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MANNERS OF COMMUNICATION IN CRITICISM

A critic, as well as every feature writer, creating his image, chooses a specific part (e.g. of a commentator, teacher, tutor, saviour of the public, etc.). While playing the part, he uses distinguishing requisites – expression genre, stylistic forms, rhetorical gestures. He also defines his attitude to tradition choosing either the strategy of an innovator or a master of stylization.

The place of publication or the stage where an author performs is essential in a process of constructing a social portrait and, not seldom, it even determines a critic's public image. A kind of audience to whom a text is addressed depends on the place of publication. A part, requisites, a stage, an audience form a feature writer's costume, which incarnates him. A journalistic text has namely a costume character.

Within democracy authors of critical texts usually create distinctive and individualized public portraits. Their basic objective is to focus one's attention on a particular work and to participate in a process of its social approval or rejection. The more distinctive feature writer's costume is the bigger his recognizability amongst the audience is, which makes him a public person and enhances the strength of critic's influence. An author's portrait is also affected by the audience, who appreciating significance of his expression either turns him into an authority or deprecates him, or simply alters his image classifying him in a system and an arrangement which is different from the one planned by the feature writer. One can assume that individualization of an author's portrait

depends on composing chosen elements of the costume and an ability to manipulate the audience's impression.

An author of a journalistic text is on the whole identical with the author of the text, which makes him recognizable by the audience, who associates him also outside the text with a group of real or created features.

The criticism of a costume exists apart from the criticism of a mask. The mask expression is characterised by the author's creation which impedes recognition of the actual writer. A critic using a mask resorts to escaping from his biography strategy or, expressing it in another words, losing his life history strategy, which not only makes it difficult to associate the author of the text with the real person, but sometimes even prevents from reaching him.

A feature writer uses a mask when he doesn't want to be universally recognizable as the author of the particular statements. The most evident element of the mask criticism is the usage of pen names or cryponyms. It doesn't certainly mean that every journalist who signes his works different than his own signature is a mask feature writer. A vital characteristic is in this case the possibility of being recognizable by the audience.

For example Marcel Reich-Ranicki (born in Włocławek in 1920), a well known West German critic, named 'the pope of literary criticism' and 'the lord of books', chose the mask journalism while debuting in the Warsaw ghetto in 'Gazeta Żydowska'. In the years 1941-42 he wrote between ten and twenty musical reviews and concert reports under a pen name of Wiktor Hart. As I have already written, for several dozen years it wasn't known that precisely Reich was the author of these texts¹.

Having not revealed his debut, Reich didn't submit himself for comprehensive assessment as a literary critic in Poland (in the years 1951-58) and in RFN (since 1958). He would lead a communicative game with the audience. The game may be called a game of 'cutting off' or 'nothing has happened' ('n-h-h')².

Moreover, in the West Germany the 'n-h-h' game received a double dimension as it concerned not only concealing a portrait of Wiktor Hart, a reviewer but also breaking off with the image of a socialist realist critic of PRL. In the latter case the game of 'cutting off' was taken up by the German audience, who, till certain moment, wasn't interested in knowing the earlier creation of the 'Die Zeit' and 'Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung' columnist³.

Individual Reich's texts are deeply set in different social and political systems (Nazism, communism, democracy), which impedes harmonious synthesis of the three author's creations in works coming from distinctive public circles, for we deal here with figurative expression.

Figurative criticism indicator is a distinctive, characteristic author's attitude, who and this determines the figurative essence -changes his image in accordance with the situation. <Figurativity> appears in both costume texts and masks. In case of Reich's

¹ See Katarzyna Taborska, *Auto-incarnation as a Communication Strategy through Marcel Reich-Ranicki's Writings*. 'Lingua as communitas' Warszawa-Poznań 2004 nr 14.

² It's worth observing here that Janusz Sławiński presented a socialist realist self-creation of a critic 'from nowhere' coming into existence after a gesture of cutting off from the past. See: idem, *Krytyka nowego typu*, in: *Teksty i teksty*, Wydawnictwo PEN, Warszawa 1990, p.138.

³ The reasons why the German audience doesn't know the PRL image of Reich are various and should be examined individually, which is not the objective of this article.

creations we have a transition from an authoritarian musical reviewer (from 'Gazeta Żydowska') through a critic - ideologist subordinated to a political doctrine (the PRL of the fifties) till a feature writer who thanks to *Literary Quartet* (1988-2001), a very popular programme in German television, became an icon of mass culture.

Simultaneously Reich-Ranicki creating his new incarnations – figures / characters-public images in a peculiar manner forgot (playing 'n-h-h') the previous ones. He created his new 'self' as though he tore or cut off from formerly produced portraits.

Therefore, only a researcher who has a possibility to observe the three stages of Reich- Ranicki's journalistic activity is able to see the relationship between created by the critic figures of expression as well as note changes and similarities in the manners of their creation.

The case of Marcel Reich-Ranicki demonstrates that it is worth supplementing manners of creation description of critics. I made such an attempt in this text.

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