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HOW DOES A HYBRID WORK OF ART EXIST?

Abstract

The aim of this article is to analyze the relation between hybrid works of art in the background of philosophical texts by Luigi Pareyson, Jurij Łotman, Wolfgang Welsch. The questions which are taken into consist of – What is the definition of a hybrid work of art? What is the impact of contemporary culture on the way of being a hybrid work of art? Do the hybrid works of art reflect the experience of contemporary reality? My considerations are based on concrete poetry, book works, book objects and liberature.

Key words: hybrid work of art, theory of formativity, liberature, concrete poetry, artistic book, contemporary culture

Deconstruction has led to the dethronement of sound in favor of writing and it is said that *pictorial turn* has happened in culture. W.J.T. Mitchell writes about it in his famous book *Picture Theory*. In parallel, the *linguistic turn*, related to the question of language as a communication tool – which apart from links with the *linguistic turn* in philosophy, is linked with influences coming from structuralism and poststructuralism – is being discussed in art¹.

The main issue of this article is the mode of existence of the hybrid work of art. Reflection on this problem will be possible if we will define what kind of works of art will be discussed in this paper.

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[&]quot;(...) subsumption of linguistic processes into art. Since Marcel Duchamp's readymades", D. Beech, Turning the Whole Thing Around: Text Art Today, in: Art and Text, ed. D. Beech, Ch. Harrison, W. Hill, Black Dog Publishing, London 2009, p. 26. I have omitted the problem of interest in language which is also significant in the works of the First Great Avant-garde, and has a different character.

I will focus on the attempt to describe the works in which the integration of visual and verbal signs occurred (on selected examples), which in effect changes the perception of such works. Language in this type of work (located on the border between literature and visual arts), and in fact the writing with its visual aspects, is the material that serves as the foundation of the process of forming an artwork. At the core of hybrid works lies the ontological heterogeneity, because the carrier of sense is not homogeneous in their case. An important role is played by the materiality of the work, which also fulfills the semantic role. From the perspective of literary studies and the "baggage" of Ingarden's category, the situation is worrying. The elements of language have been appearing in art for a long time. Suffice it to recall that cubist experiments with language elements in the early twentieth century. It is worth asking whether poetry, an artistic book, or a variety of projects relating to placing text in a public space should be considered as literature or art? Is the phenomenon of hybridity only the integration of different carriers of sense? Certainly this phenomenon is a process deeply rooted in culture. To this end, it is worth to look at how the ancients defined and understood the category of "hybrid".

Ancient appeal

The term "hybrid" is associated with variability, lack of consistency, strangeness, heterogeneity, and even anomalies. Hybridity in ancient times also does not necessarily mean a monster, but heterogeneity. They are known in many ancient cultures – even the Sumerian, Egyptian, and Greek. Hybrids are creatures of Chaos, Pre-ocean, not fully formed before the emergence of the world, which can express unity before individualization of beings. They are composed of pre-material, and exist as potential beings. Hybrids can also be interpreted as a visual way to present the relation of all the spheres of the universe: earth and sky-.of the universe. Animal hybrids are cosmic symbols, but also those of characteristic human concern in the *anthropos* sphere.

The ancient philosophers dealt with hybrids in the biological sense. Empedocles in his work *On Nature* describes the oxen with human heads. However, Aristotle in *Physics* writes: "[...] whereas those which grew otherwise perished and continue to perish, as Empedocles says his 'man-faced ox-progeny' did" (Aristotle 1994c: 276) Aristotelians did not accept the hybrid as the composition of two different natures. It seems that, for Aris-

totle, the formation of such beings actually does not take effect, because they do not arise in a purposeful way. Accordingly the purposefulness of nature is to arise only if relevant and compatible with nature. It is worth noting that in the works of Aristotle, there is no concept of "hybrid". In On the Generation of Animals the philosopher deals with the problem of anomalies and monsters. A monster arises: "If the movements imparted by the semen are resolved and the material contributed by the mother is not controlled by them, at last there remains the most general substratum, that is to say the animal. Then people say that the child has the head of a ram or a bull [...]" (Aristotle 1994a: 311). Similar anomalies occur in animals. The representative of one species can have, for example, the head of another animal. According to Stagirite monsters are just like creatures for which they are considered. Therefore, the philosopher denies hybrids the right to exist. Moreover Aristotle believes that a being who is born must be the same as a being, from which the seed came. Of the seed of the horse can be born only a horse, of human only a man, and in another case it cannot be called the offspring of a being who is born: "For these reasons we do not regard as our offspring that which is produced either from anything else in us except the semen, or from the semen when it is corrupted or fails to achieve perfection" (Aristotle 1927: 878a) Aristotle is also interested in the hybrid political system, as he writes in *Policy*.

