in sleep he wanted to drill through, to explore completely, that powerful massif of feather bedding rising out of the night. He fought in his sleep against the bed like a bather swimming against the current, he kneaded it and molded it with his body like an enormous bowl of dough, and woke up at dawn panting, covered with sweat, thrown up on the shores of that pile of bedding which he could not master in the nightly struggle. Half-landed from the depths of unconsciousness, he still hung onto the verge of night, gasping for breath, while the bedding grew around him, swelled and fermented—and again engulfed him in a mountain of heavy, whitish dough"[25].

The sweaty body of the libertine clings to the "fermented" bedding, which sometimes washes away like water and then sticks to it like dough. Wanting to "drill through, to explore completely, that powerful massif of feather bedding", the

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23 B. Schulz, "Dodo", [in:] idem, *The Street of Crocodiles and Other Stories*, op. cit., p. 270–272.
24 J. Kristeva, *Powers of Horror. An Essay on Abjection*, New York: Columbia University Press, 2004, p. 8.
25 B. Schulz, "Mr. Charles", [in:] idem, *The Street of Crocodiles and Other Stories*, op. cit., p. 49.

uncle seems to be counting on the fact that he will lose himself in these feathers, but at the same time – that he will rub himself against them and wipe off some dirty, sticky coating. Perhaps Schulz's heroes actually roll around in stale bedding so passionately in order to finally free themselves from it by lying in the mud and all sorts of filth? But what would that mean? And why does it happen in a dream?

Kristeva argues that filth is not a quality in itself, but it applies only to what relates to a boundary

and, more particularly, represents the object jettisoned out of that boundary, its other side, a margin"[26]. Schulz's characters live permanently "on the margins of reality", as Krzysztof Stala has long proven[27]. However, sleep is an area particularly conducive to liminality. Wallowing in dirt and drowning in sleep are parallel experiences, related to the violation of the boundary between subject and object. Vomiting, like sleep, throws you out of the established rules of the game and, as Kristeva writes, "shifts towards the abject"[28]. Schulz's subject in a dream is transformed into "doubtful and problematic forms, like the ectoplasm of a medium, by pseudomatter, the cataleptic emanations of the brain which in some instances spread from the mouth of the person in a trance over the whole table, filled the whole room, a floating, rarefied tissue, an astral dough, on the borderline between body and soul"[29]. The parted, saliva-dripping mouth in a dream allows this tissue or ectoplasm to escape, and the sleeper himself loses his coherent identity. He loses it to such an extent that in Schulz's descriptions there is no distinction between sleeping and dreaming. Dreaming here becomes one with the physiological process of sleeping. In "The Comet", the father sees "the clearly visible contours of an embryo (…) sleeping upside down its blissful sleep in the light waters of amnion"[30]. A dream can therefore be slept, not necessarily dreamed. At the end of "Autumn" we read: "The vast cavernous beds, piled high with chilly layers of sheets and blankets, waited for our bodies. The night's floodgates groaned under the rising pressure of dark masses of slumber, a dense lava that was just about to erupt and pour over its dams, over the doors, the old wardrobes, the stoves where the wind sighed"[31]. What is this lava – a product of physiology or a dream? Schulz has no intention of answering this question; his imagination consistently blurs the boundaries not only between the subject and

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26 J. Kristeva, op. cit., p. 68.

27 See K. Stala, *Na marginesach rzeczywistości. O paradoksach przedstawiania w twórczości Brunona Schulza*, Warszawa 1995.

28 J. Kristeva, op. cit., p. 47.

29 B. Schulz, "Treatise on Tailor's Dummies: Conclusion", [in:] idem, *The Street of Crocodiles and Other Stories*, op. cit., p. 39.

30 idem, "The Comet", [in:] idem, *The Street of Crocodiles and Other Stories*, op. cit., p. 110.

31 idem, "Autumn", [in:] idem, *The Street of Crocodiles and Other Stories*, op. cit., p. 327.

the object in a dream, but also between the sleeping subject and the dreaming subject. The sleepy dispersion of the subject is perfectly visible in the confession of Joseph from "Sanatorium Under the Sign of the Hourglass": "Thus I sleep for irregular stretches of time, for days or weeks, wandering through empty landscapes of sleep, always on the way, always on the steep roads of respiration, sometimes sliding lightly and gracefully from gentle slopes, then climbing laboriously up the cliffs of snoring. At their summit I embrace the horizons of the rocky and empty desert of sleep. At some point, somewhere on the sharp turn of a snore, I wake up half-conscious and feel the body of my father at the foot of the bed. […] I fall asleep again, with my mouth open, and the vast panorama of mountain landscape glides past me majestically"[32].

"Empty landscapes of sleep" or "rocky and empty desert" could be understood as the content of a dream, but "roads of respiration" and "cliffs of snoring" indicate that all these metaphors may equally refer to the ailments of the sleeping body. We will never find out whether Joseph is dreaming about climbing or struggling with his own breathing. In Schulz's vision of sleep, these two possibilities are no different from each other.

Immersing yourself in the dream element, in this identity-blurring lava, in the dirt-stained secretion or ectoplasm – is ultimately aimed at cleansing and reconsolidation. Dynamics of dream processes – "a race on all the floors"[33], rising and falling, "a gallop of snoring"[34], a struggle with the bed linen – it is supposed to lead to separation from the "I" of what is unnecessary and unwanted, to get rid of burdensome excess. Here, Uncle Charles, once he had "drilled through" the "massif of feather", calmed down and "slowly returned to his senses, to daylight"[35]. This return was possible thanks to freeing himself from the burden weighing him down. The last act of this release took place after waking up: "Charles yawned out of his body, out of the depth of all its cavities the remains of yesterday. The yawning was convulsive as if his body wanted to turn itself inside out. In this way he got rid of the sand and ballast, the undigested remains of the previous day"[36].

Yawning turns out to be the ultimate cleansing. By getting rid of the "ballast", the dreamer becomes a subject again, only now he is "inside out", transformed, re-constituted. As a result of sleep topped with convulsive yawning, he got rid of the "remains of yesterday". As is known, Freud used this term to describe fresh experiences that constitute the material of a dream. These experiences, according to Freud, may be quite trivial, but they may also occupy a great deal of conscious

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32 idem, "Sanatorium Under the Sign of the Hourglass", op. cit., p. 259.
33 idem, "Eddie", op. cit., p. 283.
34 idem, "Dead Season", op. cit., p. 237.
35 idem, "Mr. Charles", op. cit., p. 50.
36 Ibidem.

attention[37]. However, they are always only a disguise for a wish coming from the unconscious. In Schulz's vision of sleep, these "undigested residues of yesterday" seem to be much more important. It is because of them that all these dramatic "dream fights" occur. The task of sleep is digestion and excretion, the consistent disposal of all memories, experiences, ideas, emotions, reactions or behaviours that could disturb the image of self. The dreamer empties himself of the "leftovers" that do not fit into the whole he wants to become. He removes them in the form of secretions and fumes. Sometimes he also shakes them out of the bed, like Kathy in "The Old-Age Pensioner", who "yawns and stretches languorously for long minutes before she opens the windows and starts sweeping and dusting. The night air, saturated with sleep and snoring, lazily wafts toward the window […]. Kathy dips her hands reluctantly into the dough of bedding, warm and sour from sleep. At last, with a shiver, with eyes full of night, she shakes from the window a large, heavy feather bed, and scatters over the city particles of feathers, stars of down, the lazy seed of night dreams"[38]. In "Visitation" we witness how shop assistants "unwound themselves lazily from the dirty bedding" and "abandoned themselves for a moment to the delights of yawning—a yawning crossing the borders of sensuous pleasure, leading to a painful cramp of the palate, almost to nausea"[39]. The nausea can give pleasure because it is a harbinger of rebirth. Kristeva defines abjection as "that trifle turns me insideout, guts sprawling: […] 'I' am in the process of becoming an other at the expense of my own death, During that course in which 'I' become, I give birth to myself amid the violence of sobs, of vomit"[40].

Among the countless theories on the function of dreams opposing Freud, one seems particularly close to Schulz's vision. Its authors, Francis Crick and Graeme Mitchison, argue that the purpose of dreams is to cleanse the brain of unnecessary memories. Strictly speaking: the function of sleep is to "to remove certain undesirable modes of interaction in networks of cells in the cerebral cortex. We postulate that this is done in REM sleep by a reverse learning mechanism so that the trace in the brain of the unconscious dream is weakened, rather than strengthened by the dream"[41]. This theory shows that everything we dream is intended

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37 "We should not underrate the psychic intensities introduced into sleep by these remnants of waking life, especially those emanating from the group of the unsolved. These excitations surely continue to strive for expression during the night, and we may assume with equal certainty that the sleeping state renders impossible the usual continuation of the excitement in the foreconscious and the termination of the excitement by its becoming conscious" – S. Freud, *The Interpretation of Dreams*, trans. A. Brill, New York: The Macmillan Company 1913, p. 440.

38 B. Schulz, "The Old-Age Pensioner", [in:] idem, *The Street of Crocodiles and Other Stories*, op. cit., 290–291.

39 Idem, "Visitation", [in:] idem, *The Street of Crocodiles and Other Stories*, op. cit., p. 12.

40 J. Kristeva, *The Powers of Horror: An Essay on Abjection*, op. cit., p. 3.

41 F. Crick and G. Mitchison, *The Function of Dream Sleep*, "Nature" 1983, vol. 304, p. 111.

to be erased from memory – and effectively erased in the act of dreaming. "We dream to forget"[42] – maintain Crick and Mitchison. Otherwise, the brain would be overloaded and would malfunction. The consequence of this is the complete uselessness, or even harmfulness, of all attempts to interpret or even remember dreams. According to the authors, by trying to remember what we should forget, we expose ourselves to serious mental disorders.

Needless to say, this concept was considered controversial and caused – and continues to cause – a wave of strong criticism. However, I do not intend to comment here on the credibility of this theory. I also do not particularly care that Schulz could not have heard about it because it was announced in 1983. What is much more important is that the idea of sleep as a process of purifying memories or experiences turned out to be so attractive that it could be born in the heads of rationally thinking, outstanding representatives of experimental sciences (after all, Crick is a Nobel Prize winner for his discoveries in the field of DNA research). At the same time, as Paul Martin argues, "the reverse-learning theory of REM sleep echoes a much older strain of thought, which regarded dreams as the waste products of the mind"[43]. Martin illustrates this point with a quote from the seventeenth-century playwright Thomas Nashe: "A dream is nothing else but a bubbling scum or froth of the fancy, which the day hath left undigested; or an afterfeast made of the fragments of idle imaginations"[44]. Schulz should probably feel good in such company, gaining a solid foundation for his vision of the dream in the history of ideas and the support of the scientific authority of his late grandchildren.

Let us go back to Uncle Charles and see what happened to him after he woke up. When he finally excreted the undigested "remains", his uncle, "eased himself […] calculated something, added it all up, and became pensive"[45]. Transformed and consolidated once again, the subject turns to the future, looks boldly forward, and builds its identity on what is in front of it, not behind it. After all, "seemed slowly to shape, in that silence, its future destiny"[46]. And even though it was "harassed by sexual indulgence", Uncle Charles's body "swelling with fat", even though he himself "sat there in a thoughtless, vegetative stupor" and his "unformulated future" was like "a terrible growth, pushing forth in an unknown direction", after all, "he was not afraid of it, because he already felt at one with that unknown and enormous thing which was to come, and he was growing together

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42 Ibidem.
43 P. Martin, *Counting Sheep. The Science and Pleasures of Sleep and Dreams*, New York: Macmillan, ebook edition.
44 Ibidem.
45 B. Schulz, "Mr. Charles", op. cit., p. 50.
46 Ibidem.

with it without protest, in a strange unison"[47]. It is hard to resist the impression that it was the laxative effect of sleep that allowed for this ultimately difficult self-acceptance. When in "A Night in July" we watch Uncle Charles before falling asleep, he behaves completely differently. We see him "undressing with a dull and meditative expression. Then he would blow out the candle, take all his clothes off, and, naked, lie for a long while sleepless on the cool bed. Sleep would only gradually overpower his large body. He would restlessly murmur something, breathe heavily, sigh, struggle with an imaginary burden on his breast. At times he would sob softly and drily"[48].

