

SUMMARY OF ARTICLES

Zbigniew Benedyktowicz EDITORIAL – THE ANTHROPOLOGY OF FILM AND PHOTOGRAPHY

This successive issue of "Polish Folk Art. Contexts" is devoted to film and photography and primarily deals with the anthropology of contemporary culture. The collected texts discuss the problem of film and photography as a record and document of contemporary culture as well as the participation of the creative element in scientific ethnographic undertakings. Alongside theoretical essays by Barthes, Calvino's reflections about the myth in contemporary culture and literature and an excellent study by J. Clifford about the creative aspect of the ethnographic works by Bronislaw Malinowski, the reader will find analyses of particular symbolic and mythical structures in present-day mass culture. The issue contains an examination of registered culture encountered in the contemporary cinema moulded in an atmosphere of a postmodernistic play with cultural texts. The source materials – reminiscences, fragments of biographical diaries and photodiaries, series of artistic photography and an autobiography of a provincial photographer – oscillate around the participation of the subjective, creative and symbolic element in documentary records which, either in the form of a film or a photograph could become the object of analyses, conducted from the viewpoint of the anthropology of culture.

Aleksander Jackiewicz MY LIFE IN THE CINEMA

Professor Aleksander Jackiewicz (died in 1988) describes his life and first interests in literature, the cinema and theatre. He indicates the merging of particular interests and their transformation. In his work, professor Jackiewicz tried to combine literary and film critique and in this manner arrived at the anthropology of film, which he subsequently pursued.

Teresa Rutkowska THE WANDERINGS OF FELLINI

We are dealing here with an attempt at viewing Fellini's works through a prism of a Baroque tradition, particularly dear to that artist. The author argues that the narrative structure of his films, ways of construing time and space, symbolics as well as the visual imagery and specific philosophy have their source in the culture of the Baroque. This complex of references favours the discovery of an astonishing coherence of those works, beginning with *I Vitelloni*, up to the most recent films. We encounter a special realization of the Baroque comprehension of life and deeds as a form of wandering both on the level of contents and formal operations.

Małgorzata Baranowska THE MASS-PRODUCED POSTCARD AND THE PHOTOGRAPHY OF EMOTIONS

The mass-scale phenomenon of the postcard during the period of its greatest expansion (up to the 1920s) is incomparable. At the beginning of the century billions of illustrated postcards circulated all around Europe, creating their own universe of popular imagery, a world of ready-made feelings as well as photographic reports, a sui generis newsreel. The mass-produced „public” postcard became, in the course of time, changed by its buyer, so that from a duplicated object it turned into a unique one. Its mass nature and designs at times provoked a production of private postcards, issued in one or several copies.

The universe of the postcard has collapsed, and despite their enormous production, the number of cards will not substitute for the symbolic meaning which they had at the beginning of the century. Apparently, only private postcards salvage the very concept of the postcard from its best period.

Dariusz Czaja SYMBOL AND FILM. METHODOLOGICAL COMMENTS

Increasingly often the film is the object of analyses and interpretations within the framework of a current known as „the anthropology of contemporaneity” which has been developing in Polish ethnology for the past few years. Scholars dealing with culture have stressed such features of the cinema as: an inclination towards neomythologization (J. Lotman) or the camouflage of mythical structures and the employment of symbols (M. Eliade), and suggest that the conceptual apparatus used by ethnologists in their studies on mythical thought and symbolic imagery could be exploited for an interpretation of the film „text”. The symbol as a metacategory of interpretation appears to be particularly useful. The author examines the opinions expounded by Don Fredericksen (a lecturer at Cornell University) which are unique in filmological reflection and which deal with the possibility of applying the category of the symbol in investigations into the cinema. He stresses primarily the importance and purposefulness of the division of methodological orientations, proposed by the American scholar, into „semiotic” and „symbolic”. Finally, he also indicates the resemblance and complimentary nature of the interpretation of the symbol as seen by Jung (to which Fredericksen refers) vis à vis the achievements of the hermeneutics of culture (Eliade, Ricoeur, Avierintsev).

