

# STRESZCZENIA/ABSTRACTS

**Wojciech Gutowski**

INITIATION ASPECTS OF STEFAN GRABIŃSKI'S PROSE

The article presents various initiation forms and themes in Stefan Grabiński's prose. In his short stories they appear in fragments, in traces, and take on the shape of – so common in modern literature – anti-initiation, leading the main characters towards the discovery of the deepest sense of existence (which turns out to be beset by irrational, hostile forces) that finds fulfilment in death (in destructive transgression). The main themes, which in short stories play the role of media that direct the main characters towards a negative initiation (anti-initiation), are primarily motion (e.g. railway motion in *Demon ruchu* [*The Motion Demon*] from 1919) and fire (in *Księga ognia* [*The Book of Fire*] from 1922). The analysis of initiation plots developed in Grabiński's stories presents two opposite visions of the world: “the closed one”, in which the development of the initiating plot points to the objective, final, “ultimate” metaphysical and moral order (*Cień Bafometa* [*Shadow of Baphomet*] from 1926; *Klasztor i morze* [*Cloister and Sea*] from 1928) and “the open one” that unveils either the polysemantic insolvability of inspiring experience (*Salamandra* [*Salamander*] from 1924) or the shaping of creative personality, “the new Sisyphus” fighting with fate (*Wyspa Itongo* [*Itongo Island*] from 1936).

**Adam Mazurkiewicz**

STEFAN GRABIŃSKI'S SHORT STORIES AND THE TRADITION OF HORROR FICTION

Stefan Grabiński's short stories are a special testimony to the talent of the author who combined the tradition of horror fiction with the achievements of modern civilisation (especially in *Demon ruchu* [*The Motion Demon*]), and who resurrects conventional science fiction, re-interpreted from the point of view of accomplishments in the field of psychoanalysis. In cultural tradition, which can be treated as the point of reference for Grabiński's short stories, a special place is occupied by the trend of romantic stories about ghosts, modernist science fiction, as well as the works of Edgar Allan Poe.

Grabiński uses the penetration of the two spheres of reality – the rational and the supernatural – to expose the dual nature of the world. He seems to look for its sources in the penetration of the elements of rationalism and spiritualism. Neither nature, which is the mainstay of the supernatural powers, nor technology, whose products can be possessed by irrational beings, could protect man from the concept of “extraordinariness”, understood in its Freudian sense.

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### **Krzysztof Grudnik**

#### CATOPTRIC IDENTITY IN STEFAN GRABIŃSKI'S SHORT STORIES

The article attempts to discuss the recurring theme of Stefan Grabiński's short stories, called here "the catoptric identity". "The catoptric identity" is understood as all kinds of reflections or multiplications of identity. In the first part of the article, the author points to numerous realisations of the catoptric theme in Grabiński's short stories, and in the two following parts a detailed analysis of his two short stories – *Problemat Czelawy* [*Czelawa's Problem*], and *Dziedzina* [*The Area*] – is carried out.

### **Katarzyna Badowska**

#### LOOK-ALIKENESS, TWIN-NESS, DUALITY – "ME" VERSUS "ME" IN STEFAN GRABIŃSKI'S SHORT STORIES

The article discusses look-alike creations in six short stories by Stefan Grabiński – *Zez* [*Strabismus*], *Problemat Czelawy* [*Czelawa's Problem*], *Czad* [*Fumes*], *Kochanka Szamoty* [*Szamota's Mistress*], *In Sarah's House* [*W domu Sary*] and *Przypadek* [*The Case*]. The category of duality – understood as multiplication and dividing – becomes the basis for reflection on the identity type ipse and the search for subjectivity. It is analysed in the context of the dynamic concept of being, as well as the psychology of depth, androgyny and parapsychology.

