

**Transfers of Power and Tradition in Polish Resettlement Novel  
(draft)**

The notion of “Postcolonial transfer to Central and Eastern Europe”, the demanding voices on the sense, potential benefits and traps of which could be heard even recently, no longer raises any serious doubts [Kołodziejczyk 2011]. On the one hand, it can be considered a solidly framed *fait accompli* while on the other, it remains an open process of (re)interpretation and (self)defining of the local identity condition, still capable of stirring new discussions <sup>i</sup>. Narrowing the subject down to the Polish cultural and literary studies, it can be assumed that postcolonial or post-dependence studies,<sup>ii</sup> which were treated as methodological knowledge over the past years, have caught on well, casting light on a series of major problems for which there was previously no adequate critical descriptive language. At the same time, the existing (post)colonial landscapes [Skórczewski2013] keep re-discovering their incompleteness. For the above reasons, in the present text I will focus not so much on the recapitulation of the state of research as such, but on the phenomenon which, although aroused growing interest in the past years, remains in the phase of open (re)interpretation, i.e. the post-war literature devoted to ‘Recovered Territories’. I will start by defining the term, referring to its non-literary genesis, historical background and findings of previous interpretations. Then, I will focus on the transfers of traditions mentioned in the title, to move on to a proposal of interpretation of individual texts that build up the discourse of my interest. When doing this I will also signal the need to use the language of post-colonialism in descriptions of literary representations of the ‘Recovered Territories’ and its utility.

**Literature of the ‘Recovered Territories’ as a colonial discourse**

In 1945, based on decisions taken by the Allied states in Potsdam and Yalta, the shape of the Polish territory changed significantly. The eastern voivodeships of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Republic of Poland (the so called Eastern Borderlands) were incorporated into the USSR and, as a compensation, Poland received lands that previously belonged to the 3<sup>rd</sup> Reich, i.e. former Eastern Prussia and provinces to the east from the Oder River. These territorial acquisitions were given the name of ‘Recovered Territories’, a strongly unifying and ideologised term constituting a major *signum loci* of the communist geopolitical discourse of the Polish People’s Republic. Therefore, considering the term to be historical and (pseudo)geographical, I chose to use the

quotation mark. The special status of the said territories is already implied by the fact that a separate Ministry of the Recovered Territories was appointed and functioned in the years 1945-1949, presided over by Władysław Gomułka, the main task of which was to elaborate a new zoning plan for these areas and, thus, introduce new law and administration, provide management of the post-German property and coordinate the relocation of the Germans and resettlement of Polish citizens.

The name 'Recovered Territories' also stands for a plan of a new national imagined geography that aimed at legitimising the post-war changed territorial (and political) shape of the country, built on huge transfers of population. It was the effect of a strictly circumscribed local policy which can be defined, after Elżbieta Rybicka, as:

the whole of actions (including symbolic actions) undertaken by both institutional administrative (national, local) and non-governmental entities (including cultural institutions and associations) as well as any and all causative entities, aiming to create images of national, regional and local territories and places [Rybicka 2014, 54]

In this context, literature as a symbolic practice constituted a significant medium through which these images were introduced, strongly established within peri-literary institutional frameworks. The marriage of textual practices with authority, or of poetry with policy, was officially sanctioned already in 1948, during the Congress of Szczecin, where “permanent protection of independence and borders of the Republic of Poland” and “recovery and development of the Western Lands” [Żółkiewski 1948, 103] were considered crucial artistic tasks. In this way, the subject of settlement and the issue of the 'Recovered Territories', in the broad sense of the word, got incorporated into a bigger ideological and artistic project, namely, socialist realism. The 'wedding vows' were renewed on a regular basis, even after the doctrine was waived, i.e. during subsequent Congresses of the Writers of the Western and Northern Lands initiated in 1958. To prove the above, it is sufficient to recollect the words of Edward Gierek, the then first secretary of the Voivodeship Committee of the Polish United Workers Party (PZPR) in Katowice, inaugurating the 11<sup>th</sup> Congress, in which he said that the target of a literary discourse was to: “consolidate the nation and form patriotism and national pride that favour the shaping of the sense of confidence, security and economic stability” [Gierek 1970, 13]. By way of comparison, let me quote other words, this time written by Zdzisław Hierowski, literary critic, in his texts devoted to settlement:

