

## THE ETHOS OF THE WORD

### ABSTRACTS

#### FROM THE EDITORS – A Promise of Truth (D.Ch.)

Every word gives a promise of truth. This «natural» epistemological attitude pervades human life, determining its cultural continuity and the formation of social bonds, as well as giving sense to human creativity. The essence of this «natural epistemology» inherently present in human life consists in the expectation that the words that are being heard, indeed every message that comes from another human being, are a vehicle of truth and provide some information about how «things are,» thus enabling a better orientation in the surrounding world in all its dimensions. The human being trusts in the objective sense of words in the belief that even if they cannot provide truth about a given subject, they at least make getting closer to truth possible or are helpful in establishing what the conditions of finding out this truth are, and in deciding what still remains unknown. Even in the face of deceit, also systematic or even systemic one, the latter kind pervading totalitarian systems, the human being clings to the conviction that deceit is some sort of disturbance, that it is something that should not be the case, that it should not happen (*nota bene* it is not without reason that totalitarian systems first of all seek to assume control over the free word). In the contemporary world, this indefeasible trust in the words that are being said is manifested, for instance, in the steadfastness about the way people participate in political life: despite the widespread mistrust of the words spoken by politicians, despite being repeatedly deceived by them and despite their indignation about the deceptiveness in public life, they do not stop seeking and voting for the ones whose words – in their opinion – are most truthful, and they do not allow the possibility that all the politicians always lie. Another evident proof of this natural human trust in the words being heard is the easiness with which we respond to advertisements. Although we are perfectly aware that they use persuasion techniques and appeal to our weaknesses, although we distance ourselves from them, we nevertheless tend to treat them as a source of information and not infrequently find ourselves thinking: Maybe there is something true about what they say?

One might say that the human epistemological trust in words is simultaneously epistemological naivety, a certain weakness indeed, and that we learn from the culture of both the West and the East that one should rather be inclined in everyday life to adopt a more refined epistemological attitude, such as, for instance, skepticism or methodic doubt. Yet even the most sophisticated and most theoretically advanced projects put forward by philosophers who wish to

promote a greater epistemological «maturity» ultimately turn out incapable of shaking the natural conviction that the words being heard convey truth. Even Freud, Marx and Nietzsche, the famous “masters of suspicion”<sup>1</sup> about the word, were unable to succeed in this respect. While their observations broadened human knowledge of the reality as such and provided new ways of perceiving it, they failed in their attempts to undermine human trust in the word; at most they uncovered the so far unnoticed conditions of its interpretation. Postmodernism, which in turn attempted deconstruction of the word and advocated reading it merely as a narration type, stopped at the level of theory, also formulated by means of words.

Both the conviction that not every word coming from a politician is a lie and the belief that one can learn something from advertisements seem to point that among the consequences of this «natural» human epistemological attitude is perceiving the word as a certain good. In this perspective, the «word,» as if a special lens, appears to capture the transcendentals: being, truth, goodness and beauty. The reason is that the word permeates various forms of expression – we often say that paintings or movies, or works of art to which we traditionally apply the category of beauty, «speak.» Also music «speaks.» The human being either reads words into them or wants to express their message by means of words, because the word is a basic unit of meaning and a tool by means of which one’s image of the world can be put in order. While the popular question pupils are asked at school: «What did the poet want to say by means of it?» is frequently subject to jokes, it springs from the conviction that the word has an objective, intentional reference, that it «means,» and thus communicates meaning.

However, the objective dimension of the word the human being finds so difficult to resist by no means diminishes its subjective perception – it is not without reason that we speak about the power of the metaphor, about “spots of indeterminacy”<sup>2</sup> in works of art, about their openness to diverse interpretations. Yet the subjectivity of the word can be preserved only against the background of its objective sense of a sign. Thus also silence can be most telling and in certain situations it has the power of the word. In the Gospels, Jesus Christ, to whom the scribes and Pharisees brought a woman, humiliated by a crowd of men who had caught her in the very act of committing adultery, does not use words only, but writes on the ground with his finger. We have no clue whether those were words or what they exactly meant, but apparently they were understood by each of the irate accusers in the context of his own life. That is why the crowd dispersed. And it was only then that Christ spoke to the woman (cf. J 8: 1-11).

The belief in the value of the word, which is always some modality of truth, is inherent in the human being in spite of the fact that, absurdly, the word frequently finds itself unable to give proper names to things. The word may also be a weapon against evil, thus revealing the dignity of the human being as

<sup>1</sup> P. Ricoeur, *Freud and Philosophy: An Essay on Interpretation*, trans. D. Savage, Yale University Press, New Haven 1977, p. 32.

<sup>2</sup> See: R. Ingarden, *The Literary Work of Art: An Investigation on the Borderlines of Ontology, Logic and Theory of Literature*, trans. G.G. Grabowicz, Northwestern University Press, Evanston, Illinois, 1974, p. 249-331.

person. Fr. Tadeusz Styczeń would probably say that human dignity is revealed in any and every situation in which a human person – through his or her «yes» or «no» – takes the side of truth and opposes falsehood.<sup>3</sup> The value of the word is adequately grasped by the expression «to give one's word,» which is common to very many languages, the sense of this phrase being: I testify with all my being that things are so and so.

The juncture between the word and truth becomes particularly apparent in religion – it is not incidental that major world religions gather people precisely around the word, and are even called religions of the word, while the ethics they preach comes from «hearing the word.» Thus one might say that being religious is an attempt to give the proper response to the word a human being considers as absolute. The only proper response though turns out to be the one of one's life. The essence of such a response, as well as the dialogical dimension of religion, have been grasped, with an uncommon sensitivity, in a painting called *A Winter Landscape* by Caspar David Friedrich, who portrays, against the background of a cold landscape in which wilderness and silence predominate, a small silhouette of a crippled man who has abandoned his crutches in the snow in order to crawl up to a lonely cross and offer his prayer to God, trustful that his suffering has a meaning encompassed in the sense of world. Christianity, being a religion of the word, is also a religion of promise that there is a sense to the world, that the words with which human beings strive to render this fact make sense too, and that human beings are capable of formulating such words. In the Prologue to the Gospel according to John, the Word comes to people and entrusts itself to their care, showing them – through itself – the sense of the world and letting them take charge of it.