### **Izabela Poniatowska**

#### GRABIŃSKI POPULAR?

The article discusses the so far not researched aspect of Stefan Grabiński's work, i.e. the relationship between the texts of the author of *Demon ruchu* [*The Motion Demon*] with the popular fiction that was flourishing at the turn of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries and during the Interwar Period. Grabiński seems to be fascinated with these narratives and very often uses tricks, clichés or stereotypes that appear in the mass literature of that period, and he also uses certain "popular" plot schemes. The analysis of his works from the point of view of their relationship with this type of literature is also an excuse to reflect about the issue of relationship between literary circuits and the emergence of mass culture, and is an attempt to break out of the circle of previous interpretations.

### **Edyta I. Rudolf**

#### IN DEFENCE OF RATIONALISM.

#### DOCTORS W IN SELECTED WORKS OF STEFAN GRABIŃSKI

Grabiński, who received education in humanities, presents the attitude of an interested layman towards nature and science in his fantastic writing. However, the references to medical sciences and the creation of characters of doctors are probably based on his personal experience. In the works of the author of *Demon ruchu* [*The Motion Demon*], the world of science and medicine penetrates into mediumship and spiritualism.

The character of doctor, even though it is often just a supporting role, represents common sense. Doctor supports rationalism, in accordance with the positivist ideology, and approaches the issue of the supernatural in a scientific manner. Characters searching for rescue turn to doctors, who are helpless against dark forces because these things and phenomena cannot be scientifically or empirically explained.

**Dariusz Brzostek**

CORPUS EROTICUM, OR THE FANTASY MISTRESS OF JERZY SZAMOTA

The article attempts to interpret a short story by Stefan Grabiński entitled *Kochanka Szamoty* [*Szamota's Mistress*] from the psychoanalytical point of view, using the conceptual apparatus provided by Jacques Lacan. The context for these deliberations is set by prior interpretations of this story – a psychological one, carried out by Artur Hutnikiewicz, and a feminist-psychoanalytical one, proposed by Krystyna Kłosińska. Within the framework of this analysis, the author highlights the obsessive personality of the main character and the nature of his relationship with his mistress, Jadwiga Kalergis – who, in accordance with Lacan's apparatus, is presented as an erotic fantasy, a sort of “symptom of a man”. In consequence, the traumatic aspect of Szamota's final sexual experience is seen as the result of a confrontation with an object (*l'objet petit a*), and thus “the return of the suppressed”, which manifests itself as an obscene object of male desire.

**Marek Kochanowski**

DIALECTICS OF MOTION AND DESIRE IN A SHORT STORY BY STEFAN GRABIŃSKI ENTITLED *W PRZEDZIALE* [*IN THE COMPARTMENT*]

*W przedziale* [*In the Compartment*] is the third story in a collection by Stefan Grabiński entitled *Demon ruchu* [*The Motion Demon*]. The principal theme of this piece is the demonstration of the destructive force of brutal eroticism and crime that is a result of a fight for a woman played out in a compartment of a moving train. The actions of the main characters are motivated by the movement of the train, which in the text becomes independent of people and becomes the director of the actions of main protagonists. The article signals also a relationship between semantics of this story and an essay by Sigmund Freud, *The Uncanny*. The Freudian concept of the uncanny signifies the unknown, the inconvenient, the odd, something that comes to light particularly in various moments of “involuntary repetition”. In extreme cases, according to the narrator, human actions reveal a strong unidentified power that makes our capability of normative thinking insufficient to objectively assess a situation. The symbol of this eternal power can be a train, understood as an “icon of modernity”. The train motion turns protagonists into fragmentary characters broken down into basic units of stimuli, experiences and desires. Initiation into the sphere of what is hidden takes place in the story through motion, a demonic action of the machine that at the beginning of the twentieth century was not only seen as the symbol of advancement and technology, but was also associated with madness and death. Equally important in the analysed text is the compartment space that is a metaphorical place where an ideal machine is united with random emotions of its passengers.

### **Katarzyna Trzeciak**

BETWEEN RETHORICS OF EROS AND EROTICS OF TANATOS. WHAT DOES THE MAIN CHARACTER IN *NA WZGÓRZU RÓŻ* [ON THE HILL OF ROSES] REALLY WANT?

The text is an attempt to analyse the story by Stefan Grabiński according to the paradigm of pleasure reading by Barthes and within the category of fantasmatic criticism. According to the author, in this story the pleasure of the reader is designed as parallel to the pleasure of the narrator (the main protagonist), and its first phase is solar ecstasy. Changes in the dynamics of pleasure are brought about by an unidentified smell – interpreted here according to the Lacanian category of Thing, and therefore impossible to integrate into the symbolic system. The answer to the unclearly predicted tanatics of smell is erotica – a fantasmatic object of desire that is interpreted here as projection, or exteriorisation, of the ideal, a being drawn from the protagonist himself. Contact with the Real, with extra-discursive mystery that drives the desire of the main character, is only possible thanks to the wound – a flaw on the face of the heroine, which is not only an epiphany of the Thing, but which also shows the core and the beginning of writing that is – according to Derrida and Markowski – a cut, a slash, a scratch. This experience – going beyond the fantasy towards the Real, confrontation with the primal cause of fantasy – is the source of the perverse pleasure of the protagonist and the reader, who come closer towards the mystery of the structure of their desire. Waking up from a dream is not interpreted here as a soothing return to reality but as the continuation of the search for the truth about own desire that began during the dream and that is diagnosed as erotica of death.

### **Anna Kruszczyńska**

NUNS IN THE WORKS OF STEFAN GRABIŃSKI

The author of the article focuses on the motive of nuns that frequently appears in Stefan Grabiński's works. The article looks at the characters of nuns (a collective protagonist, a female mystic, nuns struggling with split bodies and split personalities, servants of Devil, etc.) and proves that the creation of these protagonists was inspired by the periods of the Middle Ages and the so-called Young Poland. The article attempts to establish what characterises the image of nuns and how these sacred creations were perceived.

### **Magdalena Geraga**

WHO IS RED MAGDA – REFLECTIONS ON A SHORT STORY BY STEFAN GRABIŃSKI

The article looks at one of the short stories by Grabiński from the anthropological perspective. Magda, “the daughter of flames”, is a character that arouses ambivalent emotions in the father, in the residents of the town in which arsons take place and even in herself. To say that Magda is a pyromaniac is an understatement. The girl is also a priestess of fire, a stranger, a scapegoat, a nightmare, an anthropomorphism of the fire. She is a border character who cannot be defined. However, the main point is not to define her but to pose more and more questions – who is Magda? Who is she not? Is what she appears dependent on her or is it ingrained in the sphere of fatum that neither “the daughter of flames” nor anyone else can influence?

**Monika Kulesza-Gierat**

TREATY ON PURGATORIAL SOULS BY STEFAN GRABIŃSKI

The article is devoted to *Muzeum dusz czyśćcowych* [*The Museum of Purgatorial Souls*], a short story by Stefan Grabiński, published as part of his collection *Księga ognia* [*The Book of Fire*]. The author discusses primarily the theme of purgatorial souls and compares it to the Catholic beliefs associated with Purgatory, using as the context The Museum of Souls in Purgatory that still exists in Rome.

**Artur Jabłoński**

SMOLUCH [*SLOVEN*] BY STEFAN GRABIŃSKI

The article attempts to answer the question about the ontological status of the main character of a short story by Stefan Grabiński entitled *Smoluch* [*Sloven*]. There are two possible interpretations: the sloven is either the product of imagination of the ticket inspector called Boroń, or a monster that actually exists. Decision about which path to follow influences the meaning of the whole story. Depending on the chosen solution, Boroń can be considered either the chosen one, an outstanding individual who is able to communicate with the spirit of the railway, or a madman.