Wojciech Michera THE ALCHEMICAL IMAGERY OF WERNER HERZOG. A SYMBOLIC EXEGESIS OF „HEART OF GLASS”

The author of this article employs the hermetic tradition of alchemy as a key to his proposed interpretation of Werner Herzog's *Heart of Glass* (Herz aus Glas). He presents the fundamental concepts and the very idea of the alchemical process, and distinguishes two aspects: practical — *operatio*, and intellectual — *tractatus*. Contrary to commonly held opinions, alchemy was not merely concerned with the production of gold. Its process of transformation was a symbolic materialization of the spiritual change of the apprentice while alchemical gold (*aurum nostrum*) and the philosophical stone (*lapis philosophorum*) were symbols of the goal and crowning of the goal and crowning of that transformation.

The author discerns the „alchemical nature” of the film both in its practical

dimension — *operatio* (e.g. the cast performs under hypnosis) and symbolic dimension. The ruby glass, which is the aim of the quest in the plot, closely resembles the philosophical stone and its mystical meaning. Alchemical beliefs as well as certain motifs of ancient mythology and the legend about the Graal enable us to better comprehend the symbolic sense of the activity pursued by the heroes.

Heart of Glass is a depiction of a never ending transformation summarized in the visions of Hias, the shepherd-prophet (in particular the first vision of a descending and ascending world, and the last one of four persons sailing in a „boat which is much too small” to the end of the world).

The article ends with comments which try to determine the possibility of applying the accepted line of interpretation in a discussion on Herzog's other films.

Dariusz Czaja VENICE AND DEATH. SYMBOLIC CONTEXTS

Venice holds a special place in the mythical geography of Europe. This is a distinct region, typical for its characteristic „supravalue”. Only Venice, among the many myth-producing European towns, has generated such a universal resonance in literature. Interest in Paris, St. Petersburg, Dublin or Vienna remained within the range of local, national tradition, but the image of Venice has found its expression in almost the whole of European literature. The Venetian myth develops around several tangible motifs, one of the most frequent and most spectacularly present in numerous testimonies being the motif of death. Starting with T. Mann's *Death in Venice*, the author pursues the connection between Venice and death in other texts (poetry, the belles lettres, travel books). He draws attention to the recurrence of a number of motifs associated with the symbolics of Thanatos. He also demonstrates the process of the introduction of semiotics into urban space (water, streets, palaces, and gondolas which bring to mind death and its attributes). By capturing elements of the symbols of death (darkness, blackness, subterranean, silence and oblivion), the author proves the affiliation between the image of Venice and the archaic and folklore vision of the other world. Finally, he accents the connection between the analysed stereotype images and clichés on the one hand, and archetypical contents on the other hand.

Monika Sznajderman „OLD GRINGO”: THE MOTIF OF DON QUIXOTE IN FILM AND LITERATURE

The author analyses the presence of the mythological motif of Don Quixote in other literary works, and in particular in Carlos Fuentes' book *Old Gringo* and the film by Luis Puenzo under the same title. *Don Quixote* by Cervantes is described here as a „travel book”, accompanying many literary and metaphorical journeys, and its hero is a patron of „other”, „strange” heroes who, mad in the eyes of the world, wander in search of truth and death. One of them was Ambrose Bierce, an authentic American author and journalist, whose hypothetical, mythologized history has been reconstructed by Fuentes and Puenzo. In Bierce's life story (both its literary and film version), one can detect meanings which connect him with his distant past, the foolish knight from La Mancha. The strongest bond between the two is the attitude and philosophy of a jester, together with the whole symbolic burden of that concept.