The word also delineates the borders of sense, simultaneously delineating the borders of human thought: What cannot be thought cannot be said. This particular issue was studied thoroughly by Michel Foucault in his work on the “archaeology of the word,”<sup>4</sup> inspired by a passage in Borges, who in turn quotes “a certain Chinese encyclopaedia.”<sup>5</sup> In the encyclopaedia in question it is written that animals are divided into: belonging to the Emperor; embalmed; tame; sucking pigs; sirens; fabulous; stray dogs; included in the present classification; frenzied; innumerable; drawn with a very fine camelhair brush; *et cetera*; having just broken the water pitcher; that from a long way off look like flies. „In the wonderment of this taxonomy – writes Foucault – the thing we apprehend in one great leap, the thing that, by means of the fable, is demonstrated as the exotic charm of another system of thought, is the limitation of our own stark impossibility of thinking t h a t.”<sup>6</sup> Thus also Foucault declares the belief that, at its root, the word gives a name to the order of the world in all its modalities, itself remaining a reflection of this order. Otherwise the order of thought is broken and the human mind becomes helpless having found itself lost in a cognitive chaos.

<sup>3</sup> See: *Ethos* 24: 2011 No. 3(95), “Philosopher of the Person: Tadeusz Styczeń (1931-2010).”

<sup>4</sup> See: M. F o u c a u l t, *The Order of Things: Archaeology of Human Sciences*, [trans. A. Sheridan], Routledge, London–New York 2001.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibidem*, p. XVI.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibidem*.

Radical precision of the word on the level of sentence was allegedly postulated by the Austrian writer Karl Kraus, who said – on his deathbed – when he heard the news that the Japanese had gone into Manchuria: “None of this would have happened, if people had only been more strict about the use of the comma.”<sup>7</sup> Can the corruption of language really be the cause of evil? We invite the readers of *Ethos* to reflect on this question while studying the articles collected in the present volume, which grasp various dimensions of the word: the word as the foundation of human existence, the word as «reflection» of the reality, the word facing the Absolute, the limits beyond which the word becomes helpless, the word in debate, the word in homily and in advertisement, the word facing creative imagination, the word that teaches, and the word facing evil. We have also included the profiles of some chosen thinkers to whom the word became their workshop and who, in their texts, presented a particular humility towards it, convinced that by serving the word, they serve truth.

We hope that while reading the articles on the word, our readers will be able to overcome for a moment the pressure of images, so characteristic of contemporary culture, and will think of a deeper presence in our life of a living, clear and apt word which knows when to give way to silence, as the Japanese poet Taigi does in his haiku poem:

Look how beautiful  
the surface of the snow is,  
illuminated by the sun<sup>8</sup>.

#### JOHN PAUL II – The Great Work on the «Word»

The eighth commandment, “You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor,” stresses that being truthful is a duty to be observed by human beings in their relations with others, as well as throughout their presence in social life. The commandment in question in particular reflects the fact that man was created in the image and likeness of God, who is truth. Thus human actions must be in accord with the requirements of truthfulness. Truth is good, whereas lies, hypocrisy and falsehood are evil, which human beings experience in various dimensions of their lives.

The question of truthfulness in social and public life was particularly significant in Poland after 1989. After the breakdown of communism, the freedom of speech was restored and diverse views and standpoints could be publicly expressed.

However, neither the freedom of speech, nor public expression of one’s views as such, can guarantee the freedom of the word that is thus being said. The freedom of speech is of little use if the words being said are not free, if they are tethered by egocentrism, deceit, guile, or even the hatred and contempt of

<sup>7</sup> Quoted after: S. B e l l o w, *The Jefferson Lectures*, in: by the same author, *It All Adds Up: From the Dim Past to the Uncertain Future*, Penguin, New York 1994.

<sup>8</sup> Translated into English from: *Haiku*, trans. A. Żuławska-Umeda, Ossolineum, Wrocław 1983, s. 248.

others, of human beings who have a different skin color, a different religion or different views. There is little benefit from speech or from writing unless the words they employ are meant to seek, express and share truth rather than win debates or defend one's position at any cost, even if it should be completely wrong.

Sometimes though words may express truth in a way that is humiliating to truth itself. For instance, one may happen to be telling the truth in order to justify one's lie. A grave disorder is introduced in social life through attempts to employ truth in the service of deceit. Truth is humiliated whenever it is not told for the sake truth itself or whenever there is no love for the human being inherent in it. The eighth commandment cannot be observed in social life unless it presupposes kindness, mutual trust and respect for all the differences that enrich the community.

The climate of falsehood and deceit in social life results from treating human beings as objects or means to some end; it enters social life with every word said in order to negatively affect others, as in the case of defamation or slander, or to introduce moral disorder. Throughout the communist period Poles were forbidden to say truth publicly, and after 1989 social life needed to be made free from falsehood. The virtue of veracity needed to be restored in order that it might shape human life as well as the media and the worlds of culture, politics and economy.

While the eighth commandment proclaims that truth is a good for human beings and that each human being has the right to truth, there happen to be rightful exceptions to this rule. We admire those who will not reveal the truth even in the face violence being done to them, if they know that this truth might harm innocent human beings. Oppressors have no right to truth in such cases.

In the contemporary society, one can view the media as either bearing witness to truth or not doing so. The power of modern media calls for the responsibility for the words they transmit. If the media do not accept this responsibility, they become evil and start manipulating the public opinion, much as they may be giving the impression to the contrary.