It can be considered that *On Poetics* refers to the literary hybrids, when Aristotle compares the Epic with the Tragedy. The Epic seems to be a kind of a hybrid consisting of the tragic and comic actions:

That there is less unity in the imitation if the epic poets, as is proved by the fact that any one work of theirs supplies matter for several tragedies; the result being that, if they take what is really a single story, it seems curt when briefly told, and thin and waterish when on the scale of length usual with their verse. In saying that there is less unity in an epic, I mean an epic made up of a plurality of actions [...] (Aristotle 1994b: 699).

The plurality of actions, in this context, is the work with many plots. *The Iliad* and *The Odyssey* consist of various elements, which are "each one of them in itself of some magnitude" (Aristotle 1994b: 699). These considerations Stagirite included in the *On Poetic* in which he compares the Epic and the Tragedy. Aristotle demonstrates the superiority of the Tragedy over The Epic, even though it is a kind of epic art designed for a more educated audience. Although the Tragedy requires the presentation on the stage, and therefore the use of different materials, which is acting, according to Aristotle, yet that does not mean that it is the lower form of art. The

tragedy just like The Epic achieves its aim; already in the process of reading we can experience purification. Perhaps Stagirite estimated the Tragedy higher than the Epic because of its hybridity. He writes that tragedy: "[...] Tragedy has everything that the Epic has (even the epic metre being admissible), together with a not inconsiderable addition in the shape of the music (a very real factor in the pleasure of the drama) and the Spectacle. That its reality of presentation is felt in the play as read, as well as in the play as acted" (Aristotle 1994b: 698–699).

In ancient thought we are dealing with phenomena of hybridity which is variously understood. Certainly the ancient philosophers were mostly focused on the hybrid in the biological sense, but they were familiar with thinking about art in such a way that shows these fragments from *On Poetic* by Aristotle. Finally *ut pictura poesis* formula also comes from ancient times and shows the affinity of painting and poetry, which is also a form of hybrid. It is worth reflecting on how contemporary culture understands and defines hybrid.

Hybrid as a form of culture

However trivial it may sound, this argument must begin with the following observation: as users of contemporary culture, we operate in a multicultural reality or even transcultural – in a world of globalization, digitization, virtuality, new media. Various researchers are trying to describe the processes occurring in the culture, creating for this purpose a variety of categories and theories which aim is to adequatly describe the processes taking place in the area of culture. An example in this context can be the theory of semiosphere by Jurij Łotman. He defines semiosphere as "a continuum of a specific organization" (trans. I. Ch.) (Łotman 1984: 7). This organization is primarily that the semiosphere is separated from non-semiotic reality. The limit is "a kind of filter, the device selectively permeable texts from other cultural areas and non-texts. [...] It has a function of a bottleneck through which messages have to squeeze from the outside to become a reality of semiosphere" (trans. I. Ch.) (Żyłko 1998: 15).

Inside the semiosphere there is no established order or rule:

The hierarchy of languages and texts is constantly violated: they collide with each other, as if they were on the same level. Texts are immersed in inadequate languages, while codes which decode them may be absent at all. Imagine a room in the museum, where exhibits from various ages, subtitles in familiar and unfamil-

iar languages, decoding instruction, explanatory text for the exhibition composed by methodologists, tour route patterns and rules for visitors are placed in various showcases. If you locate here the visitors with their semiotic world, we get something that will resemble the image of semiosphere (trans. I. Ch.) (Łotman 1984: 12).