Wiesław Juszcak THE WORK OF ART AND THE „LIMIT OF SENSE”

This is an analysis of *Babette's Feast* by Gabriel Axel, based on a novel by Karen Blixen. The simple but unusual tale is made real i.a. by its precise historical setting. The author interprets the film as a story about a work of art and the revelation of grace. He concentrates his attention on the mystery of sacrifice, selected from among the numerous references perceivable in the film, and describes the feast which crowns it as a „potlatch” since the nature of the french dinner given by Babette is that of a religious cult. In its course the work of art and the sacrifice merge together. „The supreme message of *Babette's Feast* is probably contained in the discovery and growing awareness of the fact that a work of art, both as a concentration and emancipation of a certain force and energy which it would be most suitable to describe as the force of truth, takes hold of us, envelopes us and compels us to participate in it”. When General Loewenhielm mentions grace (the grace of comprehending events from one's life during the feast) and Babette confesses that if she was able to offer the whole of herself then she was capable of providing others with perfect happiness, they are both speaking about the same: the experience of infinite and limitless fulfillment. A true work of art is a sacrifice and a communion — an act of merging.

Dariusz Czaja THE ETERNAL MOMENT. ON „BABETTE'S FEAST”

The author concentrates his attention predominantly on an interpretation of the symbolic dimension of the feast mentioned in the title of the film. He notices an underlying image of the Last Supper. Subsequently, he performs a closer analysis of two motifs: the idea of the sacrifice and the dialectics of the moment and eternity. He also compares certain scenes from the film with fragments of two books by Virginia Woolf („Mrs. Dalloway” and „To the Lighthouse”). Finally, the author demonstrates the way in which the vision of the feast merges with the archetype of Paradise.

Zbigniew Benedyktowicz „MARY AND MARTHA” (ON „BABETTE'S FEAST”)

The author concentrates his analysis on the motif which refers to the Evangelical parable about Martha and Mary and which, in his opinion, is the most significant both for the construction of Karen Blixen's novel and for the film. He examines the mode in which this tale is transformed and repeated, confronting two life patterns: *vita activa* and *vita passiva* (Protestantism versus Catholicism), a puritanically ascetic life and the lay life and condition of the artist.

Marta Leśniakowska ON THE SIN OF GLUTTONY AND CULTURAL CONFLICT. REMARKS PROVOKED BY „BABETTE'S FEAST”

From first century A.D. culinary art was contained in the classical definition of art as *ars/techné*. It also became the fundamental element of Western civilization (life style) and a symbol of a definite existential thesis. The story presented in *Babette's Feast* situates it in the realm of the socio-ethnological orbis interior-orbis exterior thesis and a cultural confrontation initiated by the „alien”. This fact makes it possible to view the film as an illustration of a polemic between a dual concept of European civilization and the two ethical attitudes within the framework of European Christianity (Protoeasternism and Catholicism), as well as a Kantian controversy between middle class and court culture (the enclosed culture of Protestant burghers contra the open Catholic culture). The narrative leads from conflict to acceptance, a process with a distinct ecumenical overtone. The heroes of *Babette's Feast* retain their own traditional spheres of „a lesser homeland”, and in this context the film can be regarded as a contribution to the political discussion concerning the unification of Europe.

Janusz Gazda AN ARTIST WHO CONTRIVES ONLY THE TRUTH

A great artist is a person who knows a lot by the very nature of things and not a person who uses knowledge gained from others. A great artist never imitates anyone but seeks his own paths and remains original not because he pursues originality but because he remains himself. Serge Parajanov, the author of *The Shadows of Our Forgotten Ancestors* and *The Colour of Pomegranates*, one of the greatest personalities of world cinema, was such an artist. He was born an Armenian in Georgia (Tbilisi) and his fate was determined by living in a country known as the Soviet Union although he never made any Soviet films but became part of the culture of either the Ukraine or the Caucasus (Armenia, Georgia, Azerbaijan). The author of this study analyses the motifs of Parajanov's work and poetics, reflecting on the essence of the greatness of an artist whose every film is a journey into the infinite domain of strange and little-known cultures. The intention of such journeys was to enter into the complicated world of symbols, rituals, beliefs and myths, and to discover that what is most important for understanding basic universal truths. By displaying the beauty of man-made objects, the artist wished to „show man his scale, his spiritual maximum”. Dostoevsky claimed that „beauty will save the world”. Parajanov decided above all, to salvage beauty in a state which had intentionally condemned it to annihilation.