One can see thus that the eighth commandment opens the human being to a whole range of existential dimensions. Yet bearing witness to truth is costly. Jesus Christ said: "For this reason I was born, and for this reason I came into the world – to testify to the truth" (J 18:37). While it is true that human beings are free to tell untruth, they will not be truly free unless they speak truth. Christ gives a clear response to this situation: „The truth will set you free" (J 8:32). Thus one might say that human life is an aspiration to freedom through truth. This fact is very important in the current times. While we relish the freedom of speech, as well as other freedoms it implies, we tend to forget that essentially there is no freedom without truth. Only truth can make us free. Outside truth, freedom is no longer freedom, but merely its appearance which makes the human being vulnerable to enslavement.

Keywords: truth, freedom, freedom of speech, ethics of the media, ethics of public life

Extract from the homily delivered by John Paul II on 6 June 1991 during the Holy Mass he celebrated in Olsztyn, Poland. Reprinted from: „L'Osservatore Romano,” the Polish edition, Special Issue, 1-9 June 1991, p. 66f. © Libreria Editrice Vaticana 1991.

#### Joseph RATZINGER – The Spirit of the Liturgy: The Human Voice

In the Liturgy of the Logos, of the Eternal Word, the word and thus the human voice have an essential role to play. First there is the oratio, the priestly mode of prayer, in which the priest, in the name of the whole community, speaks through Christ, in the Holy Spirit, to the Father. Then there are the various forms of proclamation: the readings, the Gospel (solemnly sung at High Mass), and the homily, which in the strict sense is reserved to the bishop and then to the priest and deacon as well. Then there is the response to the Word [Ant-Wort], by which the assembled congregation takes up and accepts the Word. This structure of Word and response, which is essential to the liturgy, is modeled on the basic structure of the process of divine revelation, in which Word and response, the speech of God and the receptive hearing of the Bride, the Church, go together. In the liturgy, the response has different forms. For example, there is the acclamation, which is of great importance in the world of ancient law. The responsive acclamation confirms the arrival of the Word and makes the process of revelation, of God's giving of himself in the Word, at last complete. The Amen, the Alleluia, and the *Et cum spiritu tuo*, and so on, are all part of this. One of the important results of the liturgical renewal is the fact that the people really do again respond in the acclamation and do not have to leave it to a representative, the altar server.

God, the Revealer, did not want to stay as *solus Deus, solus Christus* (God alone, Christ alone). No, he wanted to create a Body for himself, to find a Bride – he sought a response. It was really for her that the Word went forth. Alongside the acclamation are the various forms of meditative appropriation of the Word, especially in the singing of psalms (but also in hymns). Then there is the “new song,” the great song the Church sings as she goes off toward the music of the New Heaven and the New Earth. This explains why, in addition to congregational singing, Christian liturgy of its very nature finds a suitable place for the choir and for the instruments.

We are realizing more and more clearly that silence is part of the liturgy. We respond, by singing and praying, to the God who addresses us, but the greater mystery, which no word can express calls us to remain silent at moments such as that after the homily, during the Preparation of the Gifts, during the Consecration, and after Communion.

Shared silence becomes shared prayer, indeed shared action, a journey out of our everyday life toward the Lord, toward merging our time with his own. Liturgical education ought to regard it as its duty to facilitate this inner process, so that in the common experience of silence the inner process becomes a truly liturgical event and the silence is filled with content.

There is also a silence that is part of the liturgical action, not an interruption, namely, the silent prayers of the priest. Those who hold a sociological or activist view of the priest's duties in the Mass frown upon these prayers, and, whenever possible, they leave them out. The priest is defined in narrowly sociological and functionalistic way as the "presider" at the liturgical celebration, which is thought of as a kind of meeting. If that is what he is, then, of course, for the sake of the meeting, he has to be in action all the time. But the priest's duties in the Mass are much more than a matter of chairing a meeting. The priest presides over an encounter with the living God and as a person who is on his way to God. The silent prayers of the priest invite him to make his task truly personal, so that he may give his whole self to the Lord. The priest should pray silently with real recollection and devotion, conscious of his responsibility to proclaim the Gospel aright, conscious, too, of the need which that entails for a purification of lips and heart. When the priest does this, he shows the congregation the dignity and grandeur of the Gospel and helps them understand how tremendous it is that God's Word should come into our midst. The priest's prayer creates reverence and a space for hearing the Word. Again, liturgical education is necessary if the priest's prayer is to be understood and the people are not only to stand up physically but also to rise up spiritually and open the ears of their hearts to the Gospel.

Old prayer books contain, alongside a lot of kitsch, much that is a valuable resource for prayer, much that has grown out of deep interior experience and can again become today a school for prayer. What St. Paul says in the epistle to Romans – that we do not know how to pray as we ought (Rom 8:26) – applies even more to us today. So often we are without words in our encounter with God. The Holy Spirit does indeed teach us to pray; he does indeed give us the words, as St. Paul says; but he also uses human meditation. The prayers that have risen up from the hearts of believers under the guidance of the Holy Spirit are a school, provided us by the Holy Spirit, that will slowly open our mute mouths and help us to learn how to pray and fill the silence.

Keywords: liturgy, word, silence, priest, prayer

Extract from Joseph Ratzinger's *Der Geist der Liturgie. Eine Einführung* (Herder Verlag, Freiburg 2000), reprinted from: Joseph Ratzinger, *Teologia liturgii. Sakramentalne podstawy życia chrześcijańskiego*, trans. W. Szymona, OP, Wydawnictwo KUL, Lublin 2012, pp. 163-170 (Volume XI of the Polish Edition of Joseph Ratzinger's *Opera omnia*, ed. K. Gózdź and M. Górecka).

For the English edition see: Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger, *The Spirit of the Liturgy*, trans. J. Saward, Ignatius Press, San Francisco 2000.