[they] should head to one common aim, namely, revival, consolidation and deepening of the literary life in the Recovered Territories [...] Enrichment of our economic potential cannot be the only purpose of these Lands, as they must enrich our national culture as well, by acquiring – for

this very culture and in this very creative process – both the population which has persevered in Polishness for ages and the recent settlers [Hierowski 1960, 34

These initial directives postulated on Polish national fora were in practice reproduced in statutes of local institutions or, eventually, in literary texts, strongly modelled by censorship instructions [Bakuła 2012, 170]. Nevertheless, before I present the said reproduction in detail, let me briefly tell you how such a state of affairs and its effects are explained. Firstly, the territories incorporated into Poland after WW2 played a crucial role in the post-war political propaganda of the period for historical, political and social reasons, constituting the mythical cradle of the Polish/Piast statehood, the peculiar “spoils of war” conquered in fights against the Nazi enemy, which compensated the territorial losses to the East [i.e. Eastern Borderlands], a field of ad-hoc post-war Polish-German antagonisms (in a wider socialist and capitalist perspective) and, finally, the realm of utopian fantasies on the new communist society. Secondly, the above resulted in a literary project which drew extensively on the top-down Piast mythology and the idea of panslavism and anti-Germanness, built on the confidence in homogeneity of the national culture, in which efforts were made to blur differences between regional and local histories.

Based on these directives, prose dedicated to the subject, called a ‘settlement tendency’ by Małgorzata Mikołajczak, should be defined as “discourse inspired by the so called Western question. The said question constitutes one of the main strands of the post-war literature and, unlike other literary tendencies such as the rural, martial or borderland trend, has political roots and links the politics of location to identity politics” [Mikołajczak 2014, 19]. Bogusław Bakuła gives it a broader name, namely, the Polish migration novel, but still highlights similar features:

[it] was commonly treated as a tool of the communist propaganda, with properties typical of this type of discourse, including: glorification of the communist party’s politics, justification of violence and plunder using the notions of national and state justice, distortion of the major reasons underlying the resettlement of the population and border changes, creation of a gallery of figures who serve as carriers of ideological features; guiding the narrative towards “progressive” solutions and a social and political happy end.[Bakuła 2012, 189]

Although a strong entanglement of such prose in the discourse of authority is taken on by the majority of researches as a primary supposition, the post-colonial theory is often applied in this context as elliptic obviousness, or with a certain dose of timidity. The first of the above-mentioned directives, i.e., the principle of inscribing the settlement prose as such in a broader circle of questions related to the Polish post(colonial) condition, is already manifested by the inclusion of works devoted to literature of the ‘Recovered Territories’, such as the two texts mentioned above, into volumes of works on the subject, yet without declarative application of

the post-colonial glossary in the articles<sup>iii</sup>. The second one, in turn, involves synonymisation which blurs the transparency of the message. For instance, Joanna Szydłowska talks about the ‘post-Yalta Occident’ as an “imperial discourse which justifies appropriation-related undertakings” [Szydłowska 2103, .21] simultaneously shunning a stronger use of post-colonial interpretation tools. Arkadiusz Kalin describes the literary myth of the ‘Recovered Territories’ as a “project prepared long before 1945 which, to a large extent, resulted from reactions to the earlier Bismarck’s [myth]”, i.e. a response to the politics of location practiced earlier within the territories [Kalin 2014, 62].

Critical texts which directly define the settlement discourse as colonial discourse appeared only recently. When writing about the settlement prose in the context of mimicra and rebellion, Małgorzata Mikołajczak clearly states that it represents “best the features of the colonial situation” [Mikołajczak 2015, 287.] Dorota Wojda, in turn, uses the example of popular literature devoted to the ‘Recovered Territories’ to state that “settlement did not only mean recovery of the lands grabbed from Poland, but also their colonisation with the use of measures taken over from organisations of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Republic of Poland: the Marine and Colonial League and the Polish Western Association” [Wojda 2015, 330-331. Further in the text she considers the said discourse “de/colonising and palimpsest in nature in the sense functioning in post-colonial research” [Wojda 2015, 338]. Interestingly, both scholars build up their arguments on the establishments of Tomasz Zarzycki, who proves that in the times of the Polish People’s Republic, the Polish state would “sometimes go in for a very aggressive policy of cultural and political homogenisation” [Zarycki 2009, 199], emphasising that in these actions, it remained dependent on another hegemon, namely, the Soviet Union. In other words “the soviet authority controlled the local nationalism, tolerating it as compensation for its dominance. What is more, the said nationalism manifested itself in policy which can be called internal colonialism” [Wojda 2015: 328]. As indicated above, when it comes to literature of the ‘Recovered Territories’, the situation was a two-stage one, closed within the seemingly opposing frameworks of communism and nationalism which, however, represent a broader specificity of the Polish experience. It can be summed up in the handy formula of a ‘colonised coloniser’ [Gosk 2010] reflected further on the local level by discourse of the ‘Recovered Territories.