Sławomir Sikora PHOTOGRAPHY — MEMORY — IMAGINATION

The connection between memory and photography appears to be obvious and has been even expressed in the phrase: „mirror with a memory”. If one could describe photography as external memory, then it would contain a similar dilemma as Plato's concept of writing. In discourse, Ricoeur maintains, we deal with the dialectics of an event and meaning. Writing retains meaning at the price of the event. By way of contrast, photography retains the event and leaves meaning uncertain, to say the least. The essence of photography, according to Barthes, is hidden in the simple and banal expression: „that has been” associated with the extreme metonymical and ametaphorical nature of photographs. The author of the article refers to the categories of *studium* and *punctum*, distinguished by Barthes, and claims that the *punctum* element possesses a double reference (similar in this respect to the language of poetry). In this element the essence of photography („that has been”) can be transcended, opening up strictly metonymical photography toward metaphorical and symbolic meanings. The element of the imagination is indispensable for such a transcendence. An important example which indicates the possibility of transcendence is the experience described by Barthes (*Camera Lucida*) who discovered the truth about his dead mother in her photograph.

Ryszard Ciarka FILM AND THE TRUE IMAGE OF THINGS

The intention of the author is to answer an apparently simple but cleverly posed question concerning the role of the image in film as a carrier of the sense or idea of the work. This prime element of cinematic art functions, after all, in a context of objective reality (everyday life) and created reality, in this manner transcending beyond the sphere of that what it means in itself. This „surplus” of reality and meanings contained in the image, which endow the given work with its sense, cannot be reduced to a single scene nor to the logic of montage and, the author contends, could be deciphered in accordance with the poetic formula of „*rerum simulacra*”. Just as a suitably selected word which due to the very act of selection ceases to be only a word, and can produce a true image of things, so the film image, involved in two realities and its own technical nature, creates a new reality which we can no longer reduce and which we must learn to decipher and comprehend.

Anna Sobolewska THE CONSTRUCTION OF EXISTENCE

In his video films (based on High Definition technique) Zbigniew Rybczyński constantly experiments with the film material, the categories of time and space. The axis of his works is often a symbolic or allegorical depiction of the „path of life”, leading from childhood up to old age and death. The author of the article emphasizes the symbolic and „artificial” nature of the created time and space in which all definitions pertain exclusively to the sphere of culture (*Orchestra*). Rybczyński makes free use of the symbols of our culture, which become elements of a game whose purpose is cinematic „epistemology”: the disclosure of the universal rules of our existence. The director cherishes the Renaissance model of the artist-artisan, a master of the imagination and technology (L. da Vinci). His own favourite strategy is the technology of disillusion, parody and irony.

The author proposes a semiotic analysis of Rybczyński's films since the intention of the artist is a search for significant oppositions governing both our time and space, as well as the unconscious activity of the human mind. Rybczyński's works are composed of an incessant translation from one

symbolic system into another. *Orchestra* is not merely the visualization of music. The director proposes only symbolic action in several sign systems simultaneously. The theory and praxis of the translation, concealed in the film, are compared by the author of the article with the Cabbala.

The key to Rybczyński's vision of culture could be the concept of a game. A. Sobolewska connects it with the idea of the divine game contained in Hindu philosophy, and with the vision of the divine paradoxical synthesis of calmness and motion.

Violetta Kutlubasis-Krajewska, Piotr Krajewski MIXED TAPES, OR VIDEO-ART AT THE WROCLAW FESTIVAL

The text introduces the Polish reader to basic information concerning the origin and development of video-art. It also comprises a presentation of the largest Polish festival devoted to this form of art — the Sound Basis Visual Art Festival (WRO) which takes place in Wrocław.