Sleep in Schulz's world allows you to deal with the excess of experiences and impressions. Those who have too few experiences do not sleep at all. This is Dodo's case: "Dodo never slept. The center of sleep in his diseased brain did not function correctly, so he wriggled and tossed and turned from side to side all night long. […] His unlived life worried him, tortured him, turning round and round inside him like an animal in a cage. In Dodo's body, the body of a half-wit, somebody was growing old, although he had not lived; somebody was maturing to a death that had no meaning at all"[49]. "An unlived life" is one of the most terrifying images for Schulz. Shortly after breaking up with Josephina Szelińska, the writer confessed in a letter to Romana Halpern: "Spring is so beautiful – one should live and swallow the world. And I spend days and nights without a woman and without a Muse and I am wasting away sterile. Here I once woke up from sleep with a sudden deep despair that life was passing by, and I was not keeping any of it. If such despair continued for long, one could go mad. […] This is the greatest misfortune – not to live out your life"[50]. Let us add that even sleep does not help with this misfortune.

In contrary situations, when the excess of life (including inner life!) causes anxiety or even identity ambiguity, sleep, as we have seen, has a beneficial effect. Confirmation of what we have concluded about Schulz's dream phantasm can be found in another letter from the writer to Romana Halpern: "If I want to realize my current state, the image of someone waking up from a deep sleep comes to mind. Someone wakes up, still sees the world of dreams sinking into oblivion, still sees its fading colours in his eyes and feels the softness of dreams under his eyelids – and already a new, sober and fresh world of reality is pressing towards him and, still full of inner laziness, he is drawn into it – lingering – in his affairs and processes. Thus, in me, my singularity, my uniqueness, without being resolved, sinks into oblivion. She, who closed me off from the attacks of

47 Ibidem.
48 B. Schulz, "A Night in July", op. cit., p. 209.
49 B. Schulz, "Dodo", op. cit., p. 276.
50 B. Schulz, *Księga listów*, p. 162–163.

the world, gently withdraws into the depths, and I, like an insect released from its chrysalis, exposed to a storm of foreign light and the winds of the sky, entrust myself as if for the first time to the elements"[51].

The essence of the transformation described by Schulz here is to forget. The world of dreams sinks into oblivion, and with it "my singularity" and "uniqueness", i.e. what previously defined identity. Only getting rid of this "chrysalis" allows development and the courage to entrust oneself to the "elements". Sleep purifies, allows one to forget, to invalidate, "without being resolved", and thus creates the foundation for the pupation of the subject. And if this is the case, if the purpose of sleep is to purify memory, it becomes understandable why Schulz so rarely reported both his own and his characters' dreams. Jarzębski explains this with Schulz's desire to evoke the myth of childhood. "Although when reading ["The Street of Crocodiles"] we immediately feel the visionary and dreamlike nature of the story, words like: 'I dreamed that…' are never uttered. In fact, the writer is not interested in the dreams of literary characters at all. To enter the land of childhood, he had to shape all his work into the image of a dream. […] He managed to write a dream (not 'write it down!'), imitating the multi-layered nature of the dream subject with literary means"[52]. It is all true. Schulz, in fact, shaped his entire literary world in a dreamlike manner, so he did not have to highlight specific dreams. But perhaps the reason he did not describe dreams – and why he blurred the distinction between dreaming and sleeping – was because he believed that, as Crick and Mitchison said, "we dream in order to forget"? Then, reporting the dream would be contrary to its main purpose.

Translated by Language Extreme

51 Ibidem, p. 144.
52 J. Jarzębski, "Sen o *złotym wieku*", "Teksty" 1973, no. 2, p. 120–121.

Katarzyna Lukas: Issues of memory in the works of Bruno Schulz from the viewpoint of German Memory Studies

Writer as a precursor of scientific reflection

In his self-commentaries, Thomas Mann, whom Bruno Schulz held in high esteem, half-jokingly claimed a "copyright" to certain sociological concepts that he, as a novelist, conveyed in his works before they were phrased in the language of social science. He meant that in *Buddenbrooks* he captured the issues of the German bourgeoisie as a cultural formation, which was simultaneously described by the sociologists Max Weber, Ernst Troeltsch, and Werner Sombart[1]. Jan Assmann, an Egyptologist and founding father of German collective memory research, deciphered other sociological constructs in Mann's prose[2], too. In the tetralogy *Joseph and His Brothers*, he finds elements of cultural memory theory, one of the most important paradigms in the modern humanities. In his Biblical stories, Assmann argues, Mann described the mechanisms of collective memory creation and transmission as aptly and perceptively as his (almost) contemporaries: the French sociologist Maurice Halbwachs (1877–1945) and the German art historian Aby Warburg (1866–1929), the scholars to whom today's German Memory Studies owe key inspirations.

Since Jan Assmann fruitfully reconstructs the "theory of memory" from Mann's works, taking as its keystone the notion of myth (which, as we know,

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1 In his collection of essays *Reflections of a Nonpolitical Man*, in the chapter *Burgherly Nature* (Bürgerlichkeit), Thomas Mann refers to the hypothesis that the modern capitalist entrepreneur, who embodies the spirit of the said ideology, was shaped by Protestant ethics. Mann claims that he came to find this "discovery" of sociologists earlier on his own, through intuition and observation. While conceding the point to Werner Sombart, who in 1913 wrote about the capitalist entrepreneur as "a synthesis of hero, merchant, and burgher," Mann notes that he expressed the same thought in *Buddenbrooks* twelve years before; see T. Mann, *Betrachtungen eines Unpolitischen* (Gesammelte Werke in Einzelbänden. Frankfurter Ausgabe, Bd. 13.1), p. 159; and in English: idem, *Reflections of a Nonpolitical Man*, translated by W. D. Morris, New York 1987, p. 103–104.

2 See J. Assmann, *A Life in Quotation: Thomas Mann and the Phenomenology of Cultural Memory,* in: idem, *Religion and Cultural Memory. Ten Studies,* trans. R. Livingstone, Stanford University Press 2006, p. 155–177.

is very close to Schulz's understanding of it)[3], it is worth considering whether a coherent concept of cultural memory, if only in outline, appears in the prose of *Cinnamon Shops*' author. In my opinion, the concept can be found there. It is ahead of what today's cultural studies scholars say about collective memory because it exposes, as I will try to demonstrate, the tangents and interactions between individual and supra-individual memory. Of course, the presence of memory issues in Schulz's works is no new discovery. It has already been pointed out that many of his elaborate descriptions are metaphors for the human psyche, in which the subconscious and memory play an important role. For example, Jerzy Jarzębski reads the image of a disorderly nocturnal journey through the floors of the house in *A July Night* as a poetic transformation of the Freudian model of the psyche, where memories are repressed and censored[4]. Schulz's apocrypha, palimpsests, attics, storehouses, and granaries are nothing more than classic figures of *memoria*, with its tradition dating back to antiquity[5]. Reconstructing the whole of Schulz's putative "theory of memory" would go beyond the scope of this article. Thus, I will focus on selected aspects of it: first of all, on the analogies and differences between Schulz's and Mann's depictions of *memoria*. In addition, I would like to point out that the themes set in motion by the author of *Cinnamon Shops* in his vision of *memoria*, namely Jungian theory of archetypes and the collective unconscious, are sources that are marginalized and even rejected in the current memory discourse – wrongly so, in my opinion. Moreover, the mechanisms of memory which Schulz conveys through literary means and describes in autopoetic texts can be read through the prism of Warburg's concept in a much more convincing way than Mann's "Biblical" novel. However, one must immediately stipulate that these are *ex post* interpretations, since there is no evidence that Schulz read Jung[6], let alone Warburg, whose works were unknown in interwar Poland[7].

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3 I wrote about this in the article: *Jungowska wizja archetypów i artysty w prozie Brunona Schulza i jej przekładzie na język niemiecki* [The Jungian Vision of Archetypes and The Artist in Bruno Schulz's Prose and Its German Translation], in: *Translatio i literatura*, edited by A. Kukułka-Wojtasik, Warsaw 2011, p. 215–223; and in *Fremdheit - Gedächtnis - Translation: Interpretationskategorien einer kulturorientierten Literaturwissenschaft*, Berlin 2018, p. 215–219.

4 See J. Jarzębski, *Schulzowskie miejsca i znaki* [The Schulzian Places and Signs], Gdańsk 2016, p. 19–20.

5 On metaphors of memory cf. A. Assmann, *Metaphors, Models, and Media of Memory*, in: eadem, *Cultural Memory and Western Civilization: Functions, Media, Archives*, Cambridge 2011, p. 137–169.

6 See J. Jarzębski, op. cit. p. 11.

7 The first Polish translation of Warburg's selected works was published in 2010; see A. Warburg, *Narodziny Wenus i inne szkice renesansowe* [The Birth of Venus and Other Renaissance Sketches], translated and prefaced by R. Kasperowicz, Gdańsk 2010.

Mann's "theory of memory" and its interpretation today: Warburg or Jung?

Jan Assmann derives Mann's "theory of memory" from the author's understanding of myth. For Mann, myth is a universal narrative scheme, realized through different varieties as "stories" (transmitted orally or written down). The heroes of myth are model characters playing predetermined roles. A prehistoric man, with a yet unformed sense of individuality, was ready to identify with the group and accept the mythical role imposed on him. In Mann's works, the mythical is always connected with the collective: the tetralogy about Joseph discusses, as Mann writes in his self-commentary, "the birth of the self from the mythical collective."[8] It is the social dimension that allows Assmann to interpret Mann's myth as a form of "organization of cultural memory."[9] The author of *Joseph and His Brothers* expresses his belief that the identity and memory of the individual are shaped, on the one hand, by the unconscious "mythical" forces of the collective and, on the other, through participation in social communication: in religious rituals, rites, and festivals. Formalized, oral intergenerational transmission plays an important role in this process: the stories of the elders (Schönes Gespräch – "fine discourse"[10]), which young Joseph listens to, give meaning to contemporary events. Assmann identifies aspects of both Halbwachs' and Warburg's concepts in this representation of the individual and collective (communicative) memory's weave. Halbwachs would be alluded to by Mann's demonstration of the memory transmission process within its "social frameworks"[11], which enable the individual to assimilate the collective idea of the past and locate his own biography within it. On the other hand, Assmann sees a connection with Warburg's thought in the fact that the identity, behaviour, and actions of Mann's protagonist are influenced by the unconscious "mnemic energy" emanating from the collective past. In my estimation, this is rather an echo of Jung's theory of archetypes, coinciding in part with Warburg's ideas.

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8 In original: "die Geburt des Ich aus dem mythischen Kollektiv", T. Mann, *Joseph und seine Brüder. Ein Vortrag*, in: idem, *Reden und Aufsätze (1) (Gesammelte Werke in dreizehn Bänden, Bd. 9)*, Frankfurt am Main 1990, p. 665, translation from German by K. Lukas.

9 See J. Assmann, op. cit. p. 161.

10 In the German original written in capital letters to emphasise its ritualistic, festive character (see T. Mann, *Joseph und seine Brüder. Der erste Roman: Die Geschichten Jaakobs*, Frankfurt am Main 2008, p. 119; and in English: T. Mann, *Joseph and His Brothers*, translated by J. E. Woods, vol. 1, 2005, p. 89).

11 These "social frameworks" (*cadres sociaux*) are: family, religious community, social class, and profession; see M. Halbwachs, *The Social Frameworks of Memory*, in: idem, *On Collective Memory*, translated by L. A. Coser, Chicago and London 1992, p. 37–167.

Interpretations of Mann's prose in the Jungian spirit are widely known and supported by the writer's own self-commentary[12]. The inspiration from depth psychology in the tetralogy about Joseph is most clearly evidenced by the metaphor of the "well of the past" in the Prelude, read as a poetic image of the Jungian collective unconscious. It is to it that Mann attributes a key role in shaping individual biography. However, as Assmann argues, the writer, in his literary vision of collective memory, goes beyond Jung's (as well as Freud's) diagnoses by overcoming their biologistic stigma: Mann shows that the individual assimilates myth, understood by Assmann as a metonymy of cultural memory, not through genetic heritage but through cultural transmission[13].

This interpretation of Mann's "theory of memory" is in line with the current German Memory Studies. It assumes, following Halbwachs, a social, rather than biological, transmission of memory between generations[14]. German Memory Studies are sceptical of Jung's hypotheses. What is more, Jan Assmann rejects the theory of archetypes[15], the unconscious contents of the mind common to all people, which, according to Jung's supposition, are related to the hereditary structure of the brain and depend neither on individual experience nor on intentional socio-cultural transmission[16]. Dismissing the premise, Assmann and other German scholars after him ignore the similarity of archetypes to Warburg's "engrams" and "pathos formulas" that draw from the same sources.