## Transfers of Tradition

The preliminary establishments referred to above, which were presented to shed a light on the political background of the phenomenon of my interest, bring to mind the question of how to analyse literature of this kind. If the ‘Recovered Territories’ are perceived as a ‘persuasive concept’, after Wojda and Mikołajczak [Wojda 2015, Mikołajczak 2011] description of the rhetoric devices which determine its shape seems to be the most legitimate approach. What I mean here is ‘topographic tracking’, i.e. tracing the places in the text which build up the impression of homogeneity of the depicted world’s identity. Mikołajczak distinguishes four basic rhetoric devices, i.e. the metaphor, metonymy, synecdoche and hyperbole/litote, while Wojda supplements the list with enthymeme, still leaving it open. What is significant, the rhetoric devices should by no means be limited to single semantic units. Instead, it is good to treat them as bigger narrative schemes or clichés which have been borrowed from other traditions or constitute their amalgamate. As the author of *Polska Scheherazada* [*The Polish Scheherazade*] notices, “colonial symbols and metaphors were adopted [in the discourse of the ‘Recovered Territories’] and given new meanings; or new figures were created through negations of the previous ones” [Wojda 2015, 335]. In my opinion, this phenomenon constitutes a variant of the adaptation mechanism, which consists in “the use of old devices in the new circumstances and the use of old patterns for new purposes” [Hobsbawm 2008, 13] or, as Zarycki puts it, in “continuous usage of somebody else’s texts, which are, so to speak, taken out of their original contexts and then incorporated into one’s own utterances, which become the new context” [Zarycki 2010, 115].

Such a transplantation of well-known strands, motives and schemes into novels dedicated to the borderlands reflects, in the first place, that the discourse draws on various imperial forms. Its importance lies mainly in the fact that it often encompasses the *topoi* that are almost demonstratively contradictory to the ideological assumptions behind the settlement discourse as such. Therefore, discourse of the ‘Recovered Territories’ is palimpsest in nature in the sense that, as Wojda said, “different layers of history showed through it; history that would not let itself be erased and constituted an integral part of the present” [Wojda 2015, 338].

The first layer, i.e. the shallowest and chronologically youngest (and, therefore, perhaps most obvious) one, would be borrowings from the Russian literature of the socialist realism (especially on the plane of ideas). Among the motives that were particularly active in the years 1949-1956 were the ones used to adjust Western subjects to production-related issues, characterised by presentism and elimination of any traces of the local colour.

Frequently set within the 'Recovered Territories', 'production novels' implied the new (although temporary) imagined geography of the period, based on the Marxist social and economic geography and subordinated to the mapping of resources. Such novels, which shaped the new spatial economics, would often be set in factories of the 'Recovered Territories', like *Fundamenty [Foundations]* by Jan Pytlakowski, *Numer 16 produkuje [Produced by Number 16]* by Jan Wilczek, *Węgiel [Coal]* by Aleksander Ścibor-Rylski, *Lewanty [The Levants]* by Andrzej Braun or, for instance, *Ludzie z węgla [The Coal People]* by Nina Rydzewska.