Ludwik Stomma THE ANTHROPOLOGY OF CULTURE, HISTORY AND WINNIE THE POOH

The article discusses the possibility of applying the anthropology of culture in research into contemporary culture. The main theme is the appearance of the category of childhood in European culture and the transformation of the miniature adult who becomes a child, together with all the attributes: his own toys, clothes, habits, speech and literature. (The fairytales by the Brothers Grimm and even those by Andersen are permeated with truth; Disney was the first to create a children's world as such). One of the prominent postulates of the text is the necessity of taking into account, in ethnological investigations, the category of history (even in such synchronical methods as structuralism) since, the author maintains, too often the fact that culture is to a considerable extent decreed, is simply forgotten.

Wiesław Szpilka TO SEE THE WORLD: ETHNOGRAPHY VIS A VIS FILM AND MASS CULTURE

The article aims at presenting the specificity of an ethnographic description of mass culture whose distinctness is achieved by a confrontation with other ways of presenting the phenomenon in question. From the viewpoint of ethnography, such descriptions fall victim to three illusions listed by P. Ricoeur: the creator, the recipient and the source. Three popular and still oft-encountered opinions in the literature on the subject appear to be the outcome of those illusions. The conception proposed by M. McLuhan, for instance, is an example of the illusion of the source: civilizational changes are supposed to explain mass culture. Illusions of the recipient correspond to J. Ortega y Gasset's visions of mass man, mass culture being the realization of the latter's desires. Finally, one could regard J.H. Schiller's *Helmsmen of the Consciousness* as an illusion of the creator. For this author, as well as for all those who wrote about the socialist variant of mass culture, the belief that the creator imposes meaning upon the recipients constitutes a basic premise for the theory of manipulation. Mass culture is perceived as the tool of domination and the subjugation of certain groups by others. At the basis of all these illusions there lies a causal-effective way of thinking which, instead of speaking about the phenomenon itself, is concerned with that which precedes it or which is its aftermath. The point of departure for ethnographic description is the phenomenon on which it concentrates itself and in which it seeks meanings. It, therefore, presumes that the phenomenon has an objective existence. The ethnographer treats phenomena of mass culture as texts: starting from their external common denominators — the mass recipient — he makes his way to internal textual unity.

An example of W. Szpilka's opinions on the subject of mass culture could be his publication entitled *BATMAN — A TALE OF CREATION*. In it, he proposes a structural analysis of T. Burton's film and concentrates his attention on the mythical dimension of the story and its two prime heroes — Batman and Joker. He dissects the film into three parts, making it possible to view it as a classic example of rites des passages and a story about a new creation of the world. The permanence of the proposed models enables the author to formulate a conclusion about the sacral nature of mass culture in which, similarly to traditional cultures, a greater emphasis is placed on the recurrence and permanence of patterns than on innovation.

The text is followed by fragments of a discussion which was held at a seminar organized in the Institute of Art. Special attention should be drawn to the opinion voiced by T. Rutkowska who suggested a totally different interpretation and, by referring to the theory of U. Eco, indicated that *Batman* could be considered a classical postmodernistic work, together with its concept of a double code.

Monika Sznajderman WHAT DOES THAT MASK CONCEAL? IN CONNECTION WITH THE MOTIF OF THE JOKER: A FEW REMARKS CONCERNING „BATMAN”

The author analyses Joker — the antagonist of Batman — by discussing consecutive strata of the myth concealed under his mask. She begins with the motif of the murderous jester and the evil clown, well enrooted in literature and the cinema, and goes on to reflect on the image of the carnival produced by Joker, which becomes a symbolic regression of the world into a state of chaos, followed by a new creation. The last motif is the Promethean myth whose distant traces can be detected in Joker's fate.

Teresa Rutkowska POSTMODERNISM AND FILM

The article situates film in the context of reflections on postmodernism. Baudrillard, Jameson and above all Eco devote much attention to mass culture, including the cinema, ascribing to it an essential role in shaping the postmodernistic landscape. Such features of postmodernistic art as the abolishing of the borderline between high and low art, a fascination with kitsch, commercials, and exploited literary and film clichés, and the devaluation of creative individuality, have their source indubitably in mass culture; moreover, the distinction between a product of mass culture and a postmodernistic work often generates controversies. Jameson and Eco are inclined to perceive the difference in an intertextuality typical for postmodernistic texts.