Card. Gianfranco RAVASI – The Symbol: Between the Word and the Image (trans. P. Mikulska)

There are many who express regret that Christianity, as religion of the Word, suffers depreciation due to the fact that the prevailing culture is overloaded with images, ignoring or even suppressing the word and the values it stands for.

In this article, the author proposes considerations on the notion of the symbol as ideally uniting the image and the word and thus creating for both the opportunity for maximum expression. The analysis is set in the context of exegetical research and provides the illustrative material that the reader can use as a starting point for their own reflection on culture. By re-establishing the elevated status of the symbol, it is possible to avoid a seeming antagonism between the image and the word, at the same time preserving and emphasizing the vitality of Christianity in the context of contemporary culture.

Translated by *Patrycja Mikulska*

Keywords: symbol, image, word, allegory, hermeneutics, exegesis

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Giovanni SALMERI – The Human Being and His Life Focused on the Word: On the Prologue to the Gospel of John (trans. P. Mikulska)

The Prologue to the Gospel according to John appears to have no bearing on the foundations of philosophical ethics, especially within the Christian tradition that has so strongly emphasized the gap between theoretical discourse on the one hand, and the moral one on the other. However, the Prologue points to the crucial fact that the human being should be considered on the basis of their relationship to the word. In fact, most ethical precepts refer, directly or indirectly, to the word, which enables the emergence of otherwise inconceivable values. Different concepts of freedom may also be co-ordinated, if man is understood as a being focused on the word, and not primarily as a rational being.

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Keywords: philosophical ethics, Gospel according to John, word, freedom

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Piotr SIKORA – The Word, the Experience of the Inexpressible, and Philosophy

In the current article I briefly outline the apophatic standpoint in its approach towards the Absolute and the Unconditional. I subsequently point that the standpoint in question, while denying that there exists a distance between



the Absolute and a religious human being, on the one hand seems to assume some kind of experience of the Unconditional, but on the other hand questions its very possibility on the grounds that any object that is being experienced must be conceptually determined.

Then I present an analysis and a criticism of two competing philosophical theories of religious experience, namely, Steven T. Katz's constructivism (which is irreconcilable with the apophatic standpoint) and the conception of pure consciousness events proposed by Robert Forman (which openly refers to the apophatic intuitions, but, as I argue, is not sufficiently apophatic).

Drawing on the work of Meister Eckhart, one of the most eminent representatives of apophaticism, I attempt to show that the fallacy inherent in both theories under scrutiny consists in understanding the apophatic discourse as one that refers to an «object» distinguished from among others, thus describing its nature.

According to the interpretation I defend, the apophatic discourse (in the sense of the term "apophatic" as it is used to describe Meister Eckhart's argument) is of pragmatic character and it is used in order to shape the subject, namely, to provide a liberation from the need to seek for a particular experience conceived of as religious or mystical which might then become an object of philosophical scrutiny.

Translated by *Dorota Chabrajka*

Keywords: apophatic theology, Steven T. Katz, constructivism, Robert Forman, pure consciousness events, Meister Eckhart, mysticism

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Jacek JAŚTAL – Rhetoric as Practical Ethics: On a Certain Interpretation of Aristotle's *Rhetoric*

Among the essential problems concerning the interpretation of the thought of Aristotle is determining the relation which obtains between the theory of rhetoric he advanced and the concept of practical philosophy expounded in his works on ethics.

While Aristotle describes rhetoric as an element of ethical insight within the realm of politics, he does not develop this subject in any of the writings that are known to us.

In the article, the author attempts to present the possible ways of relating rhetoric to the Aristotelian concept of practical reason. In the first part, the origin of the Aristotelian conception of practical wisdom (*phronesis*) is investigated, its shape being largely determined not only by Plato's polemics with the sophists, but also by Isocrates's theory of rhetoric. In the second part, the author attempts

to prove that the conception of the ethos of the orator is independent of the conception of the ethical virtues put forward in Aristotle's works on ethics, thus it cannot be considered as the nexus between rhetoric and moral philosophy. In the third part of the article, the author seeks to prove that the nexus in question may be found in the Aristotelian conception of advisory oration which may be interpreted as a procedure by means of which a political community arrives at the ethically proper decisions about the issues which are crucial to its existence. Ultimately, the connection between rhetoric and ethics, according to Aristotle, might have consisted in that the properly practised art of rhetoric enables the passage from general considerations of the good of the human being and human virtues to particular moral dilemmas, yet the Stagirite did not deal with that question in his works on ethics.

Translated by *Dorota Chabrajska*

Keywords: Aristotle on rhetoric, Aristotelian ethics, *phronesis*, Isocrates, the ethos of the orator, Aristotle on virtue

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Robert PIŁAT – “I Partly Agree”: On the Distribution of Rightness in a Debate, as seen on the Example of *Quaestiones Disputatae de Anima* by St. Thomas Aquinas

In the article, I present an analysis of some chosen sections of *Quaestiones Disputatae de Anima* by St. Thomas Aquinas with the intention to reconstruct the principle on which the partial rightness is granted by the author to the quoted views of other philosophers. The precise distribution of the consent and dissent was important in the scholastic discourse insofar as it made it possible to protect an important pillar of philosophical activity of that period, namely, the authority of the thinkers of old, without simultaneously curbing the development of ideas.

Thus I examine a few cases of partial recognition of rightness and I defend the quadruple thesis: (1) Defining the extent of the rightness of a quoted author in a given matter is accomplished by resorting to more general philosophical concepts. (2) The conceptual settlements thus made remain valid only for the central cases within the examined categories; therefore they are valid only for a limited number of assertions pertaining to the examined question. (3) The reasonings that interrelate these central cases (*resp.* the central contents of a the given concept) are normative, the source of the norm in question being their relation to the most general metaphysical categories – the transcendentals – which encompass the goods *par excellence*. (4) The concept of normativity thus outlined may be incorporated into the contemporary analytic discussion of normativity.