The second transfer, which was in fact crucial and dominated in the context of a broader reflection on the Polish (post)migration condition, is connected with patterns of the 19<sup>th</sup>-century Polish borderland tradition. It is the best described phenomenon and the conditions and possibilities which it offers arise from the similarity (at least initial) between the character of the annexed territories and the Borderlands (the 'borderland' nature). Bogusław Bakula distinguishes several schemes of such 'migratory' novel, the most prominent of which are: the western scheme (western lands become the realm of adventure and the primal fight between values, the good and the bad, see e.g. *Toast [Toast]* by J. Hen, *Żarówka [The Bulb]*, by T. Mikołajek), the tragic/romantic scheme (based on the notion of misalliance, inter-ethnic romance and inter-class romance, e.g. *Grzesznicy [The Sinners]* by H. Panas), the romantic/missionary scheme (focused around the issue of re-Polonisation and winning supra-ethnic, national awareness, e.g. *Krajobraz z topolą [Landscape with a Poplar]* by I. Dowgielewiczowa, *Wdowa po Joczysie [Joczys' Widow]* by J. Hen), or, finally, the (utopian)/pioneer scheme (in the socialist realism and popular variants, e.g. *Agnieszka, córka Kolumba [Agnes, the Daughter of Columbus]* by W. Mach, oriented on work and referring to the positivist tradition of 'progress') [Bakula 2012, 172-175]. It is possible to distinguish more types of transfers similar to the ones presented above, i.e. rooted in the axiology of space. In one of the first, already 'classic' texts considered to be borderland discourses, Edward Czaplewicz drawn up a list of borderland metonyms, including: exoticism, endangered border, the school of bravery and chivalry, immemorial forbidding wilds and impenetrable forests or no-man's-land, the kingdom of beautiful and noble Nature, the folk upheavals, "meta-space of adventure, destination of a special mission and organic work", a "chopped off" fragment of the state organism, an exceptional concentration of antagonisms, the bulwark of Christianity, memorial site (grave) [Czaplewicz 1995, 15]. Although the terms above are replaced in the literature of the 'Recovered Territories' by the bulwarks of socialism, fields of battle against Nazi and capitalist elements, the hero of labour,

the working people, the disconcertingly flat and desolate landscape pierced here and there by exotic gothic turrets; and although it is Gniezno and Grunwald that become the key memorial sites and a ‘facility’ no longer means a manor, but rather a state farm and a factory, yet the function of these elements of the depicted world is close to the ones proposed by Czaplewicz. Permanent degradation of otherness, which is considered worthless or dangerous (the German or Ukrainian heritage), the “elimination of influences of Germanisms in the psychical and material sense” or “discovery of the Polish cultural subsoil” on the one hand and organisation of narration around the *terra nullius* topics, dominated by the forces of nature on the other (the scenery permits the impossible, its primeval character opens up the almost metaphysical spatial plane of the clash between the good and the bad, see *Toast*), or, finally, distribution of the belief that a civilization mission is needed (in the socialist variant), are the features typical of the colonial borderland tradition, which can also be found in the literature of the ‘Recovered Territories’.

There are still some other sources of borrowings, perhaps equally paradoxical in this context, connected with the so called *Heimatlitteratur*<sup>iv</sup> and the Polish interwar marine discourse. The first one is literature which developed in Germany between 1900 and 1950, related to the *Drang nach Osten* and the topos of East Germany perceived as the “national German land” [Klefmann, Traba 2014, 41-72]. To describe this dependency I would certainly need a separate article, but let me only mention that even the titles of settlement novels themselves, which often deal in the semantic of space, like *Trud ziemi nowe* [*Toil of New Land*], *Zawsze z tej ziemi* [*Always from the Land*] by Eugeniusz Paukszta, *Ziemia Odnalezionych przeznaczeń* [*The Land of Found Destinations*] by Władysław Ogrodziński, *Ziemia* [*The Land*] by Jan Brzoza or the anthology *Ziemia serdecznie znajoma* [*The Land Cordially Familiar*]; suggest attachment to the topics of homeland and a specific national landscape. In both German ‘fatherland’ literature and the post-war settlement prose, this landscape was built up based on the topos of familiarity and conservative values connected with emotional attachment to one’s own autobiographical site and *ethnos*. When it comes to the borrowings from the interwar marine discourse, the issue has recently been broadly commented on by Wojda, who pointed out that the project of assimilation of the new territories was a follow-up of the colonial policy of the interwar period [Wojda 2015].