The Hamburg scholar, a researcher of the Italian Renaissance, adapted the concept of engram for art history, with the idea itself having been coined by

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12 For Mann, myth is a psychoanalytical concept that can be naturally transferred into the realm of literature: "The mythical interest is as native to psychoanalysis as the psychological interest is to all creative writing", T. Mann, *Freud und die Zukunft*, in: idem, *Reden und Aufsätze (1) (Gesammelte Werke in dreizehn Bänden,* Bd. 9), Frankfurt am Main 1990, p. 493; and in English: idem, *Freud and The Future*, in: *Freud. A Collection of Critical Essays*, edited by P. Meisel, translated by H. T. Lowe-Porter, Englewood Cliffs 1981, p. 55.

13 See J. Assmann, op. cit. p. 165.

14 In addition, the concept of cultural memory was founded on the works of Lotman and Uspensky, who define culture as "the nonhereditary memory of the community": J. Lotman and B. Uspensky, *On the Semiotic Mechanism of Culture*, translated by G. Mihaychuk, p. 213, in: "New Literary History", vol. 9, no. 2, 1978, p. 211–232.

15 "Their [Halbwachs' and Warburg's] otherwise fundamentally different approaches meet in a decisive dismissal of numerous turn-of-the-century attempts to conceive collective memory in biological terms as an inheritable or 'racial memory,' a tendency which would still obtain, for instance, in C. G. Jung's theory of archetypes" (J. Assmann, *Collective Memory and Cultural Identity*, translated by John Czaplicka, p. 125, in: "New German Critique", no. 65, p. 125–133). In addition, Assmann accuses Jung of "the individual and psychological contraction of the memory concept" which, according to the German Egyptologist, "obscures the ways in which the past is given communicative and cultural presence." (idem, *Cultural Memory and Early Civilization. Writing, Remembrance, and Political Imagination*, Cambridge 2011, p. 33).

16 See C.G. Jung, *Definitionen*, in: *C.G. Jungs Taschenbuchausgabe in elf Bänden*, Bd. 3: *Typologie* [Typology], München 1993, p. 193.

zoologist Richard Semon, whom Jung also referenced, explaining the essence of his archetypes[17]. An engram, or "memory trace," is, according to Warburg, the perpetuated psychic energy of an affect: ecstasy or phobia experienced collectively by participants of ancient religious practices[18]. These practices had a tremendous traumatizing power that imprinted itself in the memory of individuals and the group as a whole, taking the form of specific gestures, poses, facial expressions, and ritualized behaviour. Although these primordial affects have been collectively suppressed, they recur in later eras in the form of images, the so-called pathos formulas (*Pathosformeln*), recognizable in the visual arts of the West[19]. Pathos formulas constitute the "language" of painting, sculpture, and printmaking (including applied arts) and, at the same time, a certain unconscious cultural resource[20]. In his study of Italian Renaissance painting, Warburg shows how these visual "memory traces," i.e., images of certain gestures and poses, are reactivated by painters who, he conjectures, were subjected to the unconscious forces of collective image memory (*Bildgedächtnis*).

Warburg does not unequivocally decide whether engrams are passed on by purely hereditary means, or whether cultural participation is indispensable for their acquisition, and the historical-cultural context necessary for their reactivation. According to Giorgio Agamben, engrams have a historical genesis, recurring in a particular era due to the confluence of various historical factors, unlike Jung's "timeless" archetypes[21]. At the same time, Warburg's conceptualisations such as: "heritage preserved in the memory"[22] (*gedächtnisbewahrtes Erbgut*), "the lasting legacy of memory"[23] (*unverlierbare Erbmasse*, more accurately translated as "indelible hereditary mass"), or "inherited mass of impressions"[24] (*Eindruckserbmasse*) would speak in favour of the "biological" hypothesis.

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17 Ibid, p. 127.

18 See T. Majewski, *Engram*, in: *Modi memorandi. Leksykon kultury pamięci* [Modi Memorandi. Lexicon of Memory Culture], edited by M. Saryusz-Wolska, R. Traba, Warsaw 2014, p.115.

19 See A. Warburg, *Bilderatlas Mnemosyne—The Original*, ed. Roberto Ohrt and Axel Heil, Berlin: Hatje Cantz 2020). For an accessible explanation of Warburg's intricate concept, reconstructed on the basis of works preserved only in fragments and sketches, see: P. Rösch, *Aby Warburg*, Paderborn 2010.

20 Cf. A. Assmann, *Cultural Memory and Western Civilization. Functions, Media, Archives*, Cambridge 2011, p. 358.

21 See G. Agamben, *Aby Warburg and the "Nameless Science"*, in idem, *Potentialities. Collected Essays on Philosophy*, Stanford 1999, p. 89–103.

22 A. Warburg, *Mnemosyne Atlas. Introduction (1929),* translated by M. Rampley; English translation first published in "Art in Translation", 1 (March 2009), p. 273–283, republished online: https://www.engramma.it/eOS/index.php?id_articolo=3082. The original wording after the edition: A. Warburg, *Mnemosyne Einleitung,* in: idem, *Werke in einem Band*, Hg. M. Treml, S. Weigel, P. Ladwig, Berlin 2010, p. 631.

23 Ibid. German quote: p. 629.

24 Ibid. German quote: p. 630.

Without a doubt, they betray inspiration from positivist naturalistic discourse, the same discourse to which Jung referred. Warburg's alleged conjecture about the genetic transmission of collective "image memory" would bring his concept closer to Jung's belief in the organic basis of collective unconsciousness. Today, the prevailing position among Warburg's editors and commentators is that the notion of collective "image memory" includes the hypothesis of both psychobiological and historical conditions of cultural transmission[25]. Certainly, the Hamburg scholar's reflection on cultural memory is not as resolutely "anti-biological" as Jan Assmann reads it, just as it is unfair and rash to nullify Jung's archetypes as relics of the 19th-century biologism. The cultural studies potential of the Swiss psychologist's statements deserves to be appreciated in today's Memory Studies, if only because of the archetypes, like Warburg's engrams, being visual and coming to the fore in every brilliant, visionary work, while the creator himself is a "'collective man', a vehicle and moulder of the unconscious psychic life of mankind"[26], that is: he transposes archetypes, felt only intuitively, into the means of expression of art or literature.

I would accept Assmann's proposal that Mann's tetralogy should be read as a poetic synthesis of two sociological theories of collective memory, Halbwachs's and Warburg's, only in the part concerning the first of these scholars. What may seem to be a literary confirmation of Warburg's ideas in Mann's prose derives, in fact, from depth psychology, which fascinated many writers in the interwar years. In my opinion, the "Warburgian component," whose presence in *Joseph and His Brothers* is debatable, manifests itself much more clearly in Schulz's concept of memory.

The Schulzian "cultural unconscious"

A vivid picture of the cultural "archive" can be found in Schulz's *The Mythologizing of Reality*, an essay discussing poetry and, more broadly, all culture-creating activity as based on the reuse of old "myths." In the text, they can be understood as a universal, timeless resource of all concepts, characters, plots, and narrative threads at the disposal of the creator[27]: "As we manipulate everyday words, we forget that they are fragments of lost but eternal stories, that we are building our houses with broken pieces of sculptures and ruined statues of gods as the barbarians did. […] Not one scrap of an idea of ours does not originate in myth

25 Cf. P. Rösch, op. cit. p. 51.

26 C.G. Jung, *Psychology and Literature*, in: idem: *Collected Works of C.G. Jung, Volume 15*, edited and translated by G. Adler and R. F. C. Hull, Princeton 1971, p.101.

27 See W. Bolecki, *Mit* [Myth], in: *Słownik schulzowski* [The Schulzian Dictionary], edited by W. Bolecki, J. Jarzębski, S. Rosiek, Gdańsk 2006, p. 222.

[…]."[28] The image of ruins, a debris pile of shards, brings to mind the well-known metaphor of memory, i.e. recollecting as excavating. For example, both Freud and Walter Benjamin compared attempts to reconstruct repressed memories to the work of an archaeologist[29]. While both had individual memory in mind, in Schulz's case, the ruins illustrate the overlap and interaction between the individual's (the poet's) memory and cultural memory, the latter being, on the one hand, fixed in artifacts ("sculptures" and "statues," i.e., external media), and, on the other hand, excavated by the poet. While reading Schulz's essay in a Jungian context, we can identify his "stories" with archetypes that the creator "translates" into the language of art.

A poetic variant of the metaphor of memory as archaeological layers is found in the short story *Spring*, which refers to "descent into the Underworld." Its famous XVII excerpt is an elaborate metaphor of cultural memory[30], its unconscious areas, and their interference with the memory of the individual, the poet:

"Here are the labyrinths of the interior, the storehouses and granaries of things. Here are the still-warm graves, the dry rot and muck. Ancient stories. Seven levels, as in ancient Troy, corridors, chambers, treasuries. […] What a swarm and pulp, tribes and generations, bibles and iliads multiplied a thousand times! What wandering about and tumult, what muddle and clamour of stories. This road goes no farther. We are at the very bottom, at the dark foundations, we are at the Mothers. Here are the endless infernos, the hopeless Ossianic expanses, the pitiful Nibelungen. […] Everything that we ever read, all the stories we ever heard and all those–never heard–that have haunted us since childhood, here and nowhere else is their fatherland. Where else would writers have taken their concepts, where else would they have gathered the courage to invent had they not sensed behind them these reserves, this capital, these hundredfold accounts with which the Underworld vibrates?"[31]

In the description above, Schulz captures the dual nature of cultural resources: conscious and unconscious. On the one hand, as sources of inspiration for the artist, he refers to antiquity (Troy, Iliad), Christianity (Bible), universal literature (Dante, Goethe, Ossian, *The Song of the Nibelungs*), that is to the tradition

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28 B. Schulz, *The Mythologizing of Reality*, in: idem, *Letters and Drawings of Bruno Schulz: with Selected Prose*, edited by J. Ficowski, translated by W. Arndt with V. Nelson. New York 1988, p. 115–116.

29 See S. Freud, *Constructions in Analysis*, in: *The Standard Edition of The Complete Works of Sigismund Freud*, edited and translated by J. Strachey, London 1964, p. 259; W. Benjamin, *Excavations and Memory*, in: *Walter Benjamin: Selected Writings*, vol. 2, part 2, edited by M. P. Bullock, M. W. Jennings, H. Eiland, and G. Smith, Cambridge, Mass. 2005, p. 576.

30 M. P. Markowski interprets it differently: as a literary transposition of Freudian topology of the psyche (see idem, *Polska literatura nowoczesna. Leśmian, Schulz, Witkacy* [Polish Modern Literature. Lesmian, Schulz, Witkacy], Kraków 2007, p. 227).

31 B. Schulz, *Collected Stories*, translated by Madeline G. Levine, Evanstone 2018, p. 120–121.

consciously passed down from generation to generation. It includes content objectified as cultural texts, knowledge that can be acquired in the process of learning and intellectual cognition. On the other hand, Schulz's "stories [...] never heard–that have haunted us since childhood" can be understood as unconscious, merely intuitive inspirations for the artistic creativity from which the poet draws unknowingly. The Jungian affiliation is very clearly drawn here: "the Underworld," in which fragments of cultural heritage coexist with mythical "stories," is a vision of the collective unconscious as a storehouse of archetypes, providing support for the individual memory and imagination of the poet or painter. Schulz thus anticipates the category of cultural memory, a cultural-sociological construct created in the face of the reflection that the concepts of "culture" and "tradition" are insufficient to describe and explain all the manifestations and mechanisms of *homo symbolicus*' activity. "Tradition," after all, refers to intentional transmission[32]. To what extent the notion of culture accommodates unconscious processes and involuntary cultural transmission is still debated[33]. In fact, the development of the term *cultural memory* was an attempt to grapple with the problem of whether there is such a thing as a "cultural unconscious" and to what extent it can be identified with the collective unconscious in the sense of Jung or Lacan. While culture and tradition can be discussed without involving the concept of the unconscious, reflection on cultural memory cannot do without it. The essence of memory, organic and supra-individual, is founded on the dynamics of the conscious and the unconscious[34]. In this context, we can see how bold and forward-looking was the anthropological reflection that Schulz captured by literary means. The existence of the collective unconscious as the basis of individual artistic expression is as obvious to the Drohobych writer as the fact that the individual memory and imagination of a poet or painter are the result of the interplay of acquired cultural knowledge and irrational forces springing from the archetypes of the collective unconscious, which demand to be given

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32 Cf. J. Ruchatz, *Tradierung*, in: *Gedächtnis und Erinnerung. Ein interdisziplinäres Lexikon*, Hg. N. Pethes, J. Ruchatz, Reinbek 2001, p. 586–587; J. Szacki, *Tradition*, in: *Deutsch-Polnische Erinnerungsorte*, Hg. R. Traba, P. O. Loew, Bd. 5: *Erinnerung auf Polnisch. Texte zu Theorie und Praxis des sozialen Gedächtnisses*, Paderborn 2015, p. 78. Even if the subject of transmission is non-discursive content (for example, embodied knowledge), it is of a conscious nature (cf. E. Klekot, *Tradycja* [Tradition], in *Modi memorandi*..., p. 500).