Translated by *Dorota Chabrajska*

Keywords: rightness in debate, scholasticism, truth, normativity

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### Dobrosław KOT – The Borders of Speech

The article presents the borderlands of speech, namely, those moments when the philosophical language encounters fundamental problems concerning expression. The borderline then is silence. The paper discusses four *modi* of silence: shame, perplexity, ignorance and mystery. Their analysis points to the need to transgress the borders of the unequivocal and precise language. Such a necessity appears already in the question itself the human being poses about what lies beyond the borders: the human being asks this question, and while asking, opens a certain perspective.

Subsequently, two significant attempts at transgressing the borders of language are characterized, namely, the ones proposed by, respectively, Martin Heidegger and Martin Buber. Both philosophers were striving to describe the reality and experience that escape the possibility of discursive description, discursive language being one «about something,» as opposed to Heidegger's and Buber's key concepts, namely, "being" and "You". Thus the article attempts to discover the methods by means of which both philosophers attempted to speak about what is difficult or utterly impossible to talk about.

Translated by *Dorota Chabrajska*

Keywords: borders of speech, silence, linguistic expression, philosophical language, discursive language, Martin Heidegger, Martin Buber

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## Dariusz KOSIŃSKI – When Is the Word «Living»?

While reflecting on the possible meanings and the practical prospects of the «Living Word,» which has become a mythical concept in the contemporary Polish theater, I propose a closer look at the typically Polish tradition that has arisen around it. I refer to the ideas put forward by Adam Mickiewicz, Cyprian Norwid and Juliusz Osterwa, as I attempt to establish what in fact the «Living Word» is, and to outline the potential of the program which aims to make it the focus of stage practice, as well as the ways of implementing this program.

Translated by *Dorota Chabrajska*

Keywords: Polish theatre, the Romantic concept of the Word, incarnate Word, contemporary theatrical pursuits, Adam Mickiewicz, Cyprian Norwid, Juliusz Osterwa

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## Fr. Jan SOCHOŃ – John Paul II's Culture of Gesture and Word

In the article, the category of the “culture of gesture and word” is implemented in order to show how words accompanied by specific gestures played an important role in the pastoral activity of Karol Wojtyła, and later Pope John Paul II. In the case of the late Pope one may even speak about a hermeneutics of gesture. While drawing on certain classical theses of metaphysical anthropology, the author demonstrates how John Paul II succeeded in restoring the lost meanings of some gestures and in creating absolutely new ones which, in time, were commonly accepted and became part of a wide range of symbolic behaviours. Among the famous gestures made by John Paul II during his travels were putting on an Indian feather headdress, expressing elation over the break dance performed in front of him by young people or gaily waving his walking stick. These and other gestures of this kind were received with great enthusiasm and joy as they showed the Pope's admiration for cultures and traditions other than European. At the same time they visibly expressed John Paul II's spiritual zeal and epitomized the creativity inherent in God's relation to man, revealed in the saving ministry of Christ.

Not infrequently did the message John Paul II conveyed to the world, as well as the gestures that accompanied it, create situations surprising also in the semiotic sense: they would awaken entire peoples from their religious or political «slumber» (the latter being the case with Poles) and enhance their sense of pride with their histories and cultures. Pope John Paul II triggered off chains of gestures of goodwill, thus generating human solidarity, strengthening people's faith in

God as well as their openness to others. Side by side with cementing the social bonds, he was creating a broad perspective of thinking in which life is a human pilgrimage to God.

The concluding parts of the article focus on John Paul II's theology of vision, manifested in particular throughout his interactions with people, and on his gesture of kissing the soil of the nations he visited. Both these gestures are analyzed with regard to their impact on broadly defined contemporary religious, social and political culture.

**Keywords:** culture, gesture, word, solemn speech, body, hermeneutics, Rhapsodic Theatre, theology of vision, mysticism, kissing the soil, the functions of language, pastoral care, liturgy, liturgical gestures

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#### Maria WOJTAK – The Homily as a Value, the Problem of Value in the Homily, and Homiletic Valuation

The article focuses on some chosen axiological issues characteristic of homilies. The problems in question are considered from the philological point of view and with reference to a transdisciplinary perspective due to the status of the object of research. In homilies, which are considered by the believers as the Word of God present in the human word, the axiological horizon is outlined precisely. The axiological sphere exhibits permanence both in the respect of the set of values it comprises and in the respect of their hierarchy, the shape of this sphere being determined by the Gospel. The transcendent values are duly conceptualized and as such they remain the measure and the source of all other valuation procedures. It is in the light of these values, above all, that moral norms are interpreted. Particular values are given a more detailed aspectual reference in separate messages, or preaching units, yet it is always done in accordance with the doctrine. The process of more detailed value description involves the means of valuation which are to a large extent unchangeable (in particular the lexical ones). The hierarchy of values which is considered as model comprises significant revaluations, as it describes as good such vital values as old age, illness or death and such material ones as poverty, and in doing so invokes the authority of Christ and his axiological judgments as they appear in the Gospel.

While presenting various duties of the followers of Christ, preachers interpret particular elements of values typical of the individuals (functioning in particular conditions) within the axiological space laid out by God himself for the community of believers.

Homilies as such happen to be better or worse as far as their stylistic and linguistic aspects are concerned. They are also subject to the norm of multi-sector propriety, so judgments pertaining to their correctness in the above-mentioned aspects need to be formulated carefully.

Translated by *Dorota Chabrajska*

Keywords: preaching, preaching unit, homily, sermon, value, valuation, genre of expression, language, style

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#### Ewa BADYDA – Responsibility for the Word, as seen in the Light of the Contemporary Use of the Persuasive Function of Language

The article analyzes ethical aspects of the persuasive effect of the word, as well as its social consequences, focusing on the example of promotional materials. In linguistic research, the ethical dimension of the message is usually examined within the context of a given intentional language use, with a view to delineate the boundary between morally neutral persuasion and linguistic manipulation. While evaluating promotional materials in this respect, one needs to take two factors into account, namely, that the target addressees of the commercial message in question may recognize its convention and be able to distinguish the information included in it from persuasion. The convention of advertisement assumes that the world adverts describe is not subject to verification in terms of its being true or false – the moral responsibility for judgments of this kind is shifted to the addressee of the commercial message of whom a certain cultural maturity and communicational experience may be expected. Yet the extent of the clarity of the convention of advertisement may vary. Precisely such cases are considered in the article, which focuses on somewhat less model texts, namely, promotional leaflets issued by banks. In the materials in question, the informational function is strongly present, but the distinction between information and persuasion is unclear. While persuasive elements can be detected on many levels of the text, decoding them is particularly difficult due to the fact that it is only indirectly that the persuasion focuses on the product itself, the aim of the persuasion being rather to encourage the potential customers in generally easy decision taking in financial matters and in abandoning the common sense while thinking about them. The analysis shows that in order to recognize the particular means of persuasion the potential customers should have a vast language experience which will comprise, among others, an awareness of the fuzziness of certain words and of the various degrees of meaning

a given general concept may imply, as well as a sense of the meanings that may be associated with a given term. Thus the potential customers need to be able to recognize the actual position of the authors of the commercial message and the position they pretend to have, as well as the persuasion mechanisms which are at work conveying the hidden message.

The ethical aspect of advertisement may be evaluated not only with respect to the intention of its author and the duties of its readers, but also with reference to utilitarian ethics, which focuses here on the evaluation of the psychosocial effects of advertisements. Statistical data and survey results point to the fact that «living on credit» has become common in Poland and that bank debts are growing. Simultaneously, bank customers have a low awareness of their rights and while deciding on particular bank services, they tend to rely on their intuition rather than make rational choices. This situation is largely determined by economic and social factors, but it should also be a reason for public anxiety about the way the word affects social life.

Translated by *Dorota Chabrajska*

Keywords: persuasion, manipulation, advertising, ethical aspect of the word, utilitarian ethics

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Adam POTKAY – The Word and Attachment: On the Ethical Dimension of Loco-Descriptive Poetry, as seen in Poems by James Thomson and William Wordsworth (trans. D. Chabrajska)

Listening offers a possible solution to the perceived ethical problems of the possessive «I» and its appropriative gaze. In English literature, one genre often associated with the appropriative gaze is the so-called «loco-descriptive poem» of the eighteenth and nineteenth century. I argue, however, that in the major loco-descriptive poems of James Thomson and William Wordsworth an aesthetic of observation and control is offset by an ethic of listening and attachment. These poems dramatize the power of sound, including the sound of poetry, to attach us both to distinct environments and to the impersonal power of life.

Keywords: ethics, ear, eye, music, loco-descriptive poetry, iconoclasm, William Wordsworth, James Thomson

The present article is part of Adam Potkay's book *Wordsworth's Ethics*, The Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore–London 2012 (forthcoming).

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Agnieszka KOMOROWSKA – *The Jeweler's Shop: Between Philosophy and Mysticism*

The article begins with a review of various possible and already functioning interpretations of Karol Wojtyła's work *The Jeweler's Shop: A Meditation on the Sacrament of Matrimony Passing on Occasion into a Drama*, in order to introduce a new, both anthropological and mystical reading of the work, with the commentary, however, upon the use of the notion of mysticism, as well as in the light of the anthropology advanced by Wojtyła as philosopher. The paper presents an attempt at a reading of Wojtyła's early work, dating from 1960, in the context of John Paul II's catechetical teaching from circa 1978, comprised in a cycle *Man and Woman He Created Them: A Theology of the Body*. That being so, there has been outlined an astounding unity of thought, and even words, making up the Author's own dictionary on the subject of human love. Thus the interpretation of the three parts of the drama is elaborated in the context of three states of humanity: the one of pre-historical innocence, the one of historical man after the original sin, and the one of Redemption. Each of the three married couples the Author describes in the subsequent parts of the drama reflects humanity on the respective stage. Accordingly, alongside the main characters, there go others who escape merely human categories: the Jeweler, the Bridegroom, Adam (and Somebody – an episodic character, but also one of great importance in terms of the moment and way of emergence). A separate part of the article is dedicated to the above-mentioned characters owing to their role in revealing the mystical perspective in the interpretation of the drama. Ultimately, man shown from his interior, although with every hallmark of his bodily experience, is depicted in Wojtyła's work in a Trinitarian reality, i.e. the way of existence of the Triune God himself – the Communion of Persons. What is the most human turns out to be the most profoundly, mystically, united with the spiritual reality.

Keywords: dramaturgy of the inner self, adequate anthropology, theology of the body, Christian mysticism, meditateness, innocence, the fall of man, freedom, being, love, marriage, spirituality, the Triune God, the Book of Genesis

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### Maciej NOWAK – Malewska in the Archives: The Writing Practices and the Literary Images

The main theme of the article is the linkages between Hanna Malewska's biography and her works. The linkages in question are examined with recourse to the French tradition of the research of autobiography, in particular to the notion of autobiographical space developed by Philippe Lejeune. Yet the focus of the present considerations is the concept of the experience of the archives which the author conceives of as a biographical fact which shaped Malewska's literary output to a significant extent. The particular manifestations of this experience in her biography, described by the author as «traces», are present in various ways and on various planes throughout the writer's works. While reconstructing the relevant autobiographical space, the author refers both to Malewska's self-presentations and to the interviews she gave, as well as quotes the opinions of those who associated her with the space of the archives and other institutions of that kind, such as libraries, reading-rooms, and the writer's study. The author points to the rich and meaningful intertextual relations which, due to Malewska's experience of the archives, turn out crucial to her literary output. The «traces» of the archives are distinguished both in the construction of her novels as such and in the philosophy of history encoded in the literary images she uses, as well as in the particular motifs, repeatedly occurring in her succeeding works, that convey the heritage of the past.