It should be noted that the semiosphere is characterized by heterogeneity. In the periphery the semiosphere is less organized. There are flexible structures there, so that within the semiosphere changes occur. Periphery is in fact the source of all dynamic processes within its borders (Żyłko 1998: 15). Besides, the semiosphere develops at different speeds at different levels. Changes occur more rapidly in the periphery than in the core area which is structured, marked by its own grammar and meta-description. It is impossible to talk about the synchronicity of processes' development that take place in the semiosphere (because different languages develop at different speed, natural languages evolve more slowly than other cultural phenomena) (Żyłko 1998: 16).

It is interesting that Łotman considers dialogue as a mode of semiosphere's existence. This dialogue includes a variety of elements: from the cerebral hemispheres of the individual to cross-cultural contacts. It follows that within the semiosphere it is possible to distinguish levels: from the semiosphere of individuals to the semiosphere of the world – "the global village, which is constantly expanding throughout the ages, has taken the comprehensive character, including signals of artificial satellites, and poems, and the cries of animals. The mutual relationship of all elements in the semiotic space is not a metaphor, but a reality" (trans. I. Ch.) (Łotman 1984: 16–17)

Another example is the theory of transversal reason invented by Wolfgang Welsch (Welsch 1998: 405–440). The feature of the reason is the ability to move from one rational configuration to another, demonstrating differences, disputing and innovating. It has nothing to do with substantial, principled, total interpretations of the reason which would even it out with intellect. The activity of transversal reason consists in crossing from one system to another, its synthesis remains partial. The holistic interpretation of any issues can never be talked about by transversal reason. It does not overcome pluralism, whereas it tries to justify it as a form of reason.

Welsch, just as Lotman in the case of the semiosphere, shows, how transfers between rationalities occur, reffering to ethics, economics and aesthetics, which, in his opinion, the distinction is necessary. Types of rationality are divided into sectors, although this distinction is sometimes confusing, because different autonomous rationalities are set free, and they

can themselves determine its meaning and boundaries. How rationalities are linked with each other and how the transversal reason moves from one to the other? Welsch gives, in this context, an example from a field of art. It was like this that art was recognized as an autonomous area according to the motto *l'art pour l'art*, at other times its sense was constituted in crossing aesthetic barriers and passing on to life. Here we see the two concepts of aesthetic rationality, which areas vary widely, both cross each other and connect. Therefore, the sectors are not stand-alone beings and speaking with one type of rationality always refers to the second. Of course, there is the problem of individual rationality distinction. Between particular paradigms occur the various processes, such as the reinterpretation or rejection. The differences between the types of rationality, which are in sectors, define these sectors and thanks to this they distinguish them from others. It should be noted that particular rationalities are derived from a common cultural root, so rationalities refer to each other in various ways by negation and reinterpretation. Therefore we can talk about transculturalism in the sense: obliterating differences between our culture and foreign, constructing cultural networks, that extend beyond the boundaries of a culture, media networks that create the culture of technology and hybridity, which, according to Welsch, is a feature of contemporary culture. Its effect is transculturalism. I invoke here the theories of Lotman and Welsch to show how hybridity is written in contemporary culture and theories that attempt to describe it. Emmanuel Molinet shows how the category of "hybridity" is used in modern technology, politics which in effect is a change in perception of reality, or the formation of its various elements. In the contemporary world the concept of hybridity is rooted in science, where its meaning is limited to the composition of an object with a few items or materials. Molinet emphasizes that the current use of the term "hybridity" assumes human intervention, human activity, which is changing the nature of some things through different methods: cloning, molecular biology, genetic testing, and artificial intelligence.

In the art language category of "hybrid", "hybridity", "hybridization" is primarily associated with works, in which new technologies and new media are used: "Technologie numerique favorise d'une estetique de l'hybridation" (Molinet, http://leportique.revues.org/index851.html). It can be said that contemporary art, in which an important role play such forms as installation and performance, creates the hybrid model (modele hybride, discipline hybride). Besides, it is impossible to distinguish one model of hybridization and to describe what exactly the hybridization process is, because various processes can be referred to as this. First of all, it is un-

clear whether a hybrid as a form is, from an aesthetic point of view, even a work of art, an artistic phenomenon, or a cultural creation. Would you say that hybrids are created when there are new forms in art? Then it must be considered that the synthesis of romantic art, unexpected juxtaposition of various forms is also a hybrid. Similarly, it would be with a number of works which are referring simultaneously, for example, to surrealism and abstraction. The question is whether it can be considered a hybrid work of art from the past, whether the concept in language of art should remain reserved for recent works. It is worth noting that interdisciplinarity, and as probably Welsch would suggest, transdisciplinarity is associated with the emergence of new technologies, multimedia and virtual reality. In this case, hybrids could be considered as a form of cultural expression in the age of globalization, the form that expresses various interpretations and meanings, transcends genre boarders and combines a variety of art. Such an understanding of hybrid could be considered a form of culture, not only in the category of adequately describing contemporary art.

The hybrid from a literary point of view

If the process of hybridization is not only limited to technology, politics and science will not stop in interpreting this process as only related to the visual arts. As we consider it a form of culture, it can be interesting – in the context of this argument – to refer to it in literature. The most important are considered to be hybrids that are at the interface between literature and the visual arts, which include: concrete poetry, artistic books, liberature and literature related to new media. It seems that it is impossible to create a separate category of hybrid works that would not have anything to do with a sound and broadly understood spectacle, and would be only a group of works in which the integration of visual and verbal signs occurred, although it may certainly be possible to find examples of this kind even among concrete poetry.

Returning to an attempt to define the phenomenon of hybridity, this time from a literary perspective, simply speaking, researchers of works of this kind think that language in this type of work, and in fact the writing with its visual aspects, is the material that serves as the foundation of the process of forming an artwork. The meaning of the work is constituted by the recipient as much as on the basis of the semantics of the language and semiotics of matter, the shape and configuration of print, paper physicali-

ty, spatiality and architecture of the volume, the iconic potentiality of the page (Kalaga 2010: 75). Externality of the text is cancelled, all elements are equally important; they are integral aspects of the work. The works are hybrids at the core of which lies the ontological heterogeneity, because the carrier of sense in this type of works is also the physical shape and material basis. In the hybrid text there is a fusion of two ontological orders, that is the material sphere of the work and his intentionality in Ingarden's categories. The theory of Ingarden is recalled here because in his theory it is particularly evident as to how the role of matter is reduced to writing functions, which does not play any significant role. The sphere of literary material only allows, according to Ingarden, to reach its intentionality in the process of concretization. In the case of hybrid text, the materiality of the work does not depreciate its intentional layers. If we wish to use the terminology of Ingarden then the process of concretization also includes non-linguistic aspects. An important role is played by the physical space of the artwork, because the material itself also has semantic function.

There is formed a structure which can be described as literary space-time, which seems to be the reverse process to the theory originating from Lessing's *Laocoon*. According to Lessing, both painting and poetry are mimetic arts, however, they use different signs. The researcher believes that in the case of painting there are figures and colors in space, and in the case of poetry – articulated sounds in time. It is important that signs of painting are natural, whereas signs of poetry are free. Lessing also determines which objects can be represented by each art discipline, to make them compatible with the nature of the signs. The painter shows the objects existing side by side in space, poetry – objects consecutive in time. So painters focus on bodies and their parts, whereas poets concentrate on activities (Lessing 1962: 63–65). The radical separation of the two pieces, arising somehow form the cultural context and time in which Lessing lived, is negated in liberature, concrete poetry and artistic books.

These works are hybrids in which it is negated by the division of interior and exterior making it appear to be an organic whole – a form. This type of work in which significant aspects are cooperating semantics of language and material structure, I propose define, following Luigi Pareyson, as a form. The theory of formativity by Luigi Pareyson is interesting from the perspective of this article because the researcher considers a work of art as a form, in which there is no division between form and content. This does not mean that the content is not relevant for this type of artwork. Already the Russian formalists in the second decade of the twentieth century recognized literary work as a "contenting form" (Eichenbaum 1986: 174),