33 The question arose in the discussion about the concept of cultural memory articulated by Jan Assmann in his article *Das kulturelle Gedächtnis*, "Erwägen – Wissen – Ethik" 2002, Heft 2, p. 239–247. The problem of a hypothetical "cultural unconscious" is raised by critics who polemicise with Assmann in the same journal, above all: E. Santner, *The Locations of Memory*, p. 220–222; H. Winkler, *Das Unbewusste der Kultur?*, p. 270–271; and A. Langenohl, *"Kulturelles Gedächtnis?" Soziologische Bedenken*, "Erwägen – Wissen – Ethik" 2002, Heft 2, p. 255–258.

34 See A. Assmann, *Vier Formen des Gedächtnisses – eine Replik*, "Erwägen – Wissen – Ethik" 2002, Heft 2, p. 235.

artistic shape. Schulz, unlike today's researchers of collective memory, has no doubt that culture is created not only through the official, conscious, and planned transmission of knowledge resources, science, and art. To use "a Schulzian term," this process takes place somewhere on the side tracks, too, surreptitiously and outside of the consciousness of its participants.

Schulz and the Warburg engrams

What is the difference between Schulz's and Mann's "theory of memory"? The Drohobych writer links the unconscious areas of cultural memory with visual art more strongly than the German novelist. We remember that Joseph from the story *The Age of Genius*, unlike his Biblical namesake in Mann's novel, is a spirited draughtsman. However, the visions that Schulz's protagonist transfers to paper as a child are attributed not to himself but to the overwhelming action of psychic energy streaming from the collective unconscious, the "storehouse" of images, ideas, and concepts striving to be articulated, to which the artist and the child have the fullest access:

"Oh, those luminous drawings, springing up as if under a stranger's hand; oh, those transparent colors and shadows! […] From the start I was assailed by doubt as to whether I am in fact their author. At times they seemed to me to be involuntary plagiarisms, something that was hinted to me, handed to me… As if something alien served as my inspiration for goals that I don't know."[35]

"Luminous drawings," which impose themselves on the artist involuntarily yet with extreme intensity, bring to mind not only Jungian archetypes (strictly: archetypal images), but also Warburg's pathos formulas. In the introduction to *Bilderatlas Mnemosyne*, the Hamburg scholar writes about the figures, gestures, and themes that demand visual expression, which are part of the "inherited mass of impressions, created in fear"[36] (*phobisch geprägte Eindruckserbmasse*) and guide the painter's hand:

"It is in the area of mass orgiastic seizure that one should seek the mint that stamps the expressive forms of extreme inner possession on the memory with such intensity—inasmuch as it can be expressed through gesture—that these engrams of affective experience survive in the form of a heritage preserved in the memory. They serve as models that shape the outline drawn by the artist's hand, once the extreme values of the language of gesture appear in the daylight through the formative medium of the artist's hand."[37]

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35 B. Schulz, *Collected Stories*…, p. 96, 102.

36 A. Warburg, *Mnemosyne Atlas. Introduction*..., op. cit. The German wording: idem, *Bilderatlas Mnemosyne,* op. cit., p. 630.

37 A. Warburg, *Mnemosyne Atlas. Introduction*..., op. cit. In original: "In der Region der orgiastischen

Despite the complicated wording, the parallels with Schulz's description are clearly discernible in this passage.

Unlike Mann, Schulz does not seem to resolve that the transmission of the unconscious content of cultural memory occurs exclusively, or mainly, through social contacts. On the contrary: in my view, Schulz allows for the possibility that humans inherit "stories," "fictions and fables" as innate capital. I believe the oft-quoted words from an open letter to Stanislaw Ignacy Witkiewicz, the metapoetic equivalent of the above excerpt from *The Age of Genius*, allow for a conclusion like that. In the letter to Witkiewicz, Schulz writes about certain (archetypical) images accompanying him since childhood, the provenience of which he cannot explain but it certainly cannot be sought in his individual experience:

"The beginnings of my graphic work are lost in mythological twilight. Before I could even talk, I was already covering every scrap of paper and the margins of newspapers with scribbles that attracted the attention of those around me. At first they were all horses and wagons. […] I don't know how we manage to acquire certain images in childhood that carry decisive meanings for us. […] There are texts that are marked out, made ready for us somehow, lying in wait for us at the very entrance to life. […] Such images amount to an agenda, establish an iron capital of the spirit, proffered to us very early in the form of forebodings and half-conscious experiences."[38]

The "iron capital of the spirit, proffered to us very early" can again be read both in the Jungian sense as collective unconscious as well as "in Warburgian terms." The images, which the child reaching for the pencil has never seen but which impose themselves on him along with their primordial, overpowering psychic energy, can be read, in my opinion, as "expressive forms of extreme inner possession," "engrams of affective experience" from the prehistoric collective. Schulz, like Warburg, does not exclude the existence of an organic basis for the "iron capital of the spirit." This interpretation of his anthropological reflection would probably not be wrong, given the omnipresence of "biological" metaphors in his prose.

There is yet another similarity between Schulz and Warburg that is mentionable, namely their penchant for "scraps" and for unsophisticated products of the fine arts. Postage stamps, an advertising catalogue, pornographic photographs,

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Massenergriffenheit ist das Prägewerk zu suchen, das dem Gedächtnis die Ausdrucksformen des maximalen inneren Ergriffenseins, soweit es sich gebärdensprachlich ausdrücken lässt, in solcher Intensität einhämmert, dass diese Engramme leidenschaftlicher Erfahrung als gedächtnisbewahrtes Erbgut überleben und vorbildlich den Umriss bestimmen, den die Künstlerhand schafft, sobald Höchstwerte der Gebärdensprache durch Künstlerhand im Tageslicht der Gestaltung hervortreten wollen" (A. Warburg, *Mnemosyne Einleitung...*, p. 631).

38 B. Schulz, *An Essay for S. I. Witkiewicz*, in: idem, *Letters and Drawings*…, p. 110–111.

"old folios full of the strangest etchings"[39]; all these products of applied graphics of dubious artistic value are elevated to the status of sacrum in Schulz's works. They are potential parts of the Book, in which some superior idea becomes present: a myth, an unknowable reality that can only be intuited. Warburg looked at the visual arts in a similar way. In his *Bilderatlas Mnemosyne*, he juxtaposed reproductions of Renaissance paintings side by side with photographs of ancient sarcophagi and coins, primitive ephemeral prints from the Reformation period, contemporary newspaper photographs, postage stamps, advertisements for cosmetics and shipping companies[40], and thus traced the journey of pathos formulas in the history of Western European "image memory".

The equality of outstanding works and graphic junk testifies to the belief that "for the purposes of the history of human expression and the topography of cultural memory, even the most marginal visual products, inferior, mass, popular, occasional objects, mean as much as the canonical masterpieces of Raphael or Dürer."[41] Engrams, images of gestures and movements of unconscious phobic genesis, release the affects "frozen" in them in unexpected places and contexts. The image-forming power of the engram, working in defiance of a draughtsman's will, emanates also from artworks that are poor, derivative, disregarded, or those that are denied the title of works of art at all. Both Warburg and Schulz take visual scraps extremely seriously; because such images are created intuitively, in an act of reflexive self-expression, the collective cultural unconscious is activated in them, whether consisted in Warburgian notions of engram and pathos formulas or called *myth* by Schulz.

Conclusion

Although the interpretation of Schulz's work from the positions of Memory Studies that are a decade younger is a backward projection of certain cultural concepts, it is probably not a gross misuse. The Drohobych writer anticipates the postmodern notion of cultural memory and suggests an affirmative answer to the question of whether there is a "cultural unconscious." What emerges from his prose is highly original and groundbreaking, though, from the viewpoint of German Memory Studies, a peculiarly heretical view of individual and collective memory. Schulz does not hesitate to combine "biologistic" and "cultural" themes that can be read in the spirit of both Jung and Warburg, which is possible because

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39 B. Schulz, *Collected Stories*…, p. 47.

40 See A. Warburg, *Bilderatlas Mnemosyne—The Original*, op. cit., tables 77, 78, 79.

41 R. Kasperowicz, *Obraz w koncepcji Aby'ego Warburga* [Image in Aby Warburg's Concept], "Konteksty. Polska sztuka ludowa" [The Contexts. Polish Folk Art] 2011, no. 2–3, p. 38. Translated from Polish by M. Kurek.

of the similarities between the concepts of archetype and engram. Schulz emphasises the visual character of cultural memory and the unconscious, and perhaps biological mechanism of its transmission, thus opening memory reflection paths, which, for example, in Jan Assmann's view, were bypassed[42] or closed in advance. That is why Schulz's take on *memoria* is a noteworthy alternative, or at least an "offshoot" of today's Memory Studies that is worth exploring.

Translated from Polish by Marta Kurek

42 The "bypassed path" within Assmann's early theory would be visual art as a testimony of cultural memory, as the German Egyptologist recognised the primacy of writing over other memory media (see M. Saryusz-Wolska, *Pamięć kulturowa* [Cultural memory], in: *Modi memorandi*..., p. 337).

Tomasz Swoboda: Plagiarism by Anticipation

Let's enter the word "plagiarism" into a search engine alongside the name of any so-called canonical author. How many results popped up? How much indisputable evidence to suggest that Thomas Mann, Marcel Proust, Fyodor Dostoyevsky and Jarosław Iwaszkiewicz rewrote someone else's texts, perhaps with subtle alterations, in parts of their own work? How many indications to suggest that numerous other passages of their texts also contain unauthorised (?) borrowings, waiting to be corroborated in a matter of time? And if all of this is true, what implications does it hold for our understanding of the historical-literary process? Surely this does not imply that all writers whose works raise such doubts should be labelled as, say, literary frauds, criminals or clandestine collaborators, and thereby—erased from literary history, or at least its canon.

Plagiarism

The word "plagiarism" derives from the Greek *plagios*—oblique or slanting. A "plagiariser" was someone who appropriated other people's slaves, a child abductor.[1] The term did not, of course, apply to literature or art—not because plagiarism was not committed, but precisely because it was so prevalent, and, in a sense, even encouraged. As we know, all classical and classicist poetics, that is, until the late 18th and early 19th centuries, rested upon the concept of *mimesis*, which, among other interpretations, was understood as imitation; whether of nature, ancient texts, or more broadly—of all model works. It was not until the arrival of Romanticism that the concept of originality was introduced as a positive aesthetic value, together with the notion that literature emerges from reality or of its own accord, rather than being derived from pre-existing literature. We essentially remain within this paradigm to this day, somewhat contrary to logic, since the exponential growth in text production is rapidly decreasing the possibility of writing something that has not yet been written.

And thus, the Library of Babel fills up, or rather—this way we keep discovering ever new shelves and racks within it. Nevertheless, the inevitability of plagiarism is not the only reason for the existence of this phenomenon. Moreover, as per the legal definition, producing a text that is identical to another simply due to the

1 J. Fux, "Le postmoderne et la question du plagiat littéraire", *Revista de Letras* 2011, no. 2, p. 68.

exhaustion of word combinations in language could not be considered plagiarism because the latter implies intentionality. Reflecting on these intentions, Jacques Finné refers to diverse motivations such as the tempting ease of "creation", the desire for fame coupled with a lack of talent, lack of time, as well as the will to improve a failed work or to preserve a work threatened with destruction, as famously exemplified by Sholokhov's *Quiet Flows the Don.*[2]

Regardless of the causes, intentions, or lack thereof, the course of the creative process and its results, it still seems that the broadly understood concept of plagiarism in literature should be considered a peculiar, alternative, as it were, yet paradoxically, to some extent legitimate form of writing, in which memory, of both the author and reader, plays a crucial role. In the case of the author, according to the logic of the Library of Babel, the act of forgetting is the *sine qua non* of traditionally understood creation. In the case of the reader, on the other hand, solely their memory determines whether that which we could call the antiplagiaristic pact (I pretend to write something that no one has written yet, and you pretend not to have read it before) can even function at all.

An interesting approach to the process of plagiarism was developed by the French group Oulipo (*Ouvroir de littérature potentielle* – "Workshop of potential literature"). By creating or discovering structures—be it mathematical or algebraic—that enable the production of literary texts *ad infinitum*, they addressed the issue of plagiarism in a rather ludic fashion. Nevertheless, the conclusions that this strategy yields for literary theory are by all means serious. In a sense, the Oulipians propose the equivalent of conceptual art in literature. What matters most to them is an invented formula, an idea, a discovery intended to create a certain possibility, a potentiality, while the final effect, the text itself, remains to some extent a secondary matter. This did not, however, prevent masterpieces such as Georges Perec's *Life: A User's Manual* from being written within the group.

The question of plagiarism was raised by Oulipo's co-founder, the mathematician François Le Lionnais: "Occasionally, we discover that a structure we believed to be entirely new had in fact already been discovered or invented in the past, sometimes even in a distant past. We make it a point of honor to recognize such a state of things in qualifying the text in question as 'plagiarism by anticipation'".[3] Even stronger is Marcel Bénabou's irony, or rather self-irony, in his book *Pourquoi je n'ai écrit aucun de mes livres* (*Why I Have Not Written Any of My Books*), the title of which paraphrases Raymond Roussel's *Comment j'ai écrit certains de mes livres* (*How I Wrote Certain of My Books*).[4] Reflecting on

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2 See: J. Finné, *Des mystifications littéraires*, Corti, Paris 2010.

3 *Oulipo: A Primer of Potential Literature*, ed. Warren F. Motte, Dalkey Archive Press, 1998, p. 31.

4 M. Bénabou, *Why I Have not Written Any of My Books*, trans. D. Kornacker, University of Nebraska Press, Lincoln 1996.

his writer's block, Bénabou explains it by the fact that all the books he intended to write had, unfortunately, already been written by others, whom he naturally refers to as plagiarists by anticipation. Finally, Jacques Roubaud leaves no illusions as to Oulipo's place in literary history: "World literature, it must be reminded at every turn, is full of plagiarists by anticipation in relation to Oulipo. However, their works, too often produced in more or less blatant ignorance of Oulipian principles, contain serious imperfections".[5]

In recent years, the idea of plagiarism by anticipation has been taken up by the French psychoanalyst and literary theorist Pierre Bayard, author of the famous essay *How to Talk About Books You Haven't Read*. As an enthusiast of applying logical paradoxes to literature, Bayard first described how in some works writers succeeded in predicting their own future.[6] Then, he tried to present the history of literature as if some authors were inspired by what they might have read had they lived longer. In this book, titled simply *Le Plagiat par anticipation*,[7] plagiarism by anticipation is considered an existing piece of work that plagiarises a text not yet written, as well as a text plagiarised by a previous text. According to Bayard, this phenomenon is marked by the evident similarity of the texts, the incongruence between the plagiarised passage and the rest of the work and other works of the period, the secrecy of the procedure, and, of course, the temporal inversion. Classic examples of such a relation based on plagiarism include, among others, Sophocles and Freud, Voltaire and Conan Doyle, and, in the field of visual arts—Fra Angelico and Jackson Pollock, in whose work Bayard identified similarities thanks to Georges Didi-Huberman's description.[8]

Perhaps the most telling example, however, is this quote: "He tried to find what caused this upsurge of his old life that he had felt and noticed several times already, though less often than today. There was always a reason for these sudden evocations, a simple and material cause, an odor perhaps, often a fragrance. How many times had a woman's dress flung upon him in passing, with the evaporated breath of some essence, the full recollection of forgotten incidents. At the bottom of old scent flasks he had also recovered fragments of his existence; and all the vagrant odors of the streets, of the fields, of the houses, of the furniture, sweet and unwelcome, the warm odors of summer evenings, the sudden chills of winter nights, always revived remote memories, as if such scents, like the aromatics that preserve mummies, retained and embalmed all these extinct events."[9] In

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5 J. Roubaud, "Vers une oulipisation conséquente de la littérature", *La Bibliothèque Oulipienne*, vol. 3, Paris 1990, p. 87.

6 P. Bayard, *Demain est écrit*, Minuit, Paris 2005.

7 Idem, *Le Plagiat par anticipation*, Minuit, Paris 2009.

8 G. Didi-Huberman, *Confronting Images. Questioning the Ends of a Certain History of Art*, trans. J. Goodman, The Pennsylvania State University, University Park 2005, pp. 16–17.

9 G. de Maupassant, *Like Death*, trans. R. Howard, New York Review Books, New York 2017, pp. 73–74.

this passage, everything—the sudden activation of the memory mechanism, the series of associations, and even the sentence rhythm—brings to mind Proust's madeleine scene. Except that the author of this text is Guy de Maupassant, and it predates *Swann's Way* by well over a quarter of a century. What does this mean? According to common sense, and in line with the suggestion at the beginning of this article, one would have to say that Proust plagiarised Maupassant's work. Pierre Bayard, however, disputes the seeming obviousness of this conclusion by pointing out, for example, that Maupassant was not among the writers most often read by Proust, and it is to be doubted that the author of *The Search* was familiar with one of the lesser-known works of the master of naturalism. And even if he had read it and indeed committed a kind of plagiarism—whether consciously or involuntarily—this in no way alters the fact that it is the second text, the madeleine, that, as it were, triggers in the first text, the Maupassant, a kind of third text: materially identical to the first one and at the same time different, since what we hear in it primarily is Proust's madeleine, which, in the chronological order of events, will come into the world much later. In other words: Maupassant's text would not exist without Proust's text. From this perspective it is thus difficult to claim that Maupassant is really the author of the text.

One might, of course—as Hélène Maurel-Indart does[10]—regard the concept of plagiarism by anticipation as a multiplication of entities beyond measure and consider it a fancy form of precursor. We should recall that the latter issue was sketched out by Jorge Louis Borges in the essay "Kafka and His Precursors", with the claim that every writer creates his own precursors and that his works modify our perception of the past as well as the future of literature. As evidence of just such a course of history, he cites a few of what he claims is an infinite number of Kafka's precursors and Kafkaesque episodes in literature.[11] But reducing plagiarism by anticipation to precursorship downplays the importance of memory or even removes it altogether from the field of literary history and theory. And yet, this history and theory cannot ignore the reader along with his readings and experiences. This reader is understood in two ways: firstly, as a real reader, and secondly, as a certain historical-literary category, the sum total of the books read by a given reading community, the reception counterpart of Riffaterre's archi-reader.[12] Such a literary history would be peculiarly paranoid, similar to that madman who accused Voltaire of plagiarism, since he used the

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10 H. Maurel-Indart, "Le précurseur dépossédé", *Acta fabula* 2009, no. 2, https://www.fabula.org/revue/document4889.php [access: 17.06.2024].

11 J. L. Borges, "Kafka and His Precursors", trans. R. L. C. Simms, University of Texas Press, Austin 1975, pp. 106–108.

12 M. Riffaterre, "Criteria for Style Analysis", *Word* 1959, vol. 15, pp. 154–174.

same expression.[13] A literary historian who does not acknowledge plagiarism by anticipation would read Sophocles and pretend there was no Freud, whereas, as Bayard points out, it is after all thanks to Freud that Oedipus becomes Oedipal.

Indeed, it is nothing less than intertextuality, although perhaps "interreadability" would be a more appropriate term here, since it is more about the relationship between readings than between the texts themselves. For, as one critic notes in a discussion of Bayard's book, we never read just one text, reading always implies prior readings.[14] Thus, the notion of the text is expanded; it must begin to also include earlier and later texts, as well as their interpretations. Alternatively, taking this logic to an extreme, we could repeat after Jacques Petit: "the text does not exist".[15] The authorial instance must also be modified, as Michel Schneider aptly puts it: "A writer is someone who plagiarises, parodies, creates pastiches and from this material composes books that do not resemble other ones, and give the impression that the models are copies, and that future books will have to be similar to them".[16] Meanwhile, literature as a whole becomes not a collection of chronologically ordered texts, but rather a space, a network, a library (Babel) in which all texts are interconnected and mutually transforming. All of them: both those already existing and those yet to be written. As Laurent Zimmermann points out, referring to the theory of possible worlds, writers remember by anticipation: the difference between the actual library and the virtual one disappears, since possible texts exist on a logical level. The writer finds himself facing the work he is currently creating and, at the same time, in front of other works, potential works, of which he chooses and realises only one without invalidating the others.[17]

The Copy

In the context of possible worlds theory, it would be appropriate to add the related vision of time as a map or time as space. With regard to literature, Barbara Zielińska discusses this in the volume *Szybko i Szybciej* [*Fast and Faster*]. Drawing on contemporary physics, she highlights, among other things, that "the past and future exist as real entities, independent of any flow", "past and future events exist

13 As in: J. Finné, op. cit., p. 53.

14 F. Pennanech, "L'histoire n'existe pas", *Acta fabula* 2009, no. 2, https://www.fabula.org/acta/document4925.php [access: 17.06.2024].

15 L. Hay, "'Le texte n'existe pas'. Réflexions sur la critique génétique", *Poétique* 1985, no. 62, pp. 146–158.

16 M. Schneider, *Voleurs de mots. Essai sur le plagiat, la psychanalyse et la pensée*, Gallimard, Paris 1985, p. 72.

17 L. Zimmermann, "Précurseur ou plagiaire par anticipation?", *Acta fabula* 2009, no. 2, https://www.fabula.org/acta/document4892.php [access: 18.06.2024].

simultaneously", while the feeling of the passage of time "is a neurophysiological phenomenon, not a physical one".[18] In other words, the linear vision of time is, according to physics, a construct of the human mind, a simplification that allows us to sensibly function within a space that simply straddles the known and the unknown.

The phenomenon of plagiarism by anticipation naturally calls for this falsification to be undermined or, in any case, made problematic. Here, perhaps an even more telling example than that of Maupassant writing in Proustian is what took place in 2016 at the Museum of Art in Łódź. As Łukasz Zaremba wrote in a booklet accompanying the event: "The sudden appearance of Gertrude Stein's pre-war Parisian studio in Łódź may be surprising at first—particularly for the viewers and critics who have become attached to classical geography, the linear concept of time and the notion of the unequivocal value of the original."[19] Gertrude Stein's salon from the writer's Parisian apartment at 27 rue de Fleurus, where, for the first time in history, paintings by Cézanne, Picasso and Matisse hung side by side, appeared "anew for the first time" in 1992 in New York. This is no longer the real lounge with its original furniture and original artwork. But neither do the copies pretend to be originals nor aim to create the illusion that we are dealing with Stein's actual salon. The paintings hanging in Łódź were clearly dated: 2015. It is evident that the goal was not merely a reconstruction, a cheap replica of the mythical space for those unable to visit the one in Paris.

The exhibition, titled *Salon de Fleurus*, was more of a meta-exhibition, presenting the problem of the exhibition as such, but also the museum institution, collections and collecting, as well as—the reason for its mention here—the original and the copy, their status and mutual relationship. In the exhibition booklet, the curators also included texts by Walter Benjamin. Except that the texts in question are from the volume *Recent Writings*, published in 2013, that contains essays written by the German philosopher (reminder: who died in 1940) at the turn of the 20th and 21st centuries… In one of these essays, entitled "On Copy", pseudo-Benjamin argues: "A copy could short-circuit the history of art. Instead of being chronological, implying both development and progress, art history could become a loop if two formally identical paintings (the original and the copy) appeared at two different points on the historical timeline."[20] As in the case of plagiarism by anticipation, this would lead to a kind of reversal of the temporal

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18 B. Zielińska, "Czas jako mapa. Zastyganie czasu w literaturze", in: *Szybko i szybciej. Eseje o pośpiechu w kulturze*, ed. D. Siwicka, M. Bieńczyk, A. Nawarecki, Instytut Badań Literackich PAN, Warszawa 1996, pp. 171–172.

19 Ł. Zaremba, "Salon-Fiction, czyli idolatria na opak", in: *Salon de Fleurus*, Muzeum Sztuki w Łodzi, 2016, p. 1.

20 W. Benjamin, "On Copy", in: *What is Modern Art? (Group Show)*, vol. 1, ed. I. Arns, W. Benjamin, Revolver – Archiv für aktuelle Kunst, Frankfurt am Main 2006.

order, the only difference being that the relationship between the artworks is not based on similarity, but on replicating. It is not entirely the same thing.