All of the major directions of the transfer mentioned above deal in a similar axiology of space, each time close to the colonial paradigm, and favour the gesture of acquisition and conquest of the expanses of the ‘Recovered Territories’. In general, however, I risked the thesis that in the subject of my interest the said transfers resembled a ‘distorting mirror’ and

produced unsuccessful literature, which was unable to create a convincing vision of the experience of migration. This state of affairs is undoubtedly related to the colonial situation after 1945. The colonised collective subject struggles to carry out the colonisation, and its narrative becomes closer to the mimicry. If the stability of the patterns borrowed was in each case determined by a specific mental attitude, the sense of superiority, advantage, offensiveness, unilaterality of the appropriation, annexation and aggressive actions, or disproportion of the resistance encountered, then, in the case of the western question, its major depositary, meaning the Polish nation [Bakuła 2006] gets deprived of its voice (?), and in the new social reality, the previous symbolic advantage transforms into the sense of humiliation, shame, fear or instability resulting from the state of permanent temporariness, deracination and foreignness of the cultural landscape.

### **Colonising liberation, or how to create a new man**

The palimpsest nature of the discourse of the ‘Recovered Territories’ has already been discussed using the example of popular literature and, first of all, in the thaw prose, i.e. the prose of the 1960s, written by the generation of authors who were already brought up in the said regions [Wojda, Mikołajczak]. The prose, read in the context of relations between the centre and the peripheries, or categories such as the already mentioned mimicry, reveals its unclear status and double entanglement, thus shaping the contours of a counter-discourse or, as Mikołajczak puts it, a counter-myth. In the final part of the text, however, I would like to have a closer look at texts which are less popular with historians of literature due to their unambiguous attachment to top-down directives, thus returning to the very beginnings of the discourse and the first foundation narratives. One of them is, without any doubt, Igor Newerly’s novel of 1950 entitled *Archipelag Ludzi Odzyskanych. Opowieść historyczna z 1948 roku* [*The Archipelago of Returned People. A historical story of 1948*].

The text is heterogeneous both in terms of the genre and the *topos*. First, it is composed of non-fictional and storytelling elements referring to the local history of the Masurian region, collected during the author’s summer kayak lake trips and published as radio reportages. It contains erudite passages on the medieval tribal history of the lands (from the Yotvingians and fights against the Teutonic Order to the Prussian Homage and the so called ‘German expansion’), yet through the free indirect speech and stories told by subsequent characters, it also reconstructs the most recent history, like the pre-war Germanisation processes carried out as part of politics of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Reich. The interpretation of the historiographic thought in the novel boils down to the narrator’s words: “there was a

nation once, but not anymore”[Newerly 1952, 23]. This is how he concludes the sense of the explicitly destroying and colonising politics of the German.

The text also contains conversations and separate reportages devoted to the post-war reality and broadly defined introduction of cooperative movement to the region, which lives on fishery. These fragments are probably the strongest manifestation of the previously mentioned shift towards the geography of resources and rhetoric of exploitation. Although industry is poorly developed in the Masurian lands, wood, fish and other fruits of the forest become local distinctive elements. It is no longer the landscape, but nature subordinated to man, that is the most important. For instance, one of the narrator’s interlocutors: “counts on the fingers how much bark they must deliver this year at all costs, because the bark is being awaited by tanners, and how many pillars, as they, in turn, are being awaited by miners, and how many beddings for the railway industry, to reconstruct...”[Newerly 1952, 45]. It is from the angle of these very resources that the Masurian landscape is being characterised, with landmarks such as 30 collection points and 2 seats of the “Woods” Co-operative [Newerly 1952, 18]. The next equally important natural resource is fish. The fishing industry is elaborated on in the fragment entitled *Obrona placówki plusk* [*Defenders of the Splash Outpost*]. It is a reportage kept in the style of socialist realism, focused around the fight for fish just after the war, saboteurs, poachers and the emerging fishing co-operative. The text also constitutes a reference to Sienkiewicz’s tradition which today seems glaring: the harbour here is perceived as the highest national welfare, like the sieged Częstochowa. Nevertheless, most importantly, it is in this very fragment that the co-operative is compared to the ‘Recovered Territories’[Newerly 1952, 224]. This metonymic equation of a socialist institution with the territory aptly presents the perception of the annexed territories as the realm where the new political vision can be implemented.