Jameson draws attention to the pastiche as the dominating creative strategy of the current, while for Eco the greatest importance belongs to the double code, that is, the coexistence within the same text of two levels — one addressed to the sophisticated audience and one which is attractive for the less educated viewer. Films by David Lynch, Peter Greenaway and Woody Allen are regarded as typically postmodernistic. In Poland, where postmodernism is distinctly imitative, mention can be made of *Swansong* by Robert Gliński and *Deja vu* by Juliusz Machulski.

Ewa Klekot "MATADOR", OR A SPANISH POSTMODERNISTIC TALE

Beginning from a formal trick which consists of showing many possible types of reality, up to a reply which the plot gives to questions posed by itself, *Matador* by Pedro Almodovar appears to be the product of relativism, typical for postmodernism. At the same time, it is an attempted declaration concerning the fundamental (and thus nonrelative?) experiences of existence, such as love and death. In order to conciliate those two premises, the film seeks refuge in the poetics of myth, the epos and the fairytale, displayed in Spanish decorations. The idea of the film is not based on a drama of attitudes, conflict of manners and morals or a psychological analysis of the dramatis personae, although all these elements do occur in it. Its heroes participate in cosmic (figuratively but also literally) phenomena and thanks to the director they change into the heroes of a myth, who exist beyond good and evil.

Czesław Robotycki VAMPIRES. FROM FOLK BELIEFS TO FILM PHANTOMS

The article begins with a description of events which took place in Cracow and Katowice in the years 1985, 1972 and 1964 when circulating rumours mentioned a vampire who killed women.

The author poses a question concerning the reason for the topicality of an apparently distant cultural matrix in popular culture and image of the world. In order to understand the phenomenon and to discover an answer to the above formulated query, he proposes to examine the various cultural contexts which in the past contained the category of the vampire. He thus discusses West European medieval beliefs, Slav and Romanian folk beliefs, Polish Romantic literature, the European Gothic novel, the vampire novel, beginning with Bram Stoker, and, finally, film adaptations of the vampire motif and Dracula.

In conclusion, the author maintains that in Polish culture the permanence of the vampire matrix should be connected with Romantic literature and folk beliefs, considering the slight acquaintanceship with foreign literature, limited reception of foreign films and the small frequency of the theme in the Polish cinema.

Aleksander Jackowski TO EXPERIENCE FICTION

The author discusses a certain specific, intermediate and fictitious space, which, nonetheless, affects reality. It could be described as „serious fiction” since although we frequently know that we are dealing with fiction, it inspires „serious” emotions. The author recalls his visits to film locations and the earnest, moving and humorous confrontations between film and reality. The reminiscences end with a story about the decorations which were supposed to resemble the market place of the small Jewish town of Drohobycz, and which were made for W. Has's *The Hourglass Sanatorium*, based on the prose of Bruno Schulz.

Anna Beata Bohdziewicz PHOTODIARY, OR A SONG ABOUT THE END OF THE WORLD

The author is a qualified ethnologist and photographer. The idea of a *Photodiary* appeared as an illumination in 1981, the year of the great Polish holiday of Solidarity. The author, however, embarked upon her work a year later, already during the martial law period. The photodiary is composed of over 3 000 photographs and concerns political, social and private lives. The works, always with a title, are accompanied by a commentary, a joke or a counterpoint, which introduce an element of play between the image and words. The published text could be regarded as the author's credo. Bohdziewicz believes in an expressive image and strong word. A photograph which is connected with the past or the future, but never with the present, always contains a feature which, citing M. Kundera, she calls „Clementis' cap” (a detail which takes on special importance).