Yet this situation makes it possible to imagine something like a "copy by anticipation". The curator of the Łódź exhibition takes us in that direction: "The copy does not have an author, although it usually contributes to shaping both the figure of the author and the aura of the original work. The salon is thus first and foremost a reminder that the canonisation and musealisation of modern art is founded as much on the fetishisation of originals as on the circulation of copies. Hence—Benjamin from 2002 somewhat complements Benjamin from 1936, the author of *The Work of Art in the Age of Its Technological Reproducibility*—it is precisely the countless reproductions (primarily technical ones) that constitute the grounds for the existence of originals as unique, singular, proper and desirable objects. They also draw attention to the fact that modern criticism, and especially art history, is based on copies, and that knowledge of modern art history—not only of modern art—is mostly a knowledge of reproductions."[21] Zaremba does not say so explicitly, but, drawing on Benjamin's ideas from his classic text, we could add—again somewhat refining the initial (original) claim—handling and observation, is the reproduction (the copy). For the common viewer, the original, being unavailable, is of little importance, as is the case with writers' manuscripts, conveniently hidden in the confines of a museum repository because they have been successfully replaced by printed and electronic versions on show. Just as Benjamin wrote: a work of art is created with the intention of being reproduced or copied, since it is the copy that creates the original—without it, the original is merely an empty, unactualised potentiality.

This paradox is explored in literature by Georges Perec's *The Winter Journey.* The protagonist of this very short story—endlessly expanded by other members of Oulipo[22]—comes across a small volume by a certain Hugo Vernier in his friends' library, in which he recognises entire passages of later poems by French masters from the late 19th century. It turns out that the poetic masterpieces of period are the fruit of plagiarism committed on a long-lost, forgotten author. However, the idea of plagiarism or copying by anticipation makes it possible to clear Rimbaud, Verlaine and Mallarmé of accusations of plagiarism. The exact opposite is true—it was Hugo Vernier who copied their yet-to-be-written poems. They themselves must have been aware of what it means to be an author. Perhaps this is how we recognise great writers. Writers like Borges, like Pierre Menard, who "did not want to compose *another* Quixote, which surely is easy enough—he wanted to compose *the* Quixote. Nor, surely, need one be obliged

21 Ł. Zaremba, op. cit., p. 2.
22 G. Perec, the Oulipo, *Winter Journeys,* trans. H. Matthews, J. Sturrock, London 2013.

to note that his goal was never a mechanical transcription of the original; he had no intention of *copying* it. His admirable ambition was to produce a number of pages which coincided—word for word and line for line—with those of Miguel de Cervantes".[23] Borges and Perec suggest that to copy someone else's text is to become the true author, thereby relegating the predecessor to a fabricator of copies by anticipation. Their protagonists' fates are not aligned: Pierre Menard does not finish his work; his voice, somewhat like in Harold Bloom's theory, was not strong enough to drown out Cervantes's voice and make his *Don Quixote* a copy by anticipation. On the other hand, Perec's Hugo Vernier perishes on the ash heap of history

Both writers repeatedly approached the problem of the copy and its paradoxes. In *Portrait of a Man Known as Il Condottiere,* Perec portrays the existence of the copyist in *doloroso* style, casting Gaspard Winckler as a melancholy figure of modernity, closely akin to the residents of the apartment block described in *Life: A User's Manual.*[24] Borges, in the aforementioned "Library of Babel" (which provides a constant backdrop to these reflections), illustrates the consequences of combinatorics for the functioning of literature. The library he describes, if considered a virtual entity, is essentially the copy by anticipation of all books that come into existence in reality. The essence of this phenomenon is articulated in Borges's customary fashion by means of a footnote: "In order for a book to exist, it is sufficient that it be *possible*. Only the impossible is excluded. For example, no book is also a staircase, though there are no doubt books that discuss and deny and prove that possibility, and others whose structure corresponds to that of a staircase."[25] Borges's very concept can also be considered a copy by anticipation of an algorithmic machine, capable of creating a gigantic, but nevertheless limited, finite number of texts. A miniature version of such a machine has, of course, already been manufactured by the Oulipians in the person of Raymond Queneau as the author of *A Hundred Thousand Billion Poems*—since that is how many can be generated by the poetic mechanism based on ten isomorphic sonnets. What is the original here, and what is copy?

I ponder all of this while gazing at the portrait of a man in a black hat, created in 2016 as part of The Next Rembrandt project.[26] The portrait was "painted" by a computer programme that analysed all existing canvases by the Leiden master over many months, ultimately generating a work that matched his style in every

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23 J. L. Borges, "Pierre Menard, Author of the *Quixote*", trans. A. Hurley, in: idem, *Collected Fictions*, Penguin Books, 1999, p. 91.

24 G. Perec, *Portrait of a Man Known as Il Condottiere*, trans. D. Bellos, University of Chicago Press, Chicago 2016.

25 J. L. Borges, "The Library of Babel", trans. A. Hurley, in: idem, *Collected Fictions*..., op. cit., p. 117.

26 See: www.nextrembrandt.com.

aspect—thematic, chromatic and compositional—without being a copy of any known work. In light of this achievement, the concept of a copy by anticipation takes on a whole new meaning. Perhaps all great artists will soon turn out to be copies of machines and AI programmes capable of producing masterpieces on demand. Who will resist the temptation of reading Proust's new novel? Who will turn down the long-sought *Messiah*? Let us fear not, for thanks to technological advancement we won't have to wait as long as several months, as people did for Rembrandt.

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Urszula Makowska, "Dziwna awersja. O wystawach Schulza", *Schulz/Forum* 2019, nr 13, p. 5-34.
Małgorzata Kitowska-Łysiak, "Uwagi w sprawie kanonu. Brunona Schulza szkicownik młodzieńczy i freski w willi Landaua", *Schulz/Forum* 2013, nr 2, p. 63-78.
Jerzy Jarzębski, "Schulz uniwersalny", *Schulz/Forum* 2015, nr 6, p. 5-16.
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Marek Wilczyński, "Polska proza galicyjska przed wojną i po wojnie. Bruno Schulz w kontekście literatury Katastrofy", *Schulz/Forum* 2015, nr 5, p. 5-17.
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Paweł Sitkiewicz, "Fantasmagorie. Rozważania o filmowej wyobraźni Brunona Schulza", *Schulz/Forum* 2012, nr 1, p. 35-46.
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[notes on contributors]

Stanley Bill
Professor of Polish Studies and Director of the Slavonic Studies Section at the University of Cambridge. He is the author of *Czesław Miłosz's Faith in the Flesh: Body, Belief, and Human Identity* (Oxford University Press, 2021), and co-editor of *The Routledge World Companion to Polish Literature* (2021) and *Multicultural Commonwealth: Poland-Lithuania and Its Afterlives* (University of Pittsburgh Press, 2023). He has published translations of Czesław Miłosz›s novel *The Mountains of Parnassus* (Yale University Press, 2017) and a selection of short stories by Bruno Schulz entitled *Nocturnal Apparitions: Essential Stories* (Pushkin Press, 2022). He is founder and editor-at-large of the news and opinion website Notes from Poland.

Łesia Chomycz
Graduate of the Faculty of History of the Ivan Franko University in Drogobych, Ukraine. Head of the Gallery of European Art in the Museum of the Drogobych Region. Co-author of a collection of essays on Bruno Schulz as well as about a dozen articles on the writer.

Jerzy Jarzębski (1947–2024)
Professor of Polish Literature at the Jagiellonian University in Cracow, Visiting Professor at Harvard University and Hebrew University in Jerusalem, member of the Board of Polish Pen and the Literary Studies Committee of Polish Academy of Sciences. His field of interest was mainly twentieth- and twenty-first-century Polish fiction, in particular the work of Witold Gombrowicz, Bruno Schulz, and Stanisław Lem. Author of ca. 600 academic publications, including 13 books, editor of the *Collected Works* of Stanisław Lem and co-editor of the *Collected Works* of Witold Gombrowicz. His works have been translated into 17 languages. Laureate of many prestigious academic awards.

Jerzy Kandziora
Professor Emeritus at the Institute of Literary Studies of Polish Academy of Sciences, literary historian, bibliographer, editor, and documentalist. He has published books on Polish fiction after 1976, Stanisław Barańczak, and Jerzy Ficowski, as well as Polish underground literature, publishing, and theater in 1976-1989. Besides, he has edited a collection of letters, memories, and statements on Bruno Schulz and published several articles in *Schulz/Forum*.

Eliza Kącka
Assistant Professor of Literature at the Department of Polish of the University of Warsaw, writer, and literary critic. Author of 2 books on Stanisław Brzozowski, a collection of

literary essays on various subjects, many academic articles, and 4 books of fiction. Editor of a few volumes of selected works of Polish poets.

Małgorzata Kitowska-Łysiak (1953–2012)
Art critic and art historian, Professor at the Institute of Art History of the Catholic University of Lublin. Her research interests included history and theory of nineteenth- and twentieth-century art, in particular Polish painting after 1945, and the artistic achievement of Bruno Schulz. Author of 4 books and ca. 250 essays and academic articles, many of them focused on the work of Schulz, editor of a number of collections of essays and anthologies. Member of the editorial board of Schulz's *Collected Works*.

Katarzyna Lukas
Associate Professor at the Institute of German of the University of Gdańsk. Author of books: *Fremdheit – Gedächtnis – Translation: Interpretationskategorien einer kulturorientierten Literaturwissenschaft* (Berlin 2018) and *Das Weltbild und die literarische Konvention als Übersetzungsdeterminanten. Adam Mickiewicz in deutschsprachigen Übertragungen* (Berlin 2009). Her research interests include Polish and German literary studies, comparative literature, translation studies, and problems of cultural memory.

Urszula Makowska
Art historian, member of the team of authors and editors of a dictionary of Polish artists and foreign artists active in Poland at the Institute of Art of the Polish Academy of Sciences, since 1994 worked also with the German *Allgemeines Künstlerlexikon*. Her research interests include Polish art of the 19th and the early 20th centuries, in particular relations between art and literature. She has published on writers' drawings and the visual interpretation of literary works in collections of articles and academic periodicals. As a Schulz scholar she has prepared an entry on Bruno Schulz in the tenth volume of *Słownik artystów polskich* (2016).

Wojciech Owczarski
Professor of the Humanities. He teaches literature and cultural studies at the University of Gdansk, Poland, and is the author of seven monographs on dreams and literature, as well as numerous articles in Polish and English. Chair of the Research Unit for Dream, Memory and Imagination Studies at the University of Gdansk. His research interests include literary studies, dream studies, theatre studies, and cultural anthropology.

Paweł Sitkiewicz
Film and media historian, Professor at the University of Gdańsk. He has published on a number of topics including animation, silent cinema, history of movie-going and graphic novel. Author of four books, including a study on the Polish School of animation (2011) and an account of the film audience in Poland between the world wars (2019).

Tomasz Swoboda
Associate Professor at the Faculty of Languages of the University of Gdańsk, essayist and translator. Teaches French and Spanish literatures. Author of books and ca. 100 articles

on literature and art: a study of Polish decadent literature and *Histoires de l'œil* (Amsterdam - New York 2013). He has translated into Polish works by Proust, Baudelaire, Nerval, Barthes, Bataille, Caillois, Leiris, Ricœur, Didi-Huberman, Mouawad, Le Corbusier, *La Bible* by Serge Bloch and Frédéric Boyer as well as the *Ariol* comic book series.. Visiting professor at the University of Toulouse-Jean-Jaurès, the Jean Moulin University Lyon 3, and the University of West Bretagne. Co-directed a research project on popular culture with the Catholic University of Louvain-la-Neuve.

Marek Wilczyński

Professor of Literature at the American Studies Center of the University of Warsaw. Author of a book-length study on American horror fiction up to the Civil War and ca. 100 articles published in Poland and abroad, co-author of *History of Twentieth-Century American Literature*, 2 vols (in Polish). His research interests include American romanticism and postmodern fiction, Polish romanticism and modernism, as well as contemporary Ukrainian literature.

Zofia Ziemann

Assistant Professor at the Centre for Translation Studies (Department of International Polish Studies, Faculty of Polish) at the Jagiellonian University, Kraków, Poland, where she heads the MA programme in Literary and Cultural Translation Studies. Her research interests are translation history, translator studies, and the reception of translated literature, with particular focus on literary retranslation. In 2020, she defended a PhD on the history of English translations of Bruno Schulz's fiction. Co-editor, with Magda Heydel, of *Retracing the History of Literary Translation in Poland: People, Politics, Poetics* (Routledge 2022). Member of the editorial boards of the academic journals *Przekładaniec* (Jagiellonian University, Kraków), *Schulz/Forum* (University of Gdańsk), and *Pamiętnik Teatralny* (Polish Academy of Sciences, Warsaw). She also works as a freelance interpreter, translator, and proofreader.

[abstracts]

Bruno Schulz
Undula

An unknown story by Bruno Schulz, titled "Undula," published in 1922 in the fortnightly Świt, a tribune of the oil industry officials from the town of Borysław, under a mysterious penname "Marceli Weron".

Łesia Chomycz
About the Exhibition in Boryslav. Bruno Schulz's Two Debuts

Most Schulz experts assume that while working on The Booke of Idolatry, he did not start writing fiction yet. It has been generally believed that his literary talent surfaced rather late, although Jerzy Ficowski thought that Schulz might have tried writing some time earlier. In the critic's opinion, the beginning of Schulz's literary talent dated back to his correspondence with close friends in 1925–1926, but since all letters from that period have been lost there is no way to validate that claim. Jerzy Jarzębski supposes that Schulz's fiction came into being rapidly, at once fully mature and perfect. Władysław Panas also points at Schulz's magisterial literary debut, The Cinnamon Shops, when the author was already about forty years old. And yet, the present essay puts those hypotheses to test. Having searched the holdings of the Vasyl Stefanyk National Academic Library in Lviv, Ms. Khomych has demonstrated that Schulz made his debut in the early 1920s almost simultaneously in two fields: in art, with a one man show in the town of Boryslaw in 1921, which has been commonly known, and in literature in 1922. Ms Khomych discovered in the 25–26 no. (January 15, 1922) of the bi-weekly Świt, sponsored by the oil officials of Boryslaw, a short story titled "Undula," signed with a penname "Marceli Weron." A critical analysis of this story demonstrates a number of affinities both with Schulz's art, and with his later fiction. The name of the title character, Undula, is the same as that of the main figure of the graphic works included in The Booke of Idolatry. Other similarities include masochistic eroticism and some characters and motifs typical of Schulz's later stories: a child, a dream, a chambermaid named Adela, the Demiurge, a crab, and a cockroach. Moreover, the stylistic and lexical features of the text leave no doubt that Schulz must have been its author. Imitation by anyone is impossible since in the early 1920s none of his other literary works was available in print. Thus, one may assume that "Marceli Weron" was Schulz's penname and "Undula" was his proper literary debut.

Urszula Makowska
"Strange Aversion". About Schulz's Exhibitions

The paper sums up and corrects information on the exhibitions in which Schulz took part as well as reconstructs the circumstances under which they were organized. Today we know about ten such exhibitions ordered in series separated by several year-long

breaks: 1920-1923, 1930, 1935. His participation in the last show, organized in 1940 by a Soviet institution, cannot be considered fully voluntary. Of the prewar exhibitions only those in Lvov – in 1922 and 1930 at the Society of the Friends of Fine Arts [Towarzystwo Przyjaciół Sztuk Pięknych] and in 1935 on the premises of Union of Polish Artists [Związek Zawodowy Polskich Artystów Plastyków] were noticed by the press, mainly local newspapers. Apparently Schulz, who understood the significance of exhibitions in building one's artistic biography, did not care much about them. He needed constant support in the selection and evaluation of his works since he was not sure of their value. Probably in the beginning he could count in that respect on his close friends from Drogobych and then those from Lvov. In fact, however, he lived outside the artistic circles and sporadic contacts with other artists did not provide him with necessary inspiration or encouragement to present his works in public. The available records imply that only in 1938, perhaps reinforced by his position in the world of literature, Schulz was ready to plan exhibitions, but not in Lvov and not even in Poland. Exhibitions allowed him also to reach out to other people. They gave him a chance to find an understanding spectator, but also required disclosing oneself. Regardless of their subject matter, drawings are records of the artist's gestures, i.e. his corporeality. Presenting them in public must have been for Schulz a temptation to tear off his disguise, but it also provoked fear to do so. It was only the graphic art that guaranteed a safe distance between the artist and spectator thanks to the technological processes that separated a single print from the artist's body. One must remember that most Schulz's exhibits were the cliché-verres, while practicing other kinds of graphic techniques was his unfulfilled dream. Thus, the sequences of Schulz's presentations at exhibitions, separated by years of absence, are related to the episodes of his biography, reflecting his attitude toward self-presentation that oscillated between desire and aversion.

Małgorzata Kitowska-Łysiak

Comments on the Canon. Bruno Schulz's Adolescent Sketchbook and Frescoes in Landau's Villa

Most likely, Schulz's sketchbook comes from 1907-1908, when he was fifteen or sixteen-years old. Scholars claim that the drawings in the sketchbook are of no high artistic value. Certainly, in the context of Schulz's canonical works, they are only attempts and anticipations of the future. Still, these early sketches deserve some more attention not only as part of a Great Artist's heritage. Schulz's sketchbook is not just a collection of drafts but, on the contrary, a set of final versions – final in the first phase of the artist's formative evolution. On the other hand, the frescoes painted by Schulz in Landau's villa are, to our present knowledge, his last work done under unusual circumstances – under pressure. We will never find out whether Schulz, doing his final job, had any artistic ambitions, but we can assume that it was not just a ransom he had to pay to live. At any rate, he followed his main principle of combining the real and the imaginary, in that case the motifs from fairy tales. It seems that juvenile daubing and illustrations to popular tales for children belong to a "reality of a lower rank," but this is what brings them together, which liberates the frescoes from the space of death, tears down a thanatological curtain, and makes us perceive them, just like the drawings from the sketchbook, as artistic efforts – not first but last. One might say that both the fairy tale motifs and their rendering let Schulz reach beyond oppression and include the frescoes in the main course of his

development. Thus, the frescoes in Landau's villa are a gesture of oppressed freedom, but freedom nonetheless. A Great Artist wanted to save not only his life, but also, and perhaps above all, the integrity of his art.

Jerzy Jarzębski
Schulz the Universal
The Universal Schulz is Schulz whose work makes the reader face many ambivalences both as regards personal and artistic choices made by the writer. The author identifies, puts in order, and places in a wide context those ambivalences which so far have proved most inspiring for interpreting Schulz's stories, letters, and essays. At first the same ambivalences created problems encountered by the early critical reception of his works. The most difficult was not just his unique fiction, but also its idiom. In the 1930 and 1940s Schulz's language could be read as aberration or anachronism, which meant that to attract more readers it had to come at least a little closer to standard Polish. Since, however, the stories could not change, what had to were the standards defining "acceptable" prose. The style of Polish prose gradually approached Schulz's idiom by becoming more open to stylistic idiosyncrasy and experiment.

Jerzy Kandziora
Jerzy Ficowski on Schulz – Between Reconstruction and Rhetoric (Reflections on *Regions of the Great Heresy*)
According to the title, the author makes an attempt to reconstruct and analyze the rhetoric of Jerzy Ficowski's works on Schulz. Since rhetoric is understood here as a way of articulating the text, in many cases it overlaps with poetics. The author's intention is to approach Regions of Great Heresy as a careful reader of both Schulz and Ficowski to show ideological and stylistic affinities between them. An important part of the essay are many statements by Ficowski himself, drawn from his private correspondence (including letters sent to Schulz) and poetry (particularly his first book of poems, Lead Soldiers of 1948, very significant in the context of his Schulz studies). Supplemented by Kandziora's commentary, Ficowski's statements shed new light on the methods of critical research on an author whose biography is incomplete, while his manuscripts, letters, and works of art have been either destroyed or scattered. Thus, Ficowski alternates biography and interpretation, trying to reintegrate the entire output of Schulz. The essay belongs to a research project supported by Narodowe Centrum Nauki.

Marek Wilczyński
Polish Galician Fiction Before and After the War. Bruno Schulz in the Context of Holocaust Literature
Usually Schulz's fiction is not interpreted with reference to the Holocaust and massive ethnic cleansing in East-Central Europe during World War II. The present paper is rooted in a belief that some of his later stories can actually be treated as "prophetic" when placed in a sequence consisting of the works by Schulz and other Polish writers from Galicia: Ida Fink, a Holocaust survivor, Zygmunt Haupt, an émigré in the United States, and Leopold Buczkowski, after the war in Poland. Schulz's followers, at least in a chronological sense, seem to have been inspired by the metaphorical energy of his fiction, though in the stories by Fink and Haupt, as well as the early novels by Buczkowski, the Schulzean metaphor is replaced by metonymy – a figure of death, and allegory – in Walter Benjamin's

terms, a post mortem mask of history stigmatized by violence. Arguably, Fink, Haupt, and Buczkowski recorded in their fiction the fulfillment of Schulz's catastrophic prophecy.

Zofia Ziemann
It's a writer's book. English-language authors read Schulz (a great deal)
The long awaited publication of Madeline G. Levine's retranslation of Schulz's fiction has sparked new interest in the reception of Schulz in English-speaking countries. In Poland, the general view seems to be that the author has not received the attention he deserves. Based largely on a review non-specialized periodicals from 1963–2018, the paper presents a strong and lasting trend in the reception of the English Schulz, namely the admiration of hosts of fellow authors: writers of high-brow and popular fiction, poets and playwrights from the whole anglophone world, form Australia to Canada. Examining their reviews of Schulz's stories, interviews and articles promoting their own work, and intertextual references to Schulz which some of them employed, the paper adds some a new names to the small handful of Schulz-loving anglophone authors of whom Polish scholars have been aware so far.

Paweł Sitkiewicz
Phantasmagorias. Some Thoughts on Bruno Schulz's Cinematic Imagination
The article is devoted to Schulz's connections to the cinema, both as a viewer and as a writer. Since we do not know much about his experiences as a moviegoer from his art or letters, the author tries to recreate it on the basis of the collective experience of Schulz's generation which was often heavily influenced by the cinema. The second part of the article focuses on Schulz's cinematic writing. The author tries to prove that Schulz's peculiar literary imagination which, according to many scholars and critics, takes its root in the image, not the word, was to some extent inspired by the early cinema or the cinema of attractions. The conclusion is that the interpreter of Schulz's work has the right to treat his older brother's movie theater in Drogobych as an important part of Schulz's private mythology.

Paweł Sitkiewicz
The Cabinet of Dr. Gotard. Bruno Schulz and German Expressionist Film
The plot of the "Sanatorium under the Sign of an Hourglass" resembles that of the most famous film of the German expressionism – The Cabinet of Doctor Caligari (1920) by Robert Wiene. In fact, similarities go beyond the plot and can be discovered also in the expressionist manner of creating the presented world and characters, the mysterious atmosphere, and many important details discussed in the essay. Is it likely that Bruno Schulz saw the film about the demonic hypnotist and his medium, which inspired him to write the story about doctor Gotard's sanatorium?

Eliza Kącka
Geometry of Imagination. On Shaping Space in Schulz's Works
The starting point of the essay is a hypothesis that the concepts of time in Schulz's fiction can be approached more effectively and systematically than those of space. It is space that shows his inventiveness the best, comparable to his drawings. There are many studies of space in Schulz's fiction, yet few of them address the basic problem: how is space

actually created, what are the rules of its production? While a number of critics have pointed at the figure of the labyrinth and geopoetics has inevitably become a relevant method, less attention has been paid to the representations of phenomena from the border area of dream and wakefulness. Ernst Mach's Analysis of Impressions, commonly read by Schulz's peers, suggests many valuable clues. The proper frame of reference for such phenomena, close to spontaneous hallucinations, is language. It is its dynamic, with which Schulz collaborates in a disciplined way without reducing its artistic value, which generates analogies between linguistic operations and spatial forms. The shaping of space conditioned by language – verbal mimesis which renounces any other mimetic ambitions – is a very interesting aspect of Schulz's writing. The essay includes analyses of the selected passages from Schulz's stories – those dominated by a unique conditional mode signalized on various levels by verbal, adjectival, and adverbial phrases. Schulz's tour de force in that respect is "The Gale." The atmosphere of the story is uncanny and surreal, and, what is perhaps the most important, the sound effects are rich as in no other work of fiction by the Drogobych writer. "Spring" shows other strategies of creating spaces derived from words. It is important that the stories in both Schulz's collections make the reader turn to the concepts related to the category of non-place.

Wojciech Owczarski
Schulz and Dreams

In Bruno Schulz's fiction one can find surprisingly many images of falling asleep, snoozing, and tossing oneself around between the sheets "damp with sleep." Starting with an analysis of comic descriptions of "wandering in the unexplored realm of dreaming," the author makes an attempt to reconstruct Schulz's idea of the mode of existence of the sleeping subject. While the dreaming "I" usually visits spheres beyond human reach, the sleeping body rests in filth. The sheets are dirty, the mouth open, with saliva dripping from the corners. Even the perfect body of Adela is crossed by the "wandering bed-bugs." The main theoretical inspiration of the essay is Julia Kristeva's concept of abjection. Sleep as the sphere of abjection blurs the boundary between the subject and the object to become the Kristevan abject. In Schulz's imagination, sleeping and dreaming are the processes of self-purification, getting rid of the unwanted attributes of the "I." In this, his approach resembles a much later theory of "unlearning," proposed by Critch and Mitchison, according to which we sleep to forget.