and it would seem that the formalists should estimate positively only formal aspects of the work of art. They do not, however, renounce the other aspects. According to Pareyson the process of forming a work of art covers all its aspects, including the matter, which becomes significant. The content of the work of art (il contenuo) is "an artist all his life, his acting personality, but not only the forming energy, but also a method of forming, that is the style" (trans. I. Ch.) (Pareyson 2009: 19). If the content of work of art is identified with the style, there is no reason to carry on an argument about the primacy of from over content, and content over form, because the spiritual element of the work of art in this approach is the style. One cannot talk about the other expression, speaking, communicating the content but making. The matter of the work of art, for the researcher, can be only a physical matter, because "in the art forming means forming a matter" (trans. I. Ch.) (Pareyson 2009: 19), that is the work of art is a formed matter. The work of art is simultaneously the law and the result of the process of forming; it acts as a forming factor before it is completely formed. The recipient can see the artistic value of the work if he looks at it as an inseparable whole – both a forming and formative form, such as "the right of process which is the result" (trans. I. Ch.)(Pareyson 2009: 20).

Hybrid in terms of genology

It seems, however, that just being a complex of two or more types of materials is not enough to talk about the phenomenon of hybridity. But before I will try to clarify what specific form of existence this type of work of art consists of, let us look at genological distinctions, from which emerges a kind of ontology outline of a hybrid work of art.

In the literature, quite traditionally understood, or at least one that remains at the level of the text and is not a hybrid consisting of a variety of media and materials, it is said about genre syncretism or the so-called "kind syncretism"². These types of terms should be used with caution, however, because it is often associated with combining together different literary forms primarily for romantic masterpieces (Grochowski 2000: 16). In a sense, Ryszard Nycz refers to this sphere of problems in his hugely popular work "Sylwy współczesne. Problem konstrukcji tekstu"

² Polish theory follows the tradition which distinguishes three main literary genres (the so-called "kinds"): poetry, prose and drama, other genres being subordinated to this division.

(Wrocław 1984). It should be noted, however, that "sylwy współczesne" are primarily of a historical category, which refers to a particular historical field of art. Hybrid is a typology which is deprived of specific references to the philosophical. Therefore "hybrid" is poorer in content than *sylwa*, but having a wider range (Grochowski 2000: 17). There are works in which heterogeneity is analyzed as a combination of literary elements and elements of other discourses, such as: scientific, journalistic, philosophical etc. within a literary text. It is also worth noting that the concept of genre syncretism or so called "kind syncretism" rather connects with some solid trans-generic fusions, such as ballad, poetic novel and romantic drama. The concept of hybridity, however, refers to the connections of a more ephemeral and unexpected nature.

The hybrid work of art is also something different form the so called "bordering genres". To talk about them, one should indicate a kind of cultural center with a clearly structured repertoire of genres in a particular historical situation, in relation to which the bordering genres could be distinguished. Besides, these bordering genres being situated in the periphery would have to refer to an invariant pattern, to be able to justify their position on this and not elsewhere of cultural phenomena. We are all aware that in today's culture, we see a strong tendency to go beyond the explicit genological allocations. We associate easily recognizable genres with popular culture and class B films as: romance, western and horror. In the case of "bowl of strategies" and blurred genres, as Clifford Geertz appropriately described it (Geertz, http://hypergeertz.jku.at/GeertzTexts/ Blurred Genres.htm), it does not come to the formation of new and constant "genological individuals". There are new and unique configurations. Therefore, I think that the term "hybrid" is much more appropriate than the syncretic genre or bordering genre. This concept is also less evaluative, it merely implies a distinction between more crystalized forms and ambivalent and indefinite forms.

In the case of hybrids which are at the interface between literature and the visual arts, it is still an issue of two type carriers of sense. Why, therefore, do I remain with the definition of a hybrid work of art and not, for example, *intermedia*?

The term *intermedia* Dick Higgins borrowed from the writings of Samuel Taylor Coleridge of 1812 and referred it to works "which fall conceptually between media that are already known" (Higgins 2001: 52). As intermedia Higgins defines works, in which the visual element is conceptually fused with words. This concept is not, however, the category having roots in the history of art and literature. It is purely typological, and, according

to Higgins, does not evaluate this type of work in any way. In addition, Higgins points out that the category of intermedia sometimes facilitates the allocation of a work of uncertain origin. But it is not important for him, what is the formal status of a work, but rather the importance of a work for the recipient (Higgins 2001: 53) He even considers that the term "intermedia" is characterized by an inner contradiction. This concept allows:

[...] for an ingress to a work which otherwise seems opaque and impenetrable, but once that ingress has been made it is no longer useful to harp upon the intermediality of a work. No reputable artist could be an intermedial artist for long—it would seem like an impediment, holding the artist back from fulfilling the needs of the work at hand, of creating horizons in the new era for the next generation of listeners and readers and beholders to match their own horizons too. What was helpful as a beginning would, if maintained, become an obsession which braked the flow into the work and its needs and potentials. (Higgins 2001: 53)

This kind of approach leads to a poor ontology of contemporary works of art. According to the typology of Jens Schröter intermedia which are the fusion of various media, are described as ontological intermediality (Ontomedialität)³, which is associated with the materiality of different media. It should be noted that various components of the media in a single work normally are the result of intentional double coding strategy, which also leads to the fact that this type of hybrid should be interpreted not only in terms of aesthetic connectivity of arts. An important issue turns out the results of interaction effects of media which are independent to each other. Hence intermediality understood – as a future of the latest art – becomes one of the phenomena which enable the diagnosis of contemporary culture. According to Andrzej Hejmej, contemporary intermedia art is based on the effect of directness and immediacy, which reveals the contingency of being in the world (Hejmej 2010: 284). These works impose a multisensory form of communication, at the same time braking the "spectator theory" or neutrality of the recipient. It is worth noting that the intermedia works are the result of the modern experience of being in the situation of media and mediated. Also the current literature belongs to this kind of artistic practice. It is formed intermedia literature realizations which do not have any norm. In this approach, each intermedial text is, in the genological sense, a unique hybrid. And yet, in some way, works which are on

³ Apart from the ontological intermediality, the researcher enumerates also the intermediality: synthetic, formal and transformational. The division is given for: A. Hejmej, *Intermedialność I literatura intermedialn*, in: *Kulturowe wizualizacje*... (Cultural visualisations...), p. 279–280.

the border between literature and visual arts are classified by certain genological categories. There are concrete poetry, liberature, artistic books, and different varieties of hypertext and cyberspace poetry.

One of the controversial and at the same time interesting genological decisions is a category of "liberature" by Zenon Fajfer in 1999 to define the literary work in which both the word and the spatial, material and graphic shape of works are equally important. Let us skip the Fajfer's programme statements, in which he wanted to make liberature a fourth literary genre. He ultimately retired from this idea⁴. It is worth nothing that the artist regards liberature as a total literature in which the author saw not only to the individual words, a represented world, the characters, but also the space in which these words are – "representing world" – a graphical representation of the text.

In a similar tone Wojciech Kalaga voices his view when he recognizes liberature as a trans-genre, which transgresses the boundaries of literary typologies (Kalaga 2010: 10). The researcher points out that the hybridity of liberature is by no means an invention of the contemporary avant-garde. Kalaga refers to the beginnings of visual poetry which go as far as the third century BC - to the works of Simias of Rhodes and Theocritus. Then Kalaga refers to the visual poetry of the twentieth century underlining the difference between it and traditional visual poetry by stating that in twentieth century poetic experiments: "It is not merely the matter of synchronizing the shape or contour of the poem with its content but of the exploration of the visual-semantic potentiality of the linguistic sign" (Kalaga 2010: 10). The matter of the text are equally important in the literary work of both the represented world and the representing world. The essence of the literature seems to be the totality of the work, which integrates semantic aspects of the text and its fabric into a semiotic unity (Kalaga 2010: 11).

And what is the difference between the artistic book and liberature? According to Z. Fajfer liberature is a spatial literature, but it is still the

In 2010 in the text "Liberature – 496 Words of Conclusion" Fajfer expresses doubt about attempts to distinguish the fourth literary genre: "But I would be more cautious now. Perhaps I wouldn't pose liberature as some *fourth literary mode*, as I don't see much sense in such three-coloured divisions now. A genre? Even if I mention this, I remember a cautionary tale about the African elephant, resembling its Indian cousin, and geneticists' claim that its actual cousin is the mouse. Indeed, genetics sexes life up. So perhaps good old Croce was right when he questioned generic divisions? Perhaps there are only specific works that constitute universes in their own right? If we agree with that, I will happily abandon liberature" Z. Fajfer (2010:149).

literature. In the case of an artistic book text is subordinated to the book, in liberature it is the book that is subordinated to text (Fajfer 2010: 61). The artistic book as a book-object is a work closer to sculpture in which the text is but one of several, equally important components, sometimes it is absent in the work at all. Liberature but annexes into its territory the physical space of the book. Therefore, according to the researchers one can talk about liberature as a new literary genre and not a new form of art.

Is it possible when the same work once placed in the gallery and another time on a shelf in the library or the bookstore will be recognized by the recipient in the first case as the artistic book, and the second – as liberature?

It seems that Fajfer gives an affirmative answer to this question when he underlines the importance of the context in which the work is installed, and the function of the recipient. Perhaps putting But Eyeing Like Ozone Whole by Zenon Fajfer in the gallery space could be considered as the artistic book. According to the creator of this work, it should be regarded as a poetic text, which required another form of materialization and he found it through a bottle. Apart from the text printed on a transparent plastic, there are no other graphic or artistic elements in this work. This poem cannot be seen from the perspective of Duchamp's ready-mades, as Duchamp did works of art with everyday objects, while Fajfer annexed the glass bottle in the sphere of literature and made him a book instead of the traditional paper-made codex. As a further argument the artist gives the uniqueness of the artistic book. Fajfer's poem is a piece addressed to readers, available in bookshops, priced as an average book, having an ISBN and published in a relatively large print run. Reviews and notes on the book are addressed to the literary audience (Fajfer 2010: 138). Fajfer's argument, however, is based on a kind of external aspects of the work of art, so that we can classify the artist's poem as a literary work. If we saw the poem in the gallery space and knew nothing about its literary origin, we would have recognized that the work before us is a book-object, in which the text can also play an important role. In this context, there is also a problem of the "artist's book" – a notion invented by Leszek Brogowski. According to the researcher, the artistic book, which is published in several copies and is available for the few, due to the price, is a unique work and at the same time it excludes the majority of the population from the opportunities of watching it. Whereas the artist's book is a form of expression and social communication tool, as it is published in a large edition (Brogowski 2010: 123–137).

The mode of existence of a hybrid work of art

According to Wojciech Kalaga the hybrid work of art as a symbiosis of textual semiosis with the semiosis of the material vehicle is an artistic creation of a different ontological status than the artistic book, which is, according to the researcher, just a beautiful, material artifact (Kalaga 2010: 11). This vehicle of the hybrid may be constituted by an appropriately shaped volume, card, but also, as in the case of hypertext or socalled e-liberature, a computer interface. Liberary books direct our attention primarily to their physical "bookishness" and, like metafiction relates to the qualities of its plot and narration, the liberary book becomes a meta-book that comments upon its own bodily subjectivity. Kalaga uses the term, a "hybrid text". In my opinion the more appropriate term is a "hybrid work of art", because it does not evaluate, which of the substances is more important. This is particularly important when we take into consideration that contemporary works of art very often use not only semantic aspects of language and visuals, but they extend also to other types of materials. In this way artistic books can also be considered as hybrid works of art, which very often constitute meanings emerging from the interaction between semantics of the language and structure of the material. For example, artistic books which I name for Piotr Rypson "conceptual books", just like concrete poetry, do not involve the senses of the recipient (Rypson 2000: 7). They often provoke reflection on the value of the language. They are a kind of "puzzle" with elusive sense. There are also books which arouse the aesthetic experience in recipients. "Books-Stories" use the traditional narration, and in the case of their interpretation it is necessary to know the various elements of culture.

Whereas concrete poetry draws the recipient's attention to the language, to its apparent transparency, materiality and physical shape. The task of the recipient is made difficult; reading requires more concentration, because it is impossible to determine the meaning, which would be obligatory in a certain group of recipients or on some level, in the perspective of selected methodology. First of all, it depends on a recipient and what meaning will be given to the work. Each choice of the order and method of perceiving leads to the creation of a new aesthetic object. The recipient is not able to reach the *signifié*. This does not mean, however, that the content gives up the seat to form. The semiotic model which reduces a concrete poem to content and form, or *significant* and *signifié* is not suited in this type of poetry. Concrete poets do not aim to establish one artistic code,

one perspective, which would integrate the variety of formal solutions. Artists very often use only letters, which, before it creates a word with the other characters, becomes independent and makes its own meaning, it becomes a material of the visual text. The symbolic signs become at that time the iconic sign, liberated from the language, its grammar and syntax, it becomes the object of the game between linearity and simultaneity. That is why the hybrid works of art should be regarded as polyphonic. We are dealing with polyphony semiotic: "Word-images are isomorphic – visual and literary, but both of these characters (letter and picture) appear in the superposition intensifying the transmission (not a tautology) (trans. I. Ch.)" (Gryglicka 2005: 128). The letters, pages, text, image, text-image, volume create polyphonic, semantic and visual spectacle, which in literary texts is realized in various ways.

The artist functioning in the world, experiencing it, even via the "weird form" still "imitates" the surrounding reality. The hybrid works are one of many examples of the crisis of the mimesis classical concepts. This does not mean, however, that they are not mimetic at all. In a specific way, they are trying to interpret the specificity of the contemporary world. In the works of this type we are dealing with the destruction of the temporal and causal order of the represented world by introducing simultaneity (Kalaga 2010: 103). It is important to realize that these types of works in a way imitate the "multi-level complexity of simultaneity, hybridity, ambiguity of (post)modern reality" [trans. I. Ch.] (Kalaga 2010: 103). They are structured in such a way that each reading experience is aporetic. The recipient is assuming that it is impossible to reach an unambiguous sense, and even a few which are coexisting with each other. On the basis of the analysis of many works, which program the recipient's experience, it can be concluded that these types of works communicate that we are dealing with aporias and indefiniteness at a higher level – that is at the level of reality in which one cannot reach the unambiguous sense of any phenomenon. Just this aporia appears through visuals integrated with a word that is not able to show the complexity of the world, as in the traditional literature a clear world describing the various elements of the world. The inability to express the sense, which faces the literature, however, speaks to the contemporary audience, sometimes to the rationality of the mind, but as often as it is the extra-rational experience, which, like according to the Russian Formalists intensifies the way of seeing and makes the perception of the recipient non-automated. Through the experience of the hybrid work of art the recipient has a chance to reflect on the contemporary world, as these works are not only the experiments of artists seeking new forms of

expression: "Mimesis is here designed for language-visual-(tactile) experience of aporia as a metaphysical quality present in the world around us: the experience of inherent inability to reach the meaning unambiguous or ambiguous and inherent incompatibility of these senses [trans. I. Ch.]" (Kalaga 2010: 104).

If, indeed, we agree that the art is the result of experience, from which it was born one interpretation of the things, as Aristotle thought, we can conclude that hybridization processes are part of media culture, transcultural, in which the inherent phenomena are heterogeneity and aporia. Hybrids are just more than heterogeneous works complex of various materials, which are characterized by weird form. They are hybrids not only at the level of structure, such as those which are originated from the period of First Great Avant-Garde – for example, volumes of poetry, which is the effect of collaboration between Julian Przyboś and Władysław Strzemiński ("Z ponad") or artistic books from the mainstream of beautiful editing. In the books of avant-garde the graphic rather creates the parallel aesthetic plan than performs a function as a traditional illustration. They are autonomous works, created as an independent work of art (for example the book of M. Szczuka) or in close cooperation with the artist and writer, as in the case of "Z ponad". In these works it has been overcome that the division of the text develops in time and the image is seen in space (Rypson 2000:11).

Hybrid works that were created after World War II and those which were created after 2000 differ strongly in their ontological status than ones from the period of The First Great Avant-Garde. The aim of this article was to show what is involved as concerns concrete poetry, artistic book, liberature, works being at the interface between literature and new media. They are a deep expression of the cultural experience, not only in its structure. Moreover, as I emphasized following Dick Higgins, just staying in creative activities on the level of intermedia is not enough to create a work of art, regardless at the interface of which arts and disciplines it is located. In this context, it is extremely current that the concept of Pareyson which adequately describes what is the content of the work of art – the spirituality of the artist, which is reflected in the style. Although the hermeneutic reading is often insufficient for hybrid works, the observation concerning the content of the work of art and its treatment as a form seems to be a universal aspect of Pareyson's theory.

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