Secondly, there is also another significant plane of the text, next to the evidence-based and historical narrative, i.e., the plot concerning adventures and mishaps of a boy named Kuba, placed in a childcare centre in Bartoszyce, whom the author encounters at the very beginning of the journey, when the boy is trying to steal his kayak. This part, which is at the same time the most elaborate of all, is kept in the style of a didactic novel of the socialist realism. According to the “socialist educational ideal and the new >>model of man<<” [Newerly 1952, 126], not only local orphaned indigenous inhabitants or young ‘repatriates’ are placed in childcare facilities, but strangers from central Poland too. The place as such performs the function of a training ground of the ‘new’ Polishness in the socialist variant, where the recovery of man, a kind of ‘total repatriation’ turns out to be equivalent to

indoctrination which blurs individual experience and genealogy. As a result of such actions, subsequent members joined the ranks of the Union of Polish Youth, ready to carry out an educational mission in the world of adults. The genealogy, or ethnos, here is negated through work and represents eradication rather than genuine liberation.

The above, however, is much more than a merely educational variant of the socialist-realistic novel as, thirdly, it is also larded with elements of adventure narrative which make the text coherent – it is during the kayak trip that the narrator listens to the stories which he later reports. This aspect of the text is significant in that it opens the discourse of the ‘Recovered Territories’ to yet another bank of traditions, i.e. the modernist travelogue, a variant of the Robinsonade. As a matter of fact, the term ‘listening’ here is slightly too empathising. The truth is that the narrator hunts for stories. By expressing his views to Kuba, who is more accustomed to the space, he proposes an arrangement: he would take the boy for a trip in exchange for being put on the path of ‘genuine Mazurians’ [Newerly 1952, 16]. In the novel, this ethnic group performs a function which looks like taken straight from novels by Charles May. The narrator says: “If we are about to hunt, let’s hunt for Mazurians. The Filippians have been written about a lot. They’re not paid much for, five zlotys per verse at most. But for a pure Mazurian, flawless and with traditions, you can get ten!” [Newerly 1952, 17]. During the trip, the young boy becomes the captain’s (reporter Robinson’s) assistant, thus winning the title of Defoe’s Friday [Newerly 1952, 13]. Such an evaluation and direct comparison of the act of writing to hunting, constitutes a direct reference to the imperial glossary and categories of epistemic conquest.

The book is also interesting for one more reason, which I would like to emphasise, namely, the element of the recovery of man and the conditions under which the process is effected. So, who is the ‘recovered man’? What has he been liberated from? And, finally, what does the liberation process as such consist in?

When kayaking from one Mazurian village to another, Newerly catalogues such figures by their exoticness. The first ‘recovered’ person is the herbalist, an elderly woman living in the forest, depositary of the secret knowledge who evokes associations with the primeval telluric element. The woman appears from nowhere and tells the narrator to wrap his fatigued wrist up in eel skin. Her recovery, shortly speaking, lies in that today the woman shares her knowledge of herbs once again, this time with the “Woods” Co-operative in Ruciany [Newerly 1952, 10]. The remaining ‘recovered’ people, however, are not shrouded in mystery at all: among them are local public officials, such as Robert Satocek, folk high school

teacher who calls his work: “a fight, not work. Fight against what people used to carry, and still do carry inside” [Newerly 1952, 52]; a forester who came to the Masuria in 1940, ‘slave’ [38] of his predecessor, a German forester; Gałazka – Masurian university student who “had to stay to attention with the entire class as a child, anytime Hitler would shout on the radio” [55] and who says: “I feel like a Pole” now, “without arrogance, simply knowing that my homeland is the homeland of common people” [56]; Hilda, yet another student who says she was a “wreck” before the war [61]; or, finally, Wilhelmina, a daughter of foreman from near Wałbrzych, who had nowhere to go when returned from a forced labour camp in the Ukraine. Central place among these characters is occupied by Halinka, a friend of Kuba from the childcare facility, Masurian girl whose father was put in prison for collaboration. Unwaveringly described by the narrator as a savage, the girl [186]: “had slender, yet strong hands. Even the plaits that she wore would not soften the sense of savageness that was associated with her. She resembled a marten or a squirrel, or any other small, vigilant and agile red forest animal” [221] – the girl gains good looks, character and beauty only when she starts working in the local glass factory and, thus, becomes useful to the community. It is she who is the point of fight in the novel. The victorious fight.

All of the characters referred to above are convalescents [Newerly 1952, 61], who spent most of their lives in the German society, and whose recovery involves their incorporation into the Polish/socialist community. The most important person recovered in the novel, however, is Kuba, the Friday from the kayak Robinsonades. The description of the recovery of the Polish boy from Warsaw, who fought in the Uprising at his father’s side and then joined the partisans is, in the narrator’s opinion, the most interesting. The boy is recovered from the tradition which was then considered disgraceful [related to the Polish Home Army and forest fights] and won over for the desirable, socialist tradition. Newerly writes a book which is mainly about the boy, touching upon the gesture of his trail being picked in at the end of the novel – it is a book about Kuba that the reporter-narrator reads during the meeting in the facility. And it is Kuba who gets incorporated into the story through the narrator’s figure, and acquires the skill of using the language. This motif, too, is touched upon in the novel, as Kuba becomes the chronicler of the facility and re-writes the four-tear chronicle eliminating blots, linguistic errors and distortions. The recovery of meanings, stories and people, on the level of both the narrator’s and Kuba’s gesture, is made through writings. Newerly’s text transcribes the stories of convalescents, depriving them of the idiomatic influences of local dialects and German intrusions, and clamps down on subordinated

ideology of the narrative. This gesture is repeated at the level of the depicted world by Kuba, in his story.

To sum up, as suggested by the perfective aspect of the participle in the title and the subtitle which refers [erroneously] to the chronology of the past, what we are dealing with here is a closed-end phenomenon, finished with success. Nevertheless, I would risk the thesis that these actions were neither performed on the historical plane referred to by the novel nor on the plane of the depicted world, but were effected through the appropriating gesture of writing. Having analysed the title of the novel only, it can be assumed that, when referred directly to the content, it connotes, first, the strategy of a wander across the Masuria and the mode of the narrative used, which is grid-like rather than linear, based on anecdotes and ‘adventures’ experienced in subsequent ports and ‘oases’ of Polishness. There are also indirect connotations to the peripheral space, which is evaluated in terms of exotics and known to the reader from geography lessons on oversea lands rather than from his or her own travel experiences, which slightly, yet expressively indicate the colonial inclinations of the discourse already ‘at the start’. A contemporary reader is also very likely to have one more association, i.e., with the notion of carceral archipelago created by Michael Foucault, and connotation with the territory of power, discipline and symbolic violence. In this context the archipelago means a “control system which, although physically dispersed, simultaneously spreads over the entire society” [Foucault 1980,69]. The elements of the said control and the metonymies of [state] power keep appearing on the plane of the depicted world every now and then, in the form of facilities, departments of the co-operative or forest administration centres. In fact, there are no signals in the text that would imply that Masuria is a land of freedom or a *terra incognita*. Going further with redefining the title of Newerly’s novel, attention should be directed to the shift from spatial to anthropological designation, which emerges from the second segment (lands-people). The metonymy suggests that this is much more than a merely territorial project. This is a project of a certain collectivity and postulated community, which is being implemented through the text.

---

<sup>i</sup> The most actual bibliography on postcoloniality and Polish culture could be found in: Wojda D., PRL-owska wizja ziem odzyskanych w „Przygodach Pana Samochodzika” Zbigniewa Nienackiego, In: Polska Szecherezada. Swoje i obce z perspektywy postkolonialnej, WUJ, Kraków 2015, p. 491-508.

<sup>ii</sup> More on the subject in: Gosk H. Opowieści “skolonizowanego/kolonizatora”. W kręgu studiów postzależnościowych nad literaturą polską XX i XXI wieku, Kraków 2010.

<sup>iii</sup> See: volumes published in the project entitled „Nowy regionalizm w badaniach regionalnych” [<http://nowyregionalizm.com.pl/strona-glowna/>] and publications of Post-Dependence Studies Centre [[http://www.cbdp.polon.uw.edu.pl/index\\_eng.html](http://www.cbdp.polon.uw.edu.pl/index_eng.html)]

---

iv See: I. Surynt, *Badania postkolonialne a „Drugi Świat”*. Niemieckie konstrukcje narodowo-kolonialne XIX wieku, „Teksty Drugie” 2007/4, p. 25-46, Hubert Orłowski, *O asymetrii deprivacji. Ucieczka, deportacja i wypędzenie w niemieckiej i polskiej literaturze po 1939 roku*, in: H. Orłowski, A. Sakson (ed.), *Utracona ojczyzna. Przymusowe wysiedlenia, deportacje i przesiedlenia jako wspólne doświadczenie*, Poznań 1996, p. 189-209.