The final conclusion of the article, however, does not concern the connection between Malewska's biography and her work, but rather her genuine axiological project, which is significantly rooted in her experience of the archives.

Translated by *Dorota Chabrajska*

Keywords: experience, autobiographism, historical novel, modern Polish literature, the spatial turn in literary research, literary axiology

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## Ryszard ZAJĄCZKOWSKI – A Poet's Free Voice: Józef Wittlin's Ethos of the Word

The article focuses on the so-far unknown documents concerning Józef Wittlin which are stored in the Museum of Literature in Warsaw. Among them, are the notebooks Wittlin kept for over forty years. Their significance results from the fact that they provide a valuable commentary on his life and work, as well as shed light on his opinions on issues such as the social and political situation in Poland and Europe during the interwar period, literary life and America. Over a hundred and twenty notebooks include genuinely true and honest confessions of the writer, frequently made to himself, expressing his desire to articulate his views without subjecting them to any censorship or pressure. Thus Wittlin's personal notes take on the proportions of an intimate diary, a special enclave of free word which he valued so highly.

In the article, three important subjects which recur in Wittlin's notebooks are considered, namely: religion, America and literary life. Throughout a period of a few decades, Wittlin experienced a spiritual evolution which resulted in his deepened and stronger religious beliefs. Being of Jewish nationality, he was exploring Christianity for decades and eventually came to the conviction that the Christian religion demonstrates a deep sensitivity to the value and dignity of a human person, together with the attitude of love which is due to human persons. His taking baptism, which he did at the age of fifty eight, was to him a challenge to adopt a thoroughly Gospel-based attitude in life.

In 1941, Wittlin moved to America. One might say that he showed a European intellectual's vision of that country in his notebooks. He would frequently compare the high, Mediterranean culture (the symbol of which was to him France) and its moral and aesthetic standards with the mass culture of America, which, in his opinion, did not exhibit a proper axiological dimension.

He believed that as far as literature was concerned the main criterion of evaluation should be its originality, which he expected both of writers and of critics. He considered Witold Gombrowicz as an eminently original and non-humble writer, and admired him for his openness that allowed him to tell the Poles even most unpopular and harsh truths. Wittlin considered the work of Gombrowicz as tantamount with pursuit of inner freedom. The space of free word Wittlin's notebooks reveal suggests that he belongs among the Polish masters of undertone such as Henryk Elzenberg, Karol Ludwik Koniński, Jan Lechoń, Jerzy Liebert, and Aleksander Wat.

Translated by *Dorota Chabrajska*

Keywords: Józef Wittlin, word, religion, America, modern Polish literature, Gombrowicz

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Kazimierz S. OŻÓG – A Word about the «Golden Mouthed»: On the 19th Century Metamorphosis of the Image of Piotr Skarga

The article focuses on the iconography of Piotr Skarga, Jesuit preacher who lived at the turn of the the 17th century, the author of the *Lives of the Saints*, numerous sermons as well as Counter-Reformation writings, and it includes a survey of texts published after his death up till the 1850's.

Skarga, who immediately after his death in 1612 was considered an unexampled religious person, a paragon of virtue and best human qualities, a preacher equal to the the legendary, «golden mouthed» John Chrysostom, was in the next century practically forgotten, and was referred to merely by some literary critics who praised his writings for their language.

However, the 19th century brought a renewed interest in Skarga and a legend about him, praising him as the nation's prophet, began to spread. His homiletic writings, in particular his *Sejm Sermons*, full of admonitions about the condition of the Polish-Lithuanian state and nobles' democracy, were being read with reference to the partitions of Poland and to the first independence uprisings that failed. Within a few decades, Skarga was commonly perceived as the nation's prophet, seer, apostle, and even messiah. This change of his image was due to Adam Mickiewicz's influential *Paris Lectures* from the 1840's, as well as to comments from later authors who stressed the significance of his public activity.

Thus a new profile of Skarga was created already before the 1850's: he was now praised as the one who allegedly foretold the fate of Poland and the events that would take place in two hundred years, and was seen as the symbol of Polishness and the teacher of values for the succeeding generations, a national hero in way equal to Tadeusz Kościuszko. The ultimate contribution to the apotheosis of Piotr Skarga was *The Sermon of Skarga* (1864), one of the earliest large-format historical paintings by Jan Matejko.

Translated by *Dorota Chabrajka*

Keywords: Piotr Skarga, Jesuits, Counter-Reformation, Adam Mickiewicz, 19th century literature, national hero, myth

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John F. CROSBY – The Word Against Evil: Dietrich von Hildebrand and the Philosophy of Intellectual Resistance to Nazism (trans. D. Chabrajka)

Besides his many philosophical and religious works, Dietrich von Hildebrand also wrote over sixty essays in the 1930's against German Nazism. While these were deeply rooted in his philosophical and religious work, they were addressed to a wide German audience and written in Vienna with a view to preventing the

annexation of Austria to the German Reich. Taken all together they form a most impressive (but little known) Christian witness from a dark era. The author presents and interprets some main themes in these essays, while also drawing on Dietrich von Hildebrand's recently published *Memoiren, 1923-1938*.

Keywords: Dietrich von Hildebrand, nazism, annexation of Austria, antisemitism, philosophical anthropology, the human person

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Doomed to Oblivion? Grzegorz FERENC talks to Marco PATRICELLI, author of *Ochotnik. O rotmistrzu Witoldzie Pileckim* ["A Volunteer: On Captain Witold Pilecki"], a biography of Witold Pilecki (trans. G. Ferenc)

Marco Patricelli, Italian author of scholarly monographs on the history of Poland, talks about his latest book on Captain Witold Pilecki, one of the greatest heroes of the second world war, the founder of the Secret Polish Army and a member of the Home Army.

In 1940 Pilecki volunteered for a Polish resistance operation to get imprisoned at Auschwitz, from where he was able to send the first intelligence report which helped to convince the Allies that Holocaust was taking place. After having organized resistance movement in Auschwitz, he escaped from the camp in 1943.

After the war, Pilecki was executed by the Stalinist secret police in 1948 and the communist regime censored any mention of his name in the public record. That ban remained in place until the fall of the Berlin wall.

Patricelli explains how he found out about Pilecki and proceeded to write a book about him, astonished that the exploits of this great Polish hero have remained relatively unknown until the present day.

Summarized by *Dorota Chabrajska*

Keywords: Witold Pilecki, Auschwitz, the Holocaust, communist Poland, Marco Patricelli

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Józef F. FERT – Fr. Tadeusz Styczeń Reads Norwid: *Vade-mecum* as an Inspirational Reading

In the essay, the author has included a textological analysis of the numerous notes Fr. Prof. Tadeusz Styczeń, the late editor-in-chief of *Ethos*, made in his copy of Cyprian Norwid's *Vade-mecum* throughout the years of his repeated reading of that volume. The notes in question became subsequently the basis for the ideas Styczeń put forward and developed in his articles on moral philosophy. Styczeń frequently referred to Norwid, whom he believed to have been the best Polish philosopher poet.

Summarized by *Dorota Chabrajska*

Keywords: Cyprian Norwid, *Vade-mecum*, moral philosophy, relations between literature and philosophy, Polish Romanticism

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Jarosław MERECKI, SDS – On the Sense of Philosophizing

Review of Andrzej Póltawski's *Po co filozofować?* ["Why to Philosophize?"], Oficyna Naukowa, Warszawa 2011.

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Fr. Grzegorz BARTH – On the Experience of Man as Person

Review of Angelo Scola's *Doświadczenie człowieka. U źródeł nauczania Jana Pawła II*, ["The Experience of Man: At the Sources of the Teaching of John Paul II"], trans. P. Mikulska, Instytut Jana Pawła II KUL, Lublin 2010.

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## Paweł SIKORA – Rationality and Transcendence

Review of Antoni Szwed's *Rozum wobec chrześcijańskiego Objawienia. Kant, Hegel, Kierkegaard* ["Human Reason Facing the Christian Revelation: Kant, Hegel, Kierkegaard"], Wydawnictwo Marek Derewiecki, Kęty 2011.

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## Antoni ŁUCKI – “An unattainable note”

Review of Andrzej Franaszek's *Miłosz. Biografia* ["Miłosz: A Biography"], Wydawnictwo Znak, Kraków 2011.

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## Wojciech KUDYBA – A Reading of Fr. Anioł Ślązak

Review of Cezary Lipiński's *Poeta poetów. Studia nad polską duchowością religijną na przykładzie recepcji Angelusa Silesiusa* ["The Poet of Poets. A Study of Polish Religious Spirituality, as seen on the Example of the Reception of Angelus Silesius"], Oficyna Wydawnicza Uniwersytetu Zielonogórskiego, Zielona Góra 2011.

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## Agnieszka RESZCZYK – The Gift of Words

Review of Fr. Janusz Pasierb's *Słowo Boże między ludźmi* ["The Word of God among Human Beings"], ed. M. Wilczek, Księgarnia św. Jacka, Katowice 2010.

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## Edward FERENC – Memory Retrieved

Review of Leon Popek's, *Ostrówki. Wołyńskie ludobójstwo* ["Ostrówki. The Volyn Genocide"], Oficyna Wydawnicza Rytm–Instytut Pamięci Narodowej, Warszawa–Lublin, 2011.

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Books recommended by *Ethos*

Joseph Ratzinger, *Opera omnia*, vol. 11, *Teologia liturgii* ["The Theology of the Liturgy"], trans. W. Szymona, OP, Wydawnictwo KUL, Lublin, 2012.

Stefan Sawicki, *Rozważania o papieżu i pisarzu* ["Reflections on the Pope and Writer"], Norbertinum, Lublin 2011.

*Promieniowanie świętości. Jan Paweł II a literatura* ["Radiation of Holiness: John Paul II and Literature"], ed. Krzysztof Dybciak and Stanisław Pażucha, Civitas Christiana, Kraków 2011.

Krzysztof Stachewicz, *Człowiek i jego ethos. Studia, szkice, polemiki z antropologii filozoficznej i etyki* ["The Human Being and the Human Ethos: Studies, Sketches and Polemics on Philosophical Anthropology and Ethics"], Uniwersytet im. Adama Mickiewicza, Poznań 2011.

Stanisław Rosiek, *Władza słowa. Szkice, notatki, świadectwa* ["The Power of the Word: Sketches, Notes, Testimonies"], słowo/obraz terytoria, Gdańsk 2011.

## Anna STAROŚCIC – In Pursuit of the Truth about the Word and God

Report on a conference "Nature – The Human Being – God: Around the Philosophical Thought of Abp. Józef Życiński", KUL, Lublin, 10 Feb. 2012.

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## Marta KACZMARCZYK – Emigrational Fate and Thought

Report on a conference "The Literary Culture of Russian, Ukrainian and Byelorussian Emigrations in the 20th Century: The Contexts, the Reception, the Aesthetics," KUL, Lublin, 13-15 Oct. 2011.

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#### Wojciech CHUDY – Borges and Philosophy

Script of the lecture on the philosophical aspects of Jorge Luis Borges's fiction delivered by the author in late 1970's at a meeting of the Thursday Philosophical Circle, a student association at the Catholic University of Lublin. The text was accidentally found over four years after the author's death, in a volume of Borges's fiction that used to belong to Wojciech Chudy.

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#### Cezary RITTER – John Paul II and Benedict XVI on the Theological and Philosophical Sense of the Word

A Bibliography of the addresses of John Paul II and Benedict XVI on the theological and philosophical sense of the word.

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