

chapter has, with a view to Foucault's concept of episteme, acknowledged these intricacies (32)).

This is not to say that the historical section is without merit. Especially for someone who is not familiar with eighteenth-century Eastern Europe, her comparative approach—Germany, Poland, and Russia as cultural and linguistic regions—offers a highly informative introduction, all the more so because the author resists any temptation to understand Germany as the model case. For example, her account of the formation of literary institutions in Poland (125–133) is a very convincing case study.

At the end of her book Chrostowska proposes a variety of future research projects such as an inquiry into the “adaptations” (191) of Horace and Boileau in different cultures, or a study of “the role played by French literary-critical forms in the early formative stages of German, Polish and Russian critical discourses” (191). She sees these future endeavors along with the study discussed here, as contributions to the “history of the present” in Foucault's sense (10), that is, her ultimate goal is to question the “givenness” of contemporary critical discourses by shedding light on the contingencies of their becoming. To be sure, these projects are original and interesting enough to achieve this goal. However, their realization is not very likely if the inquiry into the makeup of texts and their formal features still remains largely disconnected from the materiality of the field—the institutions, communication media, persons, practices, and habits of reading and writing, the functioning of schools and universities, and so on. The challenge at hand, I would think, is to conceptually think together the emergence, makeup, and transformation of a critical discourse. Such an approach would also allow the author to critically question the seeming “givenness” of cultures, literature and progressive developments. She would not run the risk of presupposing what might only be a retroactive projection from the perspective of a prevailing discourse. It might be worth looking into the work of scholars such as Friedrich Kittler or Albrecht Koschorke who draw on media-historiographies, or even take inspiration from Bruno Latour's actor-network theory. After all, the “idea of generic relation . . . in continual

flux” (16) seems quite compatible with these perspectives. △

## Poezje zebrane

**[Collected Poems], by Janusz A. Ihnatowicz.** Toronto-Rzeszów: Polish Publication Fund in Canada and the Literary Association “Fraza,” 2012. Edited with an introduction by Aleksandra Jakubowska-Ożóg. Index of poems. 526 pages. ISBN 978-0-921724-83-4. Paper. In Polish.

### Agnieszka Gutthy

Janusz Artur Ihnatowicz is a Roman Catholic priest, émigré poet, playwright, and translator. He is also professor emeritus of theology at Saint Thomas University in Houston. He has published poetry both in Polish and English, and has authored several dozen scholarly articles. He is a recipient of the Kościelski Foundation Prize in Literature (1973) and the Union of Polish Writers Abroad Prize (2012).

*Poezje zebrane* is a comprehensive collection of Fr. Ihnatowicz's poems culled from different volumes and organized chronologically, from the earliest 1972 book *Pejzaż z postaciami* through *Wiersze wybrane* (1973), *Niewidomy z Betsaidy* (1991), *Czas, co pochłania* (2002), *Epigram o nadziei i inne wiersze* (1992–2003), to *Od czasu kto nas wyzwoli?* (2007) The poems in the 1975 volume *Displeasure* have been written in English. The book also contains poems that had been dispersed in various journals, as well as previously unpublished texts. The volume closes with translations into Polish from Hebrew (“Song of Songs”), Latin (two poems of Venatius Fortunatus), and from such English poets as Gerald Manley Hopkins, William Butler Yeats, Ezra Pound, Dame E. Sitwell, John Crowe Ransom, W. Owen, E. E. Cummings, H. Crane, R. Eberhart, L. MacNeice, W. H. Auden, Steven Spender, and Dylan Thomas. The chronological organization of the book allows the reader to witness the poetic development of the author, as well as foregrounding of the recurrent motifs in his work.

Most poems are short and written in free verse, showing economy of language. The author often constructs his imagery using musical and visual elements to create mood. He frequently refers to different arts and music in the titles of his poems, for example “Malarstwo holenderskie” (Dutch Painting), “Akwarela” (Watercolor), “Piosenka wesołego staruszka” (Song of Happy Oldster), “Etiuda” (Etude), and “Scherzo.” Many poems have intertextual references to painting and literature, for example “Portret damy z kotem” (Portrait of a Lady with a Cat) brings to mind Leonardo da Vinci’s Lady with an Ermine or T. S. Eliot’s “Portrait of a Lady.” However, in Ihnatowicz’s poem the animal, against its hopes and expectations, is not caressed by the lady but jumps from her lap, frightened by the lady’s sudden tragic gesture. The poems refer to literary works, characters, and authors: “Dante u brzegu Styksu” (Dante at the banks of Styx), “Beatrice i Satyr” (Beatrice and Satyr), “Proroctwo Wernyhory” (Wernyhora’s Prophecy), “Romeo i Julia o poranku” (Romeo and Juliet at Dawn) and “Biedna Ofelia” (Poor Ophelia). “Portret autora jako chłopca małego” (A Portrait of the Author as a Petty Farmer) brings to mind Joyce’s title *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, while “Love Song of W. H. Possum,” echoes T. S. Eliot’s “Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock.”

Many of Ihnatowicz’s poems resemble scenes from a film, images following images. Here belong “Pejzaż z postaciami” (Landscape with Human Figures), “Dzieci w oknie” (Children at the Window), “W autobusie imagistów (szkice z podróży)” (In the Imagists’ Bus [Sketches from a Journey]). The author refers here to Anglo-American imagism; he juxtaposes bucolic scenes with images of war. White chickens are “white military tanks” and a blooming apple tree suddenly bursts into fire. Images of war recur in many of the poems. At the end of the bus ride an image of solitude awaits: a dark window, the “blind” window of the room where the passenger lives alone. It evokes the personal loneliness of the émigré poet but also, in a more universal sense, human solitude and homelessness. The influence of imagism can also be seen in the way the poet creates his

imagery. He often refers to imagist poets and dedicates his own poems to them (“Il fabro – in memory of Ezra”), or includes epigraphs from T. S. Eliot’s verse (“O mors amabilis amor amarus”).

Many poems create images of solitude, sadness, and death: “Samobójstwo w Paryżu” (Suicide in Paris), “Pieśń samotnego człowieka” (Song of a Lonely Man), “Epitafium bezimiennego” (Epitaph of a Nameless Man), “Melancholia” (Melancholy). From *Pejzaż z postaciami* (1972) to the most recent poems the theme of escaping time also recurs, the time that inescapably slips away every moment, hour, and day. In these poems one observes a search for the essence of time and for its secret meaning. Fr. Ihnatowicz’s poetry is a constant reminder of our transience. Even in his *Ars poetica* he asks, “Where is Horace now?” and cries, “Nothing lasts.” Virtually all themes in this poetry are subordinated to the problem of time determining human existence. The only thing that seems to resist the annihilating power of time is nature.

Finally, Fr. Ihnatowicz’s poems often refer to the Bible either in their titles or allusions, or through direct quotations. The Scripture’s authority is present in the way the poet comments on human existence. These references are often covert, and are occasionally not devoid of irony or even sarcasm.

*Poezje zebrane* is a beautiful volume of poetry and its readers will certainly appreciate the powerful allusive discipline and terse verse of Janusz Ihnatowicz. Δ

## Irresolute Heresiarch Catholicism, Gnosticism and Paganism in the Poetry of Czesław Miłosz

By Charles S. Kraszewski. Newcastle upon Tyne, UK: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2012. Endnotes, bibliography. vi + 276 pages. ISBN 978-1-4438-3761-3. Cloth. \$59.99.

### Maja Trochimczyk

Eight years after the death of Czesław Miłosz and one hundred and two years after his birth, the time has perhaps come for critical appraisals