### References:

Bakuła B., *Między wygnaniem a kolonizacją. O kilku odmianach polskiej powieści migracyjnej w XX wieku (na skromnym tle porównawczym)* in: *Narracje migracyjne w literaturze polskiej XX i XXI wieku*, ed. by H. Gosk, Kraków 2012.

Bakuła B., *Kolonialne i postkolonialne aspekty polskiego dyskursu kresoznawczego (zarys problematyki)*, *Teksty Drugie* 2006/6.

Czaplejewicz E., *Czym jest literatura kresowa?* in: *Kresy w literaturze*, ed. by E. Czaplejewicz, E. Kasperski, Warszawa 1995.

Foucault M., *Questions on Geography*, in: *Power/Knowledge. Selected Interviews and Other Writings 1972-1977*, ed. by C. Gordon, Pantheon Books, New York, 1980.

Gierek E. [Wystąpienie], in: *X I Zjazd Pisarzy Ziemi Zachodnich i Północnych: Katowice-Jaszowiec, czerwiec 1968 r.*, ed. by cz. Slezak, Śląsk, Katowice 1970.

Gosk H., *Opowieści „skolonizowanego/kolonizatora”*. W kręgu studiów postzależnościowych nad literaturą polską XX i XXI wieku, Kraków 2010.

Hierowski Z., [Dyskusja], in: *II Zjazd Pisarzy Ziemi Zachodnich, Katowice-Świerkianiec, 17, 18, 19, V 1959 r.*, ed. by A. Baumgardten, J. Pierzchała, Śląsk, Katowice 1960.

Hobsbawm E., *Introduction* in: *Invented Traditions*, ed. id., Terence Ranger, Polish translation by Mieczysław Godyń, Filip Godyń, WUJ, Cracow 2008.

Kalin, A. *Ziemia Lubuska jako wariant Ziemi Odzyskanych – funkcjonowanie mitu politycznego w literaturze powojennej (na przykładzie piarstwa historycznego Eugeniusza Paukszty)*, in: *Geografia wyobrażona regionu. Literackie figury przestrzeni*, ed. by D. Kalinowski, A. Kuik-Kalinowska, M. Mikołajczak, Universitas, Kraków 2014.

Klefmann Ch., Traba R., *Kresy&Niemiecki Wschód. W poszukiwaniu arkadii i celu misji cywilizacyjnej*, in: *Polsko niemieckie miejsca pamięci. Paralele*, ed. by Traba R., Henning Hahn H., Scholar, Warsaw 2014.

Mikołajczak M., *„Choroba migrantów – literacka epikryza i patogeneza (na przykładzie narracji osadniczej i postosadniczej)”* in *Teksty Drugie* 2014/6.

Mikołajczak M., *Między mimikrą a rebelią. Pejzaż (post)kolonialny regionalnej literatury*, „Teksty Drugie” 2015/5.

Newerly I., *Archipelag ludzi odzyskanych*, Czytelnik, Warszawa 1952.

Rybicka E., *Geopoetyka. Przestrzeń i miejsce we współczesnych teoriach i praktykach literackich*, Universitas, Kraków 2014.

Wojda D., *PRL-owska wizja ziem odzyskanych w „Przygodach Pana Samochodzika” Zbigniewa Nienackiego*, In: *Polska Szecherezada. Swoje i obce z perspektywy postkolonialnej*, WUJ, Kraków 2015.

Szydłowska J., *Narracje pojałtańskiego Okcydentu. Literatura polska wobec pogranicza na przykładzie Warmii i Mazur (1945-1989)*, Wyd. UWM, Olsztyn 2013.

Zarycki T., *Peryferie. Nowe ujęcie symbolicznych zależności centro-peryferijnych*, Scholar, Warszawa 2010.

Żółkiewski S., *Aktualne zagadnienia powojennej prozy polskiej, „Kuznica” nr 4/1949*, in: *Polski socrealizm. Antologia publicystyki społeczno-kulturalnej z lat 1948-1957, t.1*, ed. by L. Lachowiecki, T. Markiewicz, M. Paczkowski, Warszawa 1988.