Zbigniew Benedyktowicz "FLEETING PICTURES" — AN INTERVIEW WITH PIOTR SKRZYNECKI

This is a conversation with Piotr Skrzynecki, the leader of the famous Cracow "Piwnica pod Baranami" cabaret who is at the moment preparing his second film. In it he presents the story of a small square situated close to the Wawel Hill (the residence of Polish monarchs) which has become a special, unique center of unofficial artistic life for more than twenty years, at a time when Polish culture was subjected to a state monopoly, censorship etc. and when the "Piwnica pod Baranami" was part of the avantgarde of the Polish underground. The film about the Na Groblach Square is a record of picturesque, colorful and surrealist events in the history of the square; in the filmmaker's memory they have merged with his lifestory and the history of the unusual cabaret whose co-author he remains up to this very day. Skrzynecki's film is conceived as a story of the twenty years in his life whose message is addressed to his eccentric Jewish grandmother, a resident of Paris, who died in the Mauthausen death camp. The interview is supplemented by a sketch which explains the scenario and the texts of two songs composed for the film, which open and close the narrative.

Małgorzata Niezabitowska FREE MAN

The article deals with an exceptional phenomenon in the Silesian village of Bojszowa. This is the site of a film studio belonging to Józef Kłyk, director, producer, designer and author. Kłyk hoped to graduate from a film school but his parents chose another profession. He, therefore, devotes all his leisure time

to his passion with which he has also infected the residents of the village (who act in the films).

The first films were made with the cheapest possible amateur camera, later replaced by slightly better equipment. Kłyk's favourite genre are westerns. By combining Silesia and America, he has created the figure of Józef Zlotko, an emigrant from the middle of the nineteenth century. The first films were no longer than twenty minutes but the most recent ones are full length productions with a complicated plot. Kłyk consciously refers to various models which he then creatively transforms. His works contain only commentary (the author claims that westerns cannot have Polish dialogues). The number of films produced in the course of 25 years totals 68, including 7 full length pictures.

Józef Szymańczyk I AM A PHOTOGRAPHER (An Interview Noted by Anna Engelking)

„I am a photographer” is a registered conversation held with Józef Szymańczyk, in which he presents his lifestory. Szymańczyk comes from Kosowo Poleskie which is now part of Byelorussia. Prior to the first world war, when he ran a photographic studio, Kosowo was situated in a terrain of great national and cultural differentiation and the coexistence of Byelorussian, Jewish and Polish communities. Józef Szymańczyk, who comes from a poor family, is a self-taught photographer, enthusiastic and full of curiosity, who became an observer and registrar of the reality of Polesie. We owe to him a unique collection of about 70 photographs which he made in the 1930s in several villages of the region, and which would not have come into being, had he been only an artisan.

„I am a photographer. This is both good and bad”, he declared. Polesie, after all, witnessed changing authorities, political systems, states and frontiers. It became obvious that the task of the photographer which is to register everything which he sees, could be very dangerous. The story of Józef Szymańczyk tells how the fate of a humble photographer from a small studio in a county town became intertwined with History. This would not have been the case had the hero of our tale not been a photographer by vocation; someone who not only observes and makes images permanent but also creates.

Aleksander Jackowski CREATION AND DOCUMENT. FILMS BY ANDRZEJ RÓŻYCKI

Andrzej Różycki, director and photographer, from the very outset connected with the Łódź avantgarde ("Zero-61") claims that "photography has already transcended the scale of human eyesight a long time ago". He uses the camera for the realization of philosophical and poetic undertakings. In his film works Różycki deals with ethnographic issues. He is of the opinion, however, that one cannot restrict oneself to a pure document which is incapable of transmitting the truth. Even while registering man-made works, he tries to show a wider context: religious, spiritual, social and psychological, and capture the meaning of depicted reality. The author of the article discusses Różycki's more important ethnographic films.

Anna Beata Bohdziewicz WARSAW SHRINES

Old Warsaw courtyards have preserved shrines which, although quite old, are still well taken care of — renovated, painted and redecorated. Several types of huts, figures of Christ and the Holy Virgin can be distinguished. It is interesting to note that the standard figures often display different, individualised facial features.

FROM THE FOLIO OF MARIUSZ A. WIECZORKOWSKI

The author is an ethnologist by profession and a photographer whose art seeