

Reviews

DEMSKI, Dagnosław – BARANIECKA-OLSZEWSKA, Kamila (eds.): *Images of the Other in Ethnic Caricatures of Central and Eastern Europe*. 2010, Warsaw: Institute of Archaeology and Ethnology, Polish Academy of Sciences. 400. ISBN 978-83-89499-76-9; DEMSKI, Dagnosław – KRISTÓF, Ildikó Sz. – BARANIECKA-OLSZEWSKA, Kamila (eds.): *Competing Eyes: Visual Encounters with Alterity in Central and Eastern Europe*. 2013, Budapest: L'Harmattan. 546. ISBN: 978-963-236-706-4; DEMSKI, Dagnosław – LAINESTE, Liisi – BARANIECKA-OLSZEWSKA, Kamila (eds.): *War Matters. Constructing Images of the Other (1930s to 1950s)*. 2015, Budapest: L'Harmattan. 463. ISBN: 978-2-343-07233-3; DEMSKI, Dagnosław – KASSABOVA, Anelia – KRISTÓF, Ildikó Sz. – LAINESTE, Liisi – BARANIECKA-OLSZEWSKA, Kamila (eds.): *The Multi-mediatized Other. The Construction of Reality in East-Central Europe, 1945–1980*. 2017. Budapest: L'Harmattan. 630. ISBN: 978-2-343-11863-5.

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Volumes totaling 2000 pages conclude consecutive stages of this long-term research project. The central aim of this innovative collection of works is to demonstrate how the 'Other' was portrayed in Central and Eastern Europe (from the mid-19th century up until the modern period) and, correspondingly, to characterize the role various visual data sources played when analyzed within their broader historical, political, and socio-cultural context. The categories of sources for these publications include: illustrations (particularly in the form of ethnic caricatures), photographs, films, posters, paintings and postcards as well as advertisements and brochures for tourists and television programs. All of the above significantly contributed to constructing various images of 'Others' and – more specifically – in shaping the ways reality was regarded based on the 'We–Others' paradigm. Due to their specific format and design, the visual sources utilized provide an exceptional backdrop and commentary on the events, phenomena, and processes occurring in Central and Eastern Europe during the period selected by scholars involved in this project. In this part of the continent, boundaries between countries, their ethnic composition, and relationships among various national/ethnic groups were subject to numerous changes. Old and new routes of migration crossed in these areas wherein different behavioral patterns and styles of thinking continued to clash. Traditional order gave way to new ideas under the influence of the two world wars, numerous local conflicts, and systemic transformations. Moreover, long-lasting attempts of building a socialist (communist) society played a significant role in shaping the reality of this region.

The release of these particular volumes was preceded by a series of international conferences (in Warsaw, Budapest, Sofia, and Tartu) featuring experts representing diverse disciplines, institutions and countries (mainly from Central and Eastern Europe, but also from the United States of America). A total of more than 80 texts and almost 900 illustrations (black and white as well as color) were published.

Limiting the scope of analysis to the territories of Central and Eastern Europe was intentional. The purpose of the study was – above all other factors – to demonstrate precisely how ‘Others’ were (re)presented and, in turn, to characterize the functions of the visual sources in this process, along with the conditions in which the inhabitants of this part of the world were shaping their view of reality based on the relationship(s) between what was considered to be the ‘We’ at that time and that of ‘Others’. Understanding the implications of individual sources as well as their deconstruction requires a firm grasp of the historical, political, and sociocultural context of the times, as well as the events they refer to and the capacity to refer to experiences related to said events. Moreover, one needs to understand the language used by the authors of the analyzed sources, many of whom use symbols, metaphors, and allegories within their works. The sources abound in references to folklore, local beliefs, myths, religious content, ethnic stereotypes and their indicators. Images are often combined with written text (e.g., ethnic caricatures), sound or verbal commentary (films), which reinforce the messages implied and facilitate the path to understanding what they mean.

These studies prolifically illustrate how visual sources reflect the political, historical, cultural, social stratifications and their contribution to propagating particular ideas, cultural schemes, and role models, as well as in shaping specific attitudes, such as those towards ‘Others’ as well as manners of viewing them. ‘Others’ might have been perceived, for instance, as participants in this transformation process as creators of the new order. Conversely, they could have been perceived as those who challenged reality, suggesting models of alternative behavior. Here, ‘Others’ acted in the face of the officially propagated and approved norms represented and enforced by the authorities. At times of breakthrough, such as conflicts of various scales, from local examples to world wars, ‘Others’ were commonly perceived as strangers and enemies. Ethnic relationships underwent modifications, as did the ‘We–Others’ relations and ways of viewing reality. These were based largely on commonplace stereotypes of ‘Others’ and auto-stereotypes of one’s own group of reference, prejudices, and affinities. The category of ‘the Other’ was in no way limited to representatives of diverse ethnic/national groups. It also involved persons from various social circles, such as those related to institutions of power, particular professions or gender(s). Furthermore, this category also incorporated those functioning at the social margin due to, for instance, selecting cultural models distant from those propagated by those in power.

The development and examination of visual media has in many ways transformed the category of the ‘Other’ into a more complex and diverse entity. Consequently, it involves the more or less distant neighbors as well as inhabitants of remote world regions. The media strategies analyzed not only make us aware of its presence but also causes us to adopt (often unconsciously) the media-created images of the inhabitants of the global village.

Subsequent volumes of the discussed research project offer significant insight into the knowledge of various visual sources, their history as well as methods of examination and function, such as: creating images of ‘Others’, establishing the ‘We–Other’ relationship and particular representations of reality based on this relationship, reinforcing ethnic stereotypes as well as pursuing their change, impacting the sphere of ethnic/national identity, collective imagination and memory, promoting particular cultural patterns and role models. A body of diverse materials subjected to meticulous analysis provided ground for a broader understanding of the category of the ‘Other’ and various facets of

'otherness', its various shades and dimensions, the multiplicity of strategies connected with presenting, imagining and communicating with it. One might also acknowledge the relationships between visual sources and that of cultural politics regarding the memory of historical events intended to shape a particular image of the past. Furthermore, these sources convey ample knowledge on relationships between the East and the West, ethnic relations in local, regional and international dimensions and/or perceived within the boundaries of specific states. The presentation of the peculiar condition of the (already inexistent) Yugoslavia is particularly of note, with its formal affiliation to the 'Eastern Bloc' and numerous links with the West at the same time.

Much like written sources, visual sources provide a view of the history of Central and Eastern Europe as well as its inhabitants, relationships between them, and characteristics ascribed to various groups. Besides visual materials, the authors of individual articles examine the relevant literature of the field, including analyses of the history of visual sources, their specificity, research methods and theories used in their examination. A comparative perspective is present in both the individual texts and within the scope of the publications.

The prolific body of materials presented and analyzed in these volumes act as an invaluable original documentary collection. Moreover, these writings testify to the evolution of visual sources. These compilations provide information on the history of Central and Eastern Europe along with the changes they generated, such as: ethnic relations, trajectories of state boundaries, migration processes, ways of viewing migrants as 'Others', and constructing the image of 'Others'. The role of visual sources in shaping the image of reality was demonstrated in an outstanding manner by providing numerous examples of their various descriptions and commentaries.

I consider this collection of texts a leading body of research within the field of visual anthropology. It conveys an exceptional examination of the role of visual sources within the communication process, constructing images of the 'Other' and more broadly of the image of reality (in different time periods). The discussed works may also be useful in fields of research concerning media, ethnic stereotypes, the category of 'otherness', images of the 'Other', the history of Central and Eastern Europe and transformations within this region, visual culture, studies concerning shaping images of reality, studies of communication, collective and cultural memory, studies of imagination, humor studies, studies of fundamental anthropological categories of 'We-Others', methods of research based on visual sources, and finally, theories concerning such sources. These publications will also be of use when utilized in the context of comparative studies concerning different world regions, which is by no means limited to that of Central and Eastern Europe.

I admire the way participants took part in this long-term research project featuring numerous international experts, as it resulted in establishing a community that could, in the words of Ludwik Fleck, be referred to as a 'thought collective'. Moreover, what deserves recognition in particular is the establishment of an impressive collection of historical sources, the use of prolific press, photographic and film sources as well as diverse publications and archives, the demonstration of application of such sources into studies of the category of 'otherness', ethnic stereotypes, the 'We-Others' relation, ethnic/national identity with regards to Central and Eastern Europe and its history within the local, regional, national and international spheres, political and sociocultural transformations, and lastly, their causes and effects.

A more detailed presentation of the content of these volumes is impossible within the limited scope of this review; therefore, what I present here is a mere glimpse of the publication as a whole. Reading it is highly recommended. The pioneering nature of these four works is due to their scope, participation of an international selection of authors and editors, the scale of issues addressed, the presentation of numerous modes of presenting 'Others' and constructing the image of reality through visual sources. The significance of the project, its innovativeness and special character were confirmed by national and international grants awarded to fund its completion (e.g., Visegrád Fund, National Program for the Development of Humanities of the Polish Ministry of Science and Higher Education, Estonian Science Foundation), accompanied by the financial, academic and organizational support of numerous scientific institutions (e.g., Institute of Archaeology and Ethnology, Polish Academy of Sciences, Institute of Ethnology, Research Centre for the Humanities, Hungarian Academy of Sciences, Estonian Literary Museum, Institute of Ethnology and Folklore Studies with the Ethnographic Museum at the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences).

KONDRASIUK, Grzegorz (ed.): *Cyrk w świecie widowisk* [Circus in the World of Spectacles]. 2017, Lublin: Warsztaty Kultury w Lublinie. 478. 117 color illustrations, abstracts in English. ISBN 978-83-64375-26-2

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During the last few years Polish scholars of culture have (re)focused their attention towards popular culture. Many groundbreaking books concerning the meaning of cinema in the development of mass culture in Poland¹ and that of universal exhibitions² were published over the last decade. One of the latest novelties in the field is the comprehensive monograph of the first cycling movements in Warsaw.³ The present reviewed book can also be included in this novel way of researching these somewhat marginalized areas of culture. This is the first publication in years devoted in its entirety to the circus phenomenon.

The publisher of the book, an institution based in Lublin: Warsztaty Kultury [Culture workshops] organizes the Carnival Sztukmistrzów circus festival, which has been held

¹ BISKUPSKI, Łukasz: *Miasto atrakcji. Narodziny kultury masowej na przełomie XIX i XX wieku* [City of Attractions. The Birth of Mass Culture at the Turn of the Century]. 2013, Warszawa: Narodowe Centrum Kultury.

² LITWINOWICZ-DRÓŹDŹ, Małgorzata – KURZ, Iwona – RODAK, Paweł (eds.): *Ekspozycje nowoczesności. Wystawy a doświadczenie procesów modernizacyjnych w Polsce (1821–1929)* [Expositions of Modernity. State and Local Exhibitions on Polish Territories 1821–1929 and Experience of Modernization Processes]. 2017, Warszawa: Neriton.

³ KUBKOWSKI, Piotr: *Sprężysci. Kulturowa historia warszawskich cyklistów na przełomie XIX i XX wieku* [Fit People. Cultural History of Warsaw Cyclists at the Turn of the 20th Century]. 2018, Warszawa: Narodowe Centrum Kultury.

since 2009. The institution invited scholars to take part in the creation of the book, with Grzegorz Kondrasiuk, the head of theatre studies at Maria Curie-Skłodowska University in Lublin at the helm. Seventeen separate texts were included within the volume. They were written by scholars from different fields of the humanities, as well as individuals involved in the activity of the circus in a practical manner. This unorthodox combination of differential viewpoints is still rare within the Polish academic research community.

The title of the publication refers to the book *Teatr w świecie widowisk* [Theatre in the world of spectacles]. This book was written by Zbigniew Raszewski,⁴ who was one of the most important historians of Polish theatre in the 20th century. Raszewski creates a hierarchy of spectacles, at the top of which he places the theatre. The theatre reigns as it is the only form capable of being described as art. Under this classification he praises all of the spectacles which involve what he describes as an ‘artistic element’. He also speaks highly of spectacles such as revues, public reciting and most especially, the circus. The choice of this literary reference is commented on by Kondrasiuk in the following way: “I would like to remind the words and the attitude of one of the creators of the history of Polish theatre, in order to form a question – why in the absolute situation of what it could be seen as acceptance and open-mindedness towards all of the paradigms, after all the shifts (performative, visual, affective etc.), why are we still not looking at the circus?” (p. 30).

The book consists of seven chapters, the titles of which complement the traditional parts of a circus performance. *Entrée* is an essayistic preface in which Kondrasiuk elaborates upon the thought of Raszewski about the artistic dimension of the circus and then goes on to emphasize the similarities between “languages” of the spectacle and that of poetry. Additionally referring to Wisława Szymborska’s poems *Zwierzęta cyrkowe* [Circus animals, 1952] and *Akrobata* [The Acrobat, 1967], as well as Paul Bouissac’s semiotics of the circus⁵, he presents the elements which create the identity of the circus, describing the role of the spectator within the spectacle itself, emphasizing the main characteristic of spectacles: “the manufacturing’ of a different time” (p. 15).

Variétés, the most extensive part of the monograph, is a compilation based on vast yet largely unknown source material. These include: ephemeral prints, press articles, archival documents and theoretical texts by avant-garde Polish authors (Tadeusz Kantor, Andrzej Pronaszko or Leon Schiller). In this part of the publication, readers can find articles devoted to the genesis of circus spectacles in Poland. These findings were mainly reconstructed based on source materials connected to Warsaw (Janina Hera, Agnieszka Bińczycka) and popular forms of entertainment from 19th century Poznań (Krzysztof Kurek) and Lublin (Krzysztof Gombin). The great variety of entertainment available to the people of Poznań was displayed in the context of mass media development. On the basis of press articles, Kurek outlines the economic situation of the early form of the entertainment business in Poland. Agnieszka Bińczycka characterizes the situation of the Polish circus towards the end of the 19th century as well as the

⁴ RASZEWSKI, Zbigniew: *Teatr w świecie widowisk* [Theatre in the World of Spectacle]. 1991, Warszawa: Książka i Wiadomości.

⁵ BOUISSAC, Paul: *Semiotics at the Circus*. 2010, Berlin-New York: De Gruyter Mouton.

interwar period. Bińczycka emphasizes the meaning of economy in the development and collapse of particular circus initiatives. In specific, she describes the activities of privately owned companies and the influence of the economic situation of the country on the condition of the entertainment business. The living and economic situation of the artists is also described. The author recalls attempts at creating institutions which were supposed to secure them such as: Polzawid [Polish Spectacle Artists Association] established in 1922, an association which unified circus performers and was supposed to take care of the status of the artist, negotiate contracts and providing financial aid (p. 123). Paweł Stangret examines the relations between the circus and that of the artistic Polish avant-garde, placing emphasis on the works of Tadeusz Kantor and the activity of the Cirkot 2 Theatre. He draws an original yet convincing conclusion about the inspiration that the Polish avant-garde theatre drew from the circus. The historical section is encapsulated by a text of Zofia Snelewska-Stempień about the function of the circus during the post-war period. Snelewska-Stempień based her study on archival documents and interviews with the circus artists of the communist era in Poland. She performs an institutionalized synthesis of Polish stage spectacles after the year 1944. Her analysis of the functioning of the Zjednoczone Przesiębiorstwa Rozrywkowe [United Entertainment Companies] – a government institution in charge of all the entertainment shows from 1948 to 1991 deserves special attention. This institution financed the artists and gave them opportunities for development and made international exchange available. What is perhaps even more interesting is that despite the fact that the institution tried to instill some strict rules and structures, as well as impose the form of education: “the core of the Polish circus still consisted of traditional circus families” (p. 165).

The second section of *Variétés* is devoted to changes within the form of the circus in the 20th century. It is introduced with a text by a Czech author, Ondřej Cihlář. It is a valuable elaboration on the new circus. The author describes the genesis of the new circus in a clear manner. He organizes and gives names to the particular forms of 20th century stage spectacles. Also of substantial value is the work of Katarzyna Donner. She examines the codes (surroundings, space, scenography) and idioms (gestures, skills, presence of animals) characteristic of the circus. Joanna Szymajda draws a comparison between the phenomenon of the modern/new circus and the reform of modern dance in France. She indicates that the core of these changes consists of the same cultural phenomena: contestation of the existing forms, drawing inspiration from the artistic and literary avant-garde as well as a focus on physicality. Marta Kuczyńska, a performer and a director, focuses on new forms of drama in modern circus spectacles with an exemplary, synthetic analysis of the chosen three spectacles.

The third part of the *Variétés* section is dedicated to the pedagogic aspect of the circus. All authors of the texts compiled in this section are active performers or teachers. Monika Kalinowska and Mirosław Urban describe the history of the pedagogy of the circus and the emancipating role of this form of teaching (applied therapeutically among the people in danger of exclusion). Katarzyna Dąbrowska-Żmuda and Agata Zapasa describe the circus as a space for meeting with difference and variety, especially when viewed in the context of internationality within the circus society.

The *Grande finale* section begins with a reprint of an interview with Mieczysław Piniarz (died in 1991), a circus historian and collector of circus ephemera. Piniarz

is a figure deserving of a separate biography. Thanks to the inclusion of this interview in the anthology, the editor revived a forgotten yet important figure in the circus world. Artur Duda examines the meaning of the performer in a spectacle from the post-humanistic perspective, with reference to the works of Tadeusz Kantor and the phenomenology of perception as articulated by Maurice Merleau-Ponty. In this convincing analysis, Duda shows how the unorthodox function of the actor's body allows him and the audience to cross mental and physical boundaries, in effect leading to a better understanding of the surrounding reality (p. 31). Sylwia Siedlecka's contribution is devoted to the circus as a figure of social imagination. The scholar indicates that, historically speaking, the circus spectacle had connotations with myths and rituals. In its traditional form, it reversed social hierarchy and transformed social discourse (p. 319). Thanks to this particular interpretation we are able to capture the most important trait of the circus – its carnival, perverse nature. Siedlecka observes with much greater veracity than Kondrasiuk in characterizing the cultural meaning of the circus.

Parada [The parade] includes a list of publications on the topic of entertainment spectacles in the Polish language. The authors have also included a list of the most important foreign language publications. Undoubtedly, they create a valuable, essential academic storehouse for the future scholars of this phenomenon. In the part of the volume entitled *Gabinet osobliwości* [Cabinet of curiosities] a vast collection of iconographic materials was displayed. It consists of over one hundred illustrations – photographs of performances, arenas, artists, posters, and press clippings.

In the works that comprise the *Cyrk w świecie widowisk* volume, many aspects were only initially presented, a large part of which deserve separate monographic studies. The most important merit of the authors of the texts is the presentation of the circus which is a phenomenon deeply invested in social life: social hierarchy, stereotypes and imaginings. The authors have shown that the circus draws from many areas of culture; referring to history, geography, art and theatre. The creators of this book indicate that the circus has its own history entangled in both politics and economic transformations. They represent the circus as a living art form which is still morphing and the present form of which is always auto referential.

There are however, few vital aspects missing from the collection. In particular, a text about the history of the State School of Circus Art in Julinek, probably the only institution connected with the circus, which exists in the collective consciousness of the Polish people. This town, which is situated in the suburbs of Warsaw, had the largest training base for circus performers in Europe. This training base was established in 1950. As time went by, it was transformed into the first state circus school in the country. Since the breakthrough in 1989, along with the privatization of the Zjednoczone Przedsiębiorstwa Cyrkowe, the school has been dealing with increasing financial and technical problems.

What is also undoubtedly noticeable is the lack of implementation of modern humanistic research methods. All of the articles represent the anthropocentric approach and in particular, what is nowadays a heated discussion regarding the participation of animals in the circus spectacles, has been reduced to a couple of sentences. The presence of animals in the circus arena is justified by tradition and there is no constructive argument presented against the charges of public opinion. To comment on this issue, the

authors rely on the findings of anthropozoology, as well as the results of the research program led by The Institute of Literary Research at The Polish Academy of Sciences.⁶

Aspects which might also deserve a separate ‘plotline’ are the micro-stories of people described as ‘human curiosities.’ Similar attention should be devoted to the elaboration of the visual language of the entertainment spectacle mentioned by Kurek and Bińczycka. An interesting development would be the topographic description of the circus in the city with the use of a method implemented by Igor Piotrowski and Agata Koprowicz in their articles in *Ekspozycje nowoczesności*.⁷ The authors show the connection between the location of great exhibitions and the everyday life of city dwellers. They also describe the influence of modern expositions on the development of urban planning. I am convinced that a similar analysis conducted in relation to the circus might offer interesting results.

What also requires further research is the cognitive analysis of the body of the performer, which was only noted by Artur Duda in reference to Merleau-Ponty’s phenomenology of perception. In the context of the topical and problematical deficiencies, the substantial value of the publication are the various gendered readings referred to, such as the figures of the female circus owners (p. 293), women performers and actresses playing male roles (p. 52).

A serious allegation against this publication is an uneven substantive level of the separate texts. The imposed scientific form seems to be a foreign language to some of the authors. This is particularly evident in the chapter about circus education. In the article entitled, *Pedagogika cyrku w Polsce: obszary, cele, praktycy* [Pedagogy of the circus in Poland: areas, goals, practitioners] Kalinowska and Urban use old-fashioned stereotypes of childhood, talking from a place of eternal happiness which is spoiled by technology and consumerism. They note that: “the reduction of personal action, lack of interests and motivation, the inability of concentration, redirection towards consumerism, isolation and lack of movement are all symptoms of the depreciation of the childhood world” (p. 271). One of the paragraphs starts with the sentence: “Our brain consists of two hemispheres – the left one and the right one” (p. 274). Such truisms should not be a part of an academic publication. The same accusation can be made about Dąbrowska-Żmuda and Zapasa’s article about multicultural education. The authors try to prove their own thesis about the circus functioning as a medium which unites despite social cultural divisions. They quote definitions of multicultural communication straight from the textbook and do not make any effort to analyze the problem in a more extensive way.

⁶ BARCZ, Anna – DĄBROWSKA, Magdalena (eds.) *Zwierzęta, gender i kultura. Perspektywa ekologiczna, etyczna i krytyczna* [Animals, Gender and Culture. Ecological, Ethical and Critical Views]. 2014, Lublin: E-naukowiec.

⁷ KOPROWICZ, Agata: *Tryptyk z pejzażem miejskim w tle. O topograficznych i infrastrukturalnych kontekstach wielkich wystaw na ziemiach polskich. Wesołe miasteczko. Poznań 1929* [Triptych with an Urban Landscape. On the Topography and Infrastructure of Great Exhibitions in the Polish Lands. An Amusement Park. Poznań 1929]; PIOTROWSKI, IGOR: *Tryptyk z pejzażem miejskim w tle. O topograficznych i infrastrukturalnych kontekstach wielkich wystaw na ziemiach polskich. Bardzo dziwne miasto. Warszawa 1885; Egzamin dojrzałości. Lwów 1894* [Triptych with an Urban Landscape. On the Topography and Infrastructure of Great Exhibitions in the Polish Lands. A Very Bizarre Town. An Exam in Maturity. Warsaw 1885. Lviv 1894]. In LITWINOWICZ-DRÓZDŹ, Małgorzata – KURZ, Iwona – RODAK, Paweł (eds.) *Ekspozycje nowoczesności...*, compare note 2, respectively 361–392 and 29–48; 209–226.

Moreover, they do not present any *case studies*. This problem is visualized by the quote: “this ‘thing’ [which unites – J.H.] can be the new circus which can undoubtedly create a space for meeting with something different and has the potential for a multicultural dialogue.” (p. 278). Furthermore, the conclusions of the authors about the supranational character of the circus environment (p. 284) are absolutely abstracted from the political and economic context.

Despite the indicated unevenness in the scientific level of the articles, alongside the various certain substantive shortcomings, *Cyrk w świetle widowisk* is groundbreaking in terms of research on the circus in Poland. Without any doubt, it should be included in the canon of literature on culture studies. To quote Siedlecka, the post-war circus developed in an asymmetrical way. Moreover, new forms of spectacles have emerged. They are more intricate. The acts became more spectacular yet they lack theoretical reflection. Scholars have ignored the circus, describing it as infantile and camp (p. 328). The application of modern research perspectives can render the circus as a subject of inspiration for scholars in various fields, allowing them to look at it in a new way. The reviewed publication constitutes a good starting point for conducting further research.

ZIOLKOWSKI, Jan M.: *The Juggler of Notre Dame and Medievalizing of Modernity*. Volume 1: The Middle Ages. 2018, Cambridge, UK: Open Book Publishers. 403, 152 illustrations: 67 black and white, 85 in color. ISBN 978-1-78374-506-7

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Published in 2018, Jan M. Ziolkowski's *The Juggler of Notre Dame and Medievalizing of Modernity* is a series consisting of six volumes. It tells the cultural history of *Le Jongleur de Notre-Dame*, a medieval legend made famous by the late 19th-century version authored by Anatole France and published in Paris in 1892. As stated by Ziolkowski himself, the book is “the story of a story”. (p. 6)

The legend under consideration recounts the life of a successful entertainer, (most likely a juggler or an acrobat) who decides to join a monastery in order to devote his life to God. Soon enough, he realizes that he cannot fully participate in monastic life: he is not literate in Latin. He realizes that he cannot pray with the other monks. Moreover, he does not understand the monastic sign language, and thus, he cannot communicate with the brothers. Later on, he finds a statue of the Virgin Mary in the crypt of the monastery. While other monks pray eight times a day in order to pray the Liturgy of the Hours, according to the legend, the juggler goes to the crypt where he dances and performs acrobatic routines in front of the figure of Mary. It is his way of worshipping God, mostly because dancing is the only thing he knows how to do. One day his absence is detected. Two monks follow the juggler to the crypt and, having seen the performance, accuse him of blasphemy. Suddenly, the figure of the Virgin miraculously comes to life and blesses the entertainer.

In his series, Ziolkowski pursues the tracks of the juggler's story back to the Middle Ages and the story's reception from the late 19th-century until the present day. Consecutive

volumes are entitled: *Medieval Meets Medievalism*; *The American Middle Ages*; *Picture That: Making a Show of the Jongleur*; *Tumbling into the Twentieth Century*; *War and Peace*, *Sex and Violence*. The author demonstrates that this old tale is still present in European and American culture, mostly in the tale's 20th-century adaptations (i.e. a three-act opera written by Jules Massinet in 1902, numerous TV stages, radio broadcasts and children books). Tracing the roots of *The Juggler of Notre Dames* is also a pretext to show the reader how the Middle Ages have been revived from the 1870s onwards, through all forms of human expression. In my review, I will focus on the first volume of the monograph entitled: *The Middle Ages*. It concentrates on the story's medieval records, background and popularity along with its disappearance after the Reformation. Despite the title, the study does not only focus on the Middle Ages: the author cross-refers the reader to many modern and contemporary contexts. He also covers a range of phenomena related to the story, including blessed jugglers, dancing monks and Marian apparitions.

In the first chapter entitled: *The Medieval Beginnings of 'Our Lady's Tumbler'* the origin of the story is told. The author considers the story's two medieval versions, a French poem and a Latin prose. In specific, he tries to determine their genre. The story's first version is a 12th-century French poem which Ziolkowski compares to three medieval genres: the *Vida* (an Occitan genre presenting the life of a troubadour with which the juggler's pre-monastery life would easily fit), hagiography, and the Marian miracle tale. The story was later remade into a Latin *exemplum* written in prose. The author explains what an *exemplum* is and how this genre became popular. As Ziolkowski reveals, the aforementioned Latin prose is referred to in the text itself as an *exemplum* ('a little example' – p. 56). It also appears in the schematic Latin *Table of Exempla in Alphabetical Order* written in prose, a reference work for preachers, which contained sermons composed around 1277. All this makes the entire deliberation conducted by the author unnecessary. In subsequent chapters, Ziolkowski returns to these considerations. He finally summarizes these thoughts with Stephen King's words: "Sometimes a cigar is just a smoke and a story's just a story" (p. 231). Later Ziolkowski debates over the five anonymous manuscript versions of the juggler's story and tries to track down their genealogy and authorship. He concludes that the poem was composed before 1268.

In the second chapter entitled: *Dancing for God* Ziolkowski discusses different titles given to the story, i.e.: *Of the Tumbler of Our Lady*, *The Tale of the Jongleur*, *Of a Minstrel* and *Of a Minstrel Who Served Our Lady by His Own Craft*. The author demonstrates that the practice of giving different titles was utilized in order to emphasize particular points of the tale. This changed its meaning. The author considers the specifics of the protagonist's profession and its nomenclature. He uncovers numerous activities the juggler could have performed for a living; only to then confront them with the early Church's opinion on dancing. He proves that no matter how much the Church criticized dancing this type of entertainment was developing very fast, even in the neighborhood of churches. Ziolkowski continues his reflections with another topic: the ritual dances which he discusses from the perspective of anthropology. He shows medieval flagellantism (the act of whipping oneself for religious penance) and 'dance hysteria' (a mania that affected groups of people who danced until they collapsed from exhaustion) in the context of religious dances from antiquity to the modern times.

The author also considers the juggler's tale in the context of similar biographies. First, he takes into consideration the life story of a 16th-century friar, Saint Paschal Baylon,

best known for his dance performances. He, too, experienced the grace of the Virgin's statue. While attending to his duties, he sang songs and did some rhythmic steps in joy to praise the Mother of God. The image of Mary allegedly assumed a real body and blessed the saint. He was later called 'the second *jongleur de Notre-Dame*'. The second example is Saint John Bosco, who learned juggling and acrobatics to encourage young people to pray the Rosary and attend Mass. The third instance brings the reader to the 1930s, when the modern dancer Ruth St. Denis defined her dance performances as 'religion-art'.

Ziolkowski continues the topic of friars-jugglers. Another issue he takes into consideration is the Cistercian image of 'God's jesters' as well as the Franciscan imagery of "the minstrels of the Lord". Later on, the author discusses another omnipresent conception in medieval Christianity – a holy fool or a 'fool-for-Christ'. The fools renounced all their possessions and expressed themselves in meaningless, inexplicable babbling in order to achieve an extreme *imitatio Christi*: to humiliate themselves so as to imitate the humiliation of Jesus. This figure of a fool was sometimes imposed on the figure of the jongleur.

In concluding this chapter, Ziolkowski asks some fundamental and unanswerable questions: did *Our Lady's Tumbler* 'monasticize' a preexisting motif that unknown storytellers had transmitted in oral and written traditions? Did it remodel an actual occurrence that had played out within a monastery? Was it 'history' or a 'story'?

In the third chapter, *Cisterian Monks and Lay Brothers*, Ziolkowski connects these so-called 'God's jesters' and 'the minstrels of the Lord' to the tumbler of Notre-Dame as all of them breach, in a way, the conformity and obedience required by monasticism. He presents a short history of Cistercianism and emphasizes that both types of brothers mentioned in the title of the chapter had equal claims to salvation. The author introduces the term 'hyperdulia' ('more than servitude' – p. 125) and investigates the relationship Cistercian monks and lay brothers had with the Virgin. She became the special patron and point person for the order: Mary could be asked to approach Christ for any help that was needed. Mary was also seen as an embodiment of monastic virtues, like humility, chastity and silence.

The iconography of the nursing Madonna is also discussed throughout the course of the analysis. Another motif referenced is a depiction of Mary's protection in Cistercian art – white-hooded monks who take refuge beneath the garment of the Virgin. Ziolkowski traces this back to an episode in the *Dialogue on Miracles*, a book of hagiography by Caesarius of Heisterbach, the prior of Heisterbach Abbey. According to one of the miracle stories, a brother had a vision in which he found himself in heaven, but could not find his fellow monks. He queried the Mother of God who in her response revealed monks, lay brothers and nuns protected beneath her cloak.

In the following parts of this chapter, Ziolkowski undertakes many other issues concerning monastic life: he meticulously discusses the Office of the Hours, the sign language used in monasteries, and the monks' clothing, showing, at the same time, the cultural and historical contexts of the jongleur's story.

In chapter four, entitled *Reformation Endings: A Temporary Vanishing Act*, the question of the tale's popularity and transmission is brought up. The author speculates on why the beloved story, so popular for several centuries, vanished for around five hundred years only to become fashionable again at the turn of the 20th century. He links the tale's disappearance to the Reformation and iconoclasm, the point at which the whole world of

faith implied in *The Juggler of Notre Dame* was to change. Protestantism assumed an anti-Marian attitude and consequently diminished the importance of the Virgin in Christianity. Her cult only reappeared in England during the 19th century. The author then goes on to discuss the presence of the statues of the Virgin in different cities, most especially during World War I and World War II, as well as her most popular apparitions in history.

In the last part of his study, Ziolkowski investigates possible sources that could have ignited the imagination of the author of *Our Lady's Tumbler*. He examines King David's dance in front of the Ark of the Covenant and its iconography. Later on, he proceeds to stories that parallel the juggler's story. One of them is a New Testament tale about the widow's mites which correlates to the tumbler's dance, as the humblest gift from the humblest person is the best gift for God. Ziolkowski also presents some 'anti-balletic' exempla: he recalls one of the most famous narratives about the dancers of K lbigk. In 1017, a group of dancers disturbed a Mass by dancing and singing in the churchyard so they were cursed to dance and sing for an entire year. Using this legend as an example, the author shows that the Church considered dancing in the temple exceptionally sinful. He explains why the juggler was accused of blasphemy when he was found tumbling in the crypt.

In the next part of the chapter, Ziolkowski returns to the topic of analogies where he compares texts to *The Juggler of Notre Dame*. He presents the earliest supposed source – a 12th-century Latin prose: *Miracles of Saint Mary of Rocamadour*. According to the author, this narrative validates the importance of writing down miracles and promoting pilgrimage to specific places. A fiddler performed in front of the Virgin's statue and in repayment Mary prompted a taper to levitate and descend upon his instrument. The author moves on to the next tale which relates to the Marian miracle of the Holy Candle of Arras. This story is about two jongleurs, enemies, who both had miraculous visions in which the Mother of God told them to come to the city of Arras beleaguered by a plague of ergotism (fungal poisoning). They were offered a Holy Candle in the church, which could heal those burning from poisoning. The author interlaces the narrative with an analysis of different images of the Madonna: icons, paintings, sculptures, engravings, and pilgrims' badges.

An important part of Ziolkowski's considerations is the sphere of iconography. His study is filled with pictorial examples cross-referring to the juggler of Notre Dame and other topics he raises. Most of the images included in the book merely serve an illustrational purpose. However, in chapter two, Ziolkowski concentrates on the single surviving miniature of the legend, which depicts the tumbler performing in front of the Mother of God (Paris, BNF, MS Arsenal 3516, fol. 127r). Ziolkowski analyzes the composition of the illustration as well as the position of the miniature on the page. It is situated in a lower margin, *bas-de-page*, a place usually dedicated to marginalia. The investigation is carried out in the context of the medieval marginalia treated as a no-man's zone, a place fit for a carnival freak show. In his study, Ziolkowski clearly follows Mikhail Bakhtin, but for some reason omits his works in his bibliography. In *Tvorchestvo Fransua Rable*, [Rabelais and His World] (Moskva 1965), Bakhtin discusses both the serious and entertainment aspects of people's lives during the Middle Ages. He emphasizes the fact that the coexistence of these elements was often reflected in illuminated manuscripts, where strictly pious illustrations and imaginative designs such as chimeras, devils, or jugglers performing acrobatic tricks were depicted on the same page. It could be inferred

that the marginalia (and in this case, the miniature with the dancing tumbler in the *bas-de-page*) were placed beneath the text because they were considered less ‘valuable’. Ziolkowski not only refers to the margins found in manuscripts, but also to the ‘margins’ of architecture, where he mostly relies on Michael Camille’s research on architectural decorations (*Image on the Edge: the Margins of Medieval Art*, Cambridge 1992).

Additionally, Ziolkowski presents an impressive bibliography, referring his readers to many important works. Unfortunately, the articles and books mentioned are not divided into primary and secondary sources, a decision which hinders research. Readers may find it difficult to choose suitable works for further reading; however an index offering a vast array of keywords follows the bibliography.

The author does not always refer his readers to primary sources. Furthermore, Ziolkowski chooses his examples in a selective way which sometimes leads to generalizations. In mentioning the opinion of the Church’s on dancing (p. 90–91), Ziolkowski oversimplifies the topic by omitting particular names or ideas, and by presenting clichés unsupported by any direct citations. The author says that the Church condemned dancing, although there were many who argued for a more nuanced view of dance performance. For instance, Alexander of Hales (c. 1217–c. 1274) divided dance into two types: one which arose from licentious nature and was a sin, and another which stemmed from spiritual cheerfulness (like King David’s dance before the Ark), which could count as a prayer. Albertus Magnus (c. 1193–1280), a Dominican philosopher and theologian, held a similar view and claimed it was the circumstances that made dancing sinful. According to Magnus, dance could be performed only at the appropriate time, by honest men and women, and without any excessive gestures.

Moreover, the narrative is sometimes difficult to follow, as Ziolkowski concludes his analyses based on matters not yet discussed. He introduces new topics with statements already made, leaves some topics for a few paragraphs only to subsequently return to them and search for their justification. For example, the author starts to explain the history of *The Juggler of Notre Dame*’s at the very beginning of the book, even though the reader is not presented with the plot of the story until page 22. As stated by the author himself, the project was driven by a holistic approach (p. 13). For Ziolkowski, this meant that he felt the need to connote readers with anything even loosely associated with or related to *The Juggler of Notre Dame*. This renders the disquisition chaotic. He tries to focus on every single aspect even seemingly related to the general idea. As a result, not all issues are well elaborated upon and in my opinion this constitutes the main problem of the book under review.

Notwithstanding the aforementioned problems, the book: *The Juggler of Notre Dame and Medievalizing of Modernity. Volume 1: The Middle Ages* is a valuable publication which presents the background of the juggler’s tale, and is also augmented with a number of interesting analogues. In sum, Ziolkowski provides the broad context of a medieval story of a tumbler dancing in front of the statue of the Virgin, thus making an important contribution to many disciplines of the humanities.

RÉGI, Tamás: *Minimális Antropológia* [Minimal Anthropology]. 2017, Budapest: Qadmon Kiadó. 197. ISBN 978-615-810-440-1

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Hungarian anthropological scholarship, has – for the most part – neglected to keep track of the development of phenomenological approaches in anthropology. One could contend that the phenomenological perspective has assisted anthropologists in acquiring profound insights on lived experience and on a number of research topics such as the human body, emotions and that of sensory experiences. This vantage point has also contributed to a better understanding of the intersubjective reality created by and through fieldwork. The application of the phenomenological perspective has profoundly promoted the reconfiguration of the understanding of human existence within the playing field of the social sciences. As it is well known, theories on continental European phenomenology had a great influence on the social sciences, following Alfred Schütz's efforts to convert phenomenological epistemology into philosophically founded methodology. Despite this development in international anthropological scholarship, Hungarian ethnography has mainly focused on the collection of empirical data. Consequently, ethnographies in Hungarian remained mostly untouched by the variety of epistemological issues raised in perspectives of phenomenology. Tamás Régi's book is novel in the sense that it is likely the first reflective account on the challenges of the phenomenological approach in Hungarian.

What then are these challenges? One of these challenges is the de-normalization of one's basic human assumptions – assumptions that establish our perception of and engagement with reality. In order to carry through with this process, anthropologists do well to distance themselves from their own culturally defined assumptions and categories. Therefore – in line with phenomenological methodologies – anthropologists are urged to bracket ideas based on individually based, culturally defined perceptions, as this way of doing research is deeply embedded in discourses of anthropological scholarship. One might, therefore, as the title of the book suggests, utilize “minimal anthropology” in engaging with the lifeworld(s) of the communities under review. This minimalistic approach allows for the comprehensive reconfiguration of the basic assumptions of the anthropologist. Naturally, this does not mean that anthropologists should neglect anthropological knowledge, but, rather, that they should strive to radically expand the frames of anthropological understanding by acquiring contingent indigenous categories. Therefore, the anthropologist should pay special attention to locally defined modalities of social engagements, as well as the cultural arrangement of sensory perceptions, and then be able to adapt to them. As a corollary in this process, the distinction between subjective perspective and the objective world is blurred in the intersubjective reality created by the interplay of actors. One of the most meaningful agents in this intersubjective reality is the anthropologist; most especially while they are conducting anthropological fieldwork.

The title – not coincidentally – refers to Michael Jackson’s renowned book on phenomenological anthropology entitled: “*Minima ethnographica*”. Tamás Régi’s *Minimal anthropology* reminds the reader both in style and in theme of Jackson’s work, by formulating anthropological inquiry as a personal journey that is based on stories of personal relationships. This approach grazes an acute epistemological problem; namely, how researchers can transform their particular and deeply personal experiences born in the territory of intersubjective reality, into universal conclusions. Tamás Régi’s book – in my opinion – indicates that it is indeed, conceivable to overcome this problem.

With the help of a concise summary on the major issues of phenomenological anthropology, I intend to shed light on the most important message of the book under survey. Régi conducted subsequent periods of fieldwork among the Mursis in Ethiopia, engaging with lifeworlds radically different from his own. The author provides his readers with an intimate story on living among the Mursis. The author delves into how he developed personal bonds with a few of his Mursi friends and interlocutors. Thus, his story not only introduces us to Mursi lifeworlds, it also provides us with a highly sensitive description on transformations in the mindset of the anthropologist, as well as his perception of human bodies, emotions and even geometrical forms. Hence, this book is not the funny story of the “innocent anthropologist”, who stumbles while in the field; it is also not the ever-repeated initiation legend about the anthropologist gaining acceptance and rapport in the community at hand and under review. Alternatively, this book is a deeply personal report on the intersubjective reality co-created by the Mursis and the anthropologist during his fieldwork endeavors.

Anthropological fieldwork – as we gather from the book – is not merely the sterile examination of social reality from an objective, academic and stationary point of view. Fieldwork also involves the profound transformation of the anthropologist. It is not only about testing the validity of basic academic categories, but also about the reassessment of the body and senses of the anthropologist. The profound transformation of the anthropologist commences – as described in the first chapter of the book – with the first encounter. The first encounter is always crucial, as it is the initial confrontation with radical alterity known as the “Other” in anthropological literature. Régi places his own story of his first encounter with the Mursis and Mursi land in a historical context that focuses on his personal history and the history of previous colonial encounters in Africa. By reflecting on other co-constructors of intersubjective reality, he also tries to understand and describe how the Mursis engage with European otherness.

Following the description of the first encounter with Mursi lifeworlds, the anthropologist begins to recognize new aspects of his body as well as his bodily functions, within the frames of a newly forming realm of intersubjectivity. The body, the garment and that of local healing methods are all part of this reality. Moreover, they are partly the outcome of previous encounters between Mursis and outsiders. In the present times – as the author argues – likely the most important and most definitely, the most frequent encounters between Mursis and Europeans come to being within the context of tourism. Tourism creates a contact zone in which Mursi alterity is colonized by the European gaze through an emphasis on exoticism. These exchanges are not characterized by spheres of intersubjective reality; on the contrary, they create grotesque freak shows based on pretense.

In the next chapter, in order to contrast the barriers and confines generated by tourism, the author describes what Mursi lifeworlds are like when there is no intention

to take possession of them. Anthropological inquiry endeavors to accept and perceive local lifeworlds as they are; with minimal transformations caused by the presence of the anthropologist. Certainly, the presence of the anthropologist is never indiscernible for locals. Moreover, the life of the anthropologist never fully melds into the local social reality. Ever still, the intention of the anthropologist oftentimes involves the transformation of his own ideas and lifeworld, rather than the rearrangement of local ones. From this angle – as the author claims– everything becomes radically different on Mursi Land. In engaging in fieldwork, “otherness” is not just an abstract category – it is the omnipresent reality of the sensory experience of the anthropologist.

Despite the intention of not transforming the local world, the anthropologist - in many cases-embodies the stranger per se among indigenous communities. This is what Michael Taussig (another recurrently referenced scholar in the book) calls the “stranger effect”. Through the description of a tragic event, Régi provides an answer for what contact with global culture means for the Mursis by (following in the footsteps of Taussig) understanding fieldwork as magic, and the anthropologist as a magician.

In sum, the first five chapters offer a brief introduction on the ways and means of personal transformation, as well as the construction of intersubjective lifeworlds. These issues provide the framework for Régi’s ethnography of the Mursi. The next four chapters present an intimate description of the Mursi, focusing on local aesthetics, the problem of center-periphery relations in Ethiopia, agreements and contracts and lastly, local concepts of human beauty. These detailed and carefully contextualized descriptions provide the reader with an insightful description of the four important domains of Mursi lifeworlds.

Although many anthropological works emphasize the description and analysis of ethnographies, this book is primarily about relationships and voyages where the anthropologist refrains from narrating the objective story of the “wise” outsider. On the contrary, as we acquire from the book, the anthropologist falls from one situation and encounter to the next. His actions are part and parcel of a web of deeply interwoven human relationships. Therefore, this book is not only about the Mursis. Rather, it is about a well-defined way of doing anthropology; a method that is genuinely personal, inherently moral and thus, deeply embedded in the domain of phenomenological anthropology.

KESZEG, Vilmos: *A beszélés antropológiája*. [Anthropology of Speaking. Notes for Students.] (Néprajzi Egyetemi Jegyzetek 9). 2018, Kolozsvár: Kriza János Néprajzi Társaság – BBTE Magyar Néprajz és Kulturális Antropológia Intézet. 498. ISBN 978-606-9015-05-6

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Without a doubt, this book is truly an innovative work in Hungarian ethnography, and within the fields of both cultural and social anthropology. Scholars have long awaited such a wide scale summary on the topic of: “the anthropology of speaking”. The lack

of Hungarian input is hardly understandable, as the last half century abounded in works dealing with the ethnography/anthropology of speaking, verbal and nonverbal communication, as well as discourse analysis on a worldwide scale. These works were published in English, French and German. Thus, it seems to be one of the most dynamic fields of contemporary anthropology. Theoretical approaches and methodological introductions that focus on verbal communication are also numerous.

Based on a wide range of bibliographical data, the author not only mentions, but briefly interprets these theoretical frames and methodological alternatives within the scope of a detailed introduction (pp. 9–19) and the lexicon-like first chapter of the book (pp. 23–31), where the author lists and summarizes the most important models of the field, namely: pragmatics and speech-act theory (p. 23), context theory (p. 24), communication theory (p. 25), discourse theory (p. 25), sociolinguistics, language sociology, anthropological linguistics, ethnolinguistics (p. 26), psycho-linguistics (p. 27), ethnomethodology (p. 28), conversation-analysis (p. 29), text-typology (p. 29), and genre-system theory (p. 30). These coup d'œil-like glimpses of the scholarly ways of interpreting both spoken and verbal communication are not elaborate per se. However, they will likely stimulate the interests of the students they are written for, catalyzing further readings on the aforementioned topics.

The following section of the book includes the history of the scholarly analysis and theories of speaking and conversation (pp. 32–66). The author starts his journey along with the theoretical milestones of Franz Boas and Edward Sapir, then – after mentioning some important linguistic and anthropological contributions – introduces Dell Hymes' S-P-E-A-K-I-N-G model, and finishes with Erving Goffman's theoretical works (pp. 32–45). The second half of this section introduces the sporadic Hungarian endeavors that study verbal communication as mostly semi-linguistic, semi-ethnological interdisciplinary methods. He discusses his topic within separate, short introductions to the research of the beliefs, the folklore of religious communication, remembrance, laic poems, folksongs and music, the study of ballads, folktales, true stories and short epic genres, the ethnography of folk customs, and lastly, the research of communication-systems of smaller speaking communities, like villages (pp. 45–66). The author attaches one or more short case-studies as demonstrations to all of the subchapters. Additionally, he suggests further readings.

The third section of the book is about speaking customs and strategies (pp. 68–205). It includes detailed descriptions of what to focus on in observing and analyzing dramatic folk customs, transcendent communication (such as praying, talking to the dead etc.), gossip, scandals, jokes and other kinds of folklore texts, customs of the rites de passage – within their distinctive social contexts and their specific expressions (pp. 68–136). The author – as in the previous chapters – adds concrete examples to each of these folklore genres and folk custom situations, besides the suggested (methodologically interesting) works. He leads the attention of his readers towards the aspects that are most necessary to focus on. The last chapters of this section encapsulate a summary of the occasions, modes and strategies of the ritual and festive forms of speaking in Aranyosszék, one of the author's most famous field research sites (pp. 137–205). Based on his own research, these last chapters contain the communication strategies, practices, and occasions of the ritual year, rites of passage, as well as official and non-official ways of speaking.

The last section of the book discusses the modes (styles) of speaking, as well as the habitus of using media by analyzing particular situations and recorded conversations (pp. 207–405).

It begins with introductions of the types, functions and usage of texts in funerary rituals in Aranyosszék (Scaunul Secuiesc al Arieșului) (pp. 207–236), then continues with the organization of genealogical remembrance (pp. 237–274), autobiographic ways of speaking in the 20th century (pp. 275–297), and finally, autobiographic representations of personal fate in sporadic ethnic minorities (pp. 298–317). The next chapter covers the research results of the “living scenes” in Torda, discussed as ritual gestures on stage and in everyday life (pp. 318–341). Then the author analyzes the relationship between the verbal and written narratives of various Communist regimes (pp. 342–363). He then goes on to discuss mass media communication and its effects based on a multi-layered discourse catalyzed by a car accident which ended with an explosion, killing seventeen people (pp. 364–386). The last chapter of this section focuses on three speech acts, analyzed by the author based on their various situational, thematic and self-oriented structure as well as style (pp. 387–405).

Through the diverse examples provided in the latter half of the book, Vilmos Keszeg focuses on many aspects, namely: the ways (modes, styles), the textual structures, strategies, the social and situational contexts, as well as the roles and functions of verbal communication. As an approach to complex analysis, his attention is not only on the speaker, the audience and the social context, but also on the stylistic and structural aspects of the text, as well as non-textual behavior (e.g. silence). Essentially, this method can be interpreted based on Dell Hymes’ S-P-E-A-K-I-N-G theory.

In the afterword (pp. 407–408), the author stresses that the research and analysis of speaking and communication should be both interpretive and illustrative; which is precisely why his book itself contains plenty of analytical case studies in the second half of the text. These practical chapters could be added upon, according to Vilmos Keszeg. However, they were carefully chosen in order to demonstrate methods and theoretical frames aimed at instructing students, using concrete examples. The book ends with short definitions of the keywords utilized in the book (pp. 409–413), followed by an impressive bibliography (pp. 415–465), which offers a useful guide on the topic. Lastly, a Romanian and English language summary is provided at the end of the book (pp. 467–470).

I suggest this book for students of anthropology, ethnology, and communication studies (for whom it was primarily written) and also, for ethnographers or anthropologists who are seeking a brief overview on the wide theoretical spectrum of how to study spoken and verbal communication as a wider social practice.

ROZWADOWSKI, Andrzej: *Rocks, Cracks and Drums: In Search of Ancient Shamanism in Siberia and Central Asia* (Translated from Polish by Anieszka Tokarczuk). 2017, Budapest: Molnár & Kelemen Oriental Publishers. 166. ISBN 978-9-6388-2386-1

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In reading *Rocks, Cracks and Drums*, it is difficult to say anything else other than: ‘it is a good book’ or ‘it was a good read’. It offers a brief and well-structured analysis on rock art

and its possible links to shamanism. Identifying shamanic motifs in ancient rock art with a high degree of certainty is an arduous task. Without knowing virtually anything about the shamanic beliefs and practices of those who inhabited Siberia and Central Asia thousands of years ago, or even before Christ, one is inclined to resort to knowledge that we possess about the shamanism of the contemporary (or those of the quite recent past) indigenous peoples of the aforementioned regions. This is where a researcher's hypotheses can be led astray by assumptions based on contemporary data. Rozwadowski is well aware of this danger but he too seems to admit that -generally speaking- what we know today about shamanism is based on the shamanism and religious thinking of the various Turkic and Mongolic peoples, Native Americans (known to have migrated from Siberia) as well as the Sun-cult of early Indo-Europeans. The emphasis is placed on the groups mentioned above. Moreover, this is the most we can rely on in deciphering the basics of rock art.

Rozwadowski's readings and interpretations of some of these ancient images are well established and convincing to the contemporary reader. However, one cannot help but wonder: 'would the creators of these images agree?' and 'to what extent were the creators aware of what they were creating?'. Creators, performers and practitioners often reproduce the things they have seen, heard about or learned from previous generations without knowing the original symbolic meaning of their performance or creation; oftentimes attaching new meanings, as well as their own interpretations to a given topic or theme. Thus, for instance when someone drew a sun-headed figure on a rock 4000 years ago, that sun-headed figure might have meant something else to its creator than a similar sun-headed figure that was drawn on a different rock a couple decades beforehand. It is highly possible that creators of these figures, or those of deer-stones and zigzag images were merely reproducing tradition, copying and to a certain extent modifying what they had seen from their fathers and grandfathers. What might have represented a god for the fathers and grandfathers, might have represented the deceased fathers and grandfathers of their sons and grandsons, who might or might not have had -by the time of the creation of the image- become gods themselves.

Rozwadowski often refers to the shaman's journey to the other world – a commonplace notion in Siberian shamanism – in trying to disentangle these images. However, he does not take into account that a spirit's journey from the other world to the human world is also a widely known concept in the region, especially among Mongolian shamanists, including Buryats. The drum and the staff are usually referred to as the 'spirits' vehicle' (*ongodiin unaa*). Moreover, the altered state of consciousness of the shaman is called 'the entering of the spirit' (*ongon oroh*) and 'descent of the spirit, the spirit descends' (*ongonii buult, ongon buuh*). These expressions clearly indicate that it is the invoked spirit that makes the journey and descends to the human world by entering the shaman's body and speaking to the audience through him/her. Rozwadowski mentions that the staff has the same function as the drum and that among the Khakas people, having a staff is a preliminary step before a shaman can own and use a drum (p. 132). It is also true to the Buryats, adding that experienced, high-ranking shamans retain and continue to use their staffs despite having a drum. The reason is that the staff is not the shaman's vehicle, but that of the spirit. Low ranking, beginner shamans are not allowed to invoke and work with stronger spirits. Thus, the staff is the vehicle, the mount of weaker, or benevolent, less dangerous spirits, and the opposite is true of the drum. When a high-ranking shaman performs a ritual that does not require the participation of strong spirits, the staff will be

used. In most Buryat shamanic rituals that I have attended, the staffs and drums were employed interchangeably, depending on the actual spirit that was invoked at the moment.

On the other hand, the interpretation of the shamanic costume as a disguise that makes the shaman look like an animal and thus, allows him/her to blend in with the creatures of the other world is only one of a number of possible interpretations. Among a number of peoples in North Asia, the shaman's coat is considered to be an armor. The Buryat shaman usually puts on this armor while using a drum. An arsenal of miniature weapons are attached to his whip's handle. Thus, the spirit entering the shaman's body is imagined as a warrior on horseback (drum), wielding weapons and clad in armor. For the attendees of a ritual however, it is the shaman and not the spirit who appears to be an armed warrior. This warrior image might be a relatively recent phenomenon, possibly connected to the Inner Asian middle ages. Additionally, more recent pieces of rock art might allude to this function of the shaman's garment. We haven't touched upon the many other possible interpretations of the shaman's costume, or of the various types of rituals they conduct and the initiations they go through; all of which differ from one another in space, in each smaller locality and in time, even within the time frame of a few decades.

The problem with reading rock art is that a piece might very well depict a tiny detail of a ritual that was significant in the moment, or a problem that was meant to be solved by a ritual. When we look at a representation of a shaman on the surface of a rock we do not know, with certainty, what sort of shamanism the community of the creator practiced. We cannot decide whether they believed that their shamans traveled to the world of the spirits or vice-versa. We might identify claws, antlers or horns with ease on the depicted shaman's costume and conclude that it served as a disguise. However, it might have served as the attire of an animal-like spirit, if in the given community's belief system it was not the shaman, but rather, the spirits who traveled to the human world. On the other hand, the fact that animal parts can be detected on a depicted costume, does not exclude that the costume could have had multiple functions at the time of its creation.

In conclusion, our knowledge of ancient belief systems is much too meager to read shamanism-related rock art with confidence. Furthermore, the complexities of the shamanic traditions that can come into play offer too many plausible interpretations, in order to make firm judgements. Rozwadowski's attempts, I believe, are still the initial steps in the journey towards understanding the religious thinking of rock-art creators as well as their respective communities. The author's focus on the morphological features of rocks, their protrusions, cracks and caves greatly expands on the previous confines of this field of research. This research offers more commonalities to be revealed between ancient and recent/contemporary shamanic ideas and practices. One obvious example among the many is that of cavities and caves as places of symbolic rebirth and gates to the otherworld. *Rocks, Cracks and Drums* is a good read and an inspiring book that truly propels the reader to get more involved in the field; searching for novel forms and interpretations, indeed perhaps challenging some of the speculations that the author has provided his readership with.