Katarzyna Lukas
Issues of memory in the works of Bruno Schulz from the viewpoint of German Memory Studies

The author attempts at reconstructing the concept of cultural memory found in Bruno Schulz' oeuvre. The aim is to show that Schulz, not unlike Thomas Mann, anticipated some theoretical aspects of postmodern memory studies as pursued in Germany since the 1980s. On the one hand, there are striking affinities between Schulz and the art historian Aby Warburg whose ideas of "collective visual memory" and "pathos formulas", developed until the 1920s, have only recently been rediscovered and acclaimed in the present-day cultural research. On the other hand, Schulz draws on Jung's depth psychology by referring to the theory of archetypes and the common unconscious. Unlike Warburg's, Jung's ideas have been rejected in contemporary German memory studies because of their alleged biologistic flaw. Due to his affinities to both Warburg and Jung, Schulz

suggests his own vision of individual and collective memory, which allows for reconciling the "biological" and the "culture-oriented" reflection on collective memory and may be a source of inspiration in today's research.

Tomasz Swoboda
Plagiarism by Anticipation

The author of the paper presents a short history of the idea of plagiarism and concludes that today it should be interpreted as a unique, alternative, but still legitimate manner of writing, in which what matters most is memory – that of the author and that of the reader. Such an approach was proposed by members of the OuLiPo group (François Le Lionnais, Marcel Bénabou, and Pierre Bayard) as plagiarism by anticipation. Its features, such as obvious similarity of texts, discord between the plagiarized fragment and the rest of the work and other works from the same period, secrecy, and temporal inversion, in the era of widespread reproduction provoke to think about copies in terms of anticipation or falsification of the missing works. Will the Messiah come from that direction?

www.schulzforum.pl

Located at this web address, *The Calendar of the Life, Work and Reception of Bruno Schulz* is available to readers since 2017. It has been a growing research project whose aim is to present Schulz's biography on the basis of archive materials (the known ones and the ones constantly opening to new discoveries), as well as to present verified sources in the form of an open, interactive calendar, where the chronologically organized entries make it possible to follow events and facts related to Schulz's life, observe his resonance with the events of the time, the voices of readers and critics, and learn about the history of the posthumous reception of his work.
The Schulz Calendar allows you to look at the artist from several perspectives:

From the perspective of his life, recreated from the surviving fragments, and arranged day by day into a surprisingly complete whole – life reconstructed from documents previously unknown to anyone or known only to individual people.

From the perspective of his images – the calendar collects all known images of Schulz, all his visual works (wherever possible, in new, colourful reproductions) as well as additional iconography, showing his broadly understood world: texts of friends and acquaintances, scans of articles, books or documents, photos of places and objects associated with him.

From the perspective of his work – texts in a new critical edition, which has been published successively since 2016 and already contains four volumes, as well as artistic work, available in high-quality scans.

From the perspective of the reception of his work, divided into two periods – the active period of his creative life (1920–1943) and the period of posthumous reception (1943–2021), containing all (even the smallest) references along with expert linguistic-literary commentary, woven into a network of mutual relations.

From the perspective of places – cities, streets, buildings that were important to Schulz.

From the perspective of people who knew Schulz, who had something interesting to say about him, with whom he came into contact (personally or through his work), and those who cut him off – possibly everybody who had even the slightest impact on his life or art.

From the perspective of sources – manuscripts, documents, letters, memoirs, journalistic, academic and literary texts, which are presented not only in high-quality scans, but also in text form, enabling further work on them.

From the perspective of paths – micro-narratives creating a more or less coherent narrative, ordered not chronologically, but thematically.

“Schulz/Forum” book series

With the support of the magazine, the latest books on Schulz by both Polish and foreign authors are published. The series contains the following:

1. **Schulz. Między mitem a filozofią**, red. Joanna Michalik, Przemysław Bursztyka, Gdańsk 2014.
This anthology shows a map of the philosophical works Schulz might have been influenced by while creatively transforming them in his prose and drawings.

2. Jerzy Jarzębski, **Schulzowskie miejsca i znaki**, Gdańsk 2016.
The author is convinced that there is a common history of reading Schulz and understanding his work. One version of it is presented in this volume.

3. Włodzimierz Bolecki, **Wenus z Drohobycza**, Gdańsk 2017.
Who needs Schulzology today, when we know that Schulz cannot be turned into a hero of the media or of politics?

4. Serge Fauchereau, **Fantazmatyczny świat Brunona Schulza**, przeł. Paulina Tarasiewicz, Gdańsk 2018.
A Polish translation of a brilliant essay analysing Schulz’s artistic and literary work in the context of avantgarde European literary and artistic movements of the 20th century.

5. Piotr Sitkiewicz, **Bruno Schulz i krytycy**, Gdańsk 2018.
A book devoted to the critical, literary and artistic reception of Schulz’s stories and visual works during his lifetime.

6. Henri Lewi, **Bruno Schulz, czyli strategie mesjańskie**, przeł. Tomasz Stróżyński, Gdańsk 2019.
Polish translation of the only French-language attempt to date at a comprehensive analysis of Schulz’s literary and artistic work.

7. Józef Olejniczak, **Pryncypia i marginesy Schulza**, Gdańsk 2019.
A collection of personal essays about the work, biography and legend of Bruno Schulz, which are all a record of Olejniczak’s fascination “at first sight”.

8. Schulz. Słownik mówiony, red. Marcin Całbecki, Piotr Millati, Gdańsk 2019.
Continuation of work on Bruno Schulz’s dictionary. The entries collected in this volume are the fruit of an academic conference organized at the University of Gdańsk.

9. Katarzyna Warska, **Schulz w kanonie. Recepcja szkolna w latach 1945–2018**, Gdańsk 2022.
The publication discusses the school reception of Bruno Schulz's life and work, including: the political, social, critical and historical literary background in the years 1945–2018.

10. Stanisław Rosiek, **Odcięcie. Szkice wokół Brunona Schulza**, Gdańsk 2022.
A collection of essays in which the point of reference is Schulz's literary identity, understood not as a continuity of memory, but as a flickering and never-finished game between the writer's style, imagination and existence.

11. Jakub Orzeszek, **Drugie ciało pisarza. Eseje o Brunonie Schulzu**, Gdańsk 2023.
Eleven illustrated essays whose main theme are the erotic and mournful bodies of Bruno Schulz: both those created by the author of *The Cinnamon Shops* in prose, drawings and graphics, and those created after his death – in the form of artistic homage or martyrological cult of him.

Schulz Archive

Bruno Schulz w oczach współczesnych. Antologia tekstów krytycznych i publicystycznych lat 1920–1939, redakcja Piotr Sitkiewicz, Fundacja Terytoria Książki, Gdańsk 2021.

From the first press mention in the Lviv "Chwila" to the obituary published in the conspiratorial monthly "Sztuka i Naród" – an anthology of critical and journalistic pieces shows how contemporaries perceived the literary and artistic work of Bruno Schulz, as well as himself as a person.

The basis for qualifying the text for this anthology was the appearance of Schulz's name in any context – critical or biographical. Therefore, extensive reviews and critical sketches are juxtaposed with short press mentions of a strictly informative nature.

Bruno Schulz w oczach świadków. Listy, wspomnienia i relacje z archiwum Jerzego Ficowskiego, redakcja Jerzy Kandziora, Fundacja Terytoria Książki, Gdańsk 2022.

Jerzy Ficowski's first appeals for the broad literary society to submit memories of Schulz and information about his memorabilia appeared in June 1948. The letters of those who contacted Ficowski at the earliest formed the core of Schulz's biography used in *Regions of the Great Heresy*, the first monograph – which, to a large extent, is a biographical narrative. The next book about Schulz, *Okolice sklepów cynamonowych*, departs from this convention: it is a collection of reports, sketches, and contextual stories in which Schulz's artifacts and new witnesses, revealed and given voice for the first time, also begin to play an important role.

Shortly before his death, Ficowski wrote about his Schulz archive, recommending it to Jerzy Jarzębski: "There are […] a lot of different letters, reports of correspondence, etc., which are the basis of my past biographical research and collections. I didn't use everything: there are some details in these materials that didn't fit into what I wrote, or some that I could only treat briefly and cursorily. I think this material may be useful again – as a complement or exemplification.

Collected works

Schulz's work has not yet been organized and edited critically. There has never been a critical edition of his prose that would take into account the magazine first editions of the stories, which were often significantly different from the versions in the published original text of *Sanatorium Under the Sign of the Hourglass*. The book edition of Schulz's reviews and essays did not include all pieces of his criticism known to us. It was also the case with the volume of his correspondence. This comprehensive edition collects and organizes all existing knowledge about the writer. But not only. Schulz – like Norwid or Witkacy – is a "bimodal" creator who communicated both in words and images. It is impossible to separate Schulz the writer from Schulz the artist, and this parallelism was taken into account in the arrangement of his *Collected Works*. The series, which was initially planned for seven volumes, has expanded to nine volumes, of which four have been published so far; further volumes are being prepared.

Volume 1: Xięga bałwochwalcza
The first publication collecting reproductions of all preserved portfolios of *The Booke of Idolatry*, along with a critical commentary. It will be published in 2024.

Volume 2: Sklepy cynamonowe, wstęp i opracowanie Jerzy Jarzębski, dodatek krytyczny Stanisław Rosiek, opracowanie językowe Małgorzata Ogonowska, Gdańsk 2018.

Volume 3: Sanatorium pod Klepsydrą
The second volume of Schulz's stories is a variorum edition – it takes into account magazine variants of the texts. It is illustrated with the author's original graphics.

Volume 4: Kometa i inne opowiadania
The volume will include all of Schulz's stories that were not included in the original volumes of *The Cinnamon Shops* and *Sanatorium Under the Sign of the Hourglass*, including the recently discovered *Undula*. Publication planned for 2024.

Volume 5: Księga listów, zebrał i przygotował do druku Jerzy Ficowski, uzupełnił Stanisław Danecki, Gdańsk 2012.

Volume. 6: Księga rękopisów

Volume 7: Szkice krytyczne, koncepcja edytorska Włodzimierz Bolecki, komentarze i przypisy Mirosław Wójcik, opracowanie językowe Piotr Sitkiewicz, Gdańsk 2017.

Volume 8: Rysunki i szkice

Volume. 9: Varia

Schulz / Forum Special Issue: Identities and Biographies 2023

Who is he? Who was he (for himself, for others)? Who is this Schulz to us? And who is the "Schulz" who was seen and talked about so differently by others – his contemporaries? He comes (to us) suddenly and unexpectedly, out of nowhere. After all, he has been dead for a long time. He stands before us in silence, he gives us some signs – but what do they mean? He wants something, but his demands fall on deaf ears. Eventually, he moves away, leaving traces of his existence that fade away over time, becoming less and less legible and understandable.

The great goal of traditional biography has been (and continues to be) the search for the hidden centre of identity of its protagonist. Finding a formula that integrates the history of the "I" transforming over time would allow us to answer the fundamental question of who Schulz was. It is futile, though, to look for a satisfactory answer to this question (that is, one encompassing life in toto) in hundreds, thousands of Schulzological studies. Most likely, such an answer cannot be given – because it does not exist. Therefore, there is no alternative but to limit ourselves to creating one-off formulas that cover only a part of Schulz's life, and never reveal the hidden meanings of some events, of which trace remains (in biographical documents).

The authors of the essays included in this volume try to determine the central points of Schulz's identity/biography – each on their own. The essays were written in the last decade and were published in the first sixteen issues of Schulz/Forum, a journal published by Schulz Research Lab at the University of Gdańsk.

Identities and Biographies. Us **sr**

Piotr Millati Was Bruno Schulz a Writer?

Michał Paweł Markowski Schulz – Writer as Philosopher

Stefan Chwin Why Bruno Schulz Did Not Want to Be a Jewish Writer

Małgorzata Ogonowska Bruno Schulz, the Man

Stanisław Rosiek A Cut-off. Seven Fragments

Paweł Dybel Schulz's Masochism and the Word's Threshold of Shame

Piotr Sitkiewicz Bruno, Son of Franz. Schulz and Kafka in the Interwar Poland

Tymoteusz Skiba Witold Gombrowicz and Bruno Schulz. Parallel Biographies

Katarzyna Warska Childhood in the Biography of a Writer. The Case of Bruno Schulz

Aleksandra Skrzypczyk An Attempt at an Acoustic Biography of Bruno Schulz. Auditory Experiences

Jakub Orzeszek Schulz and Mourning. About the Writer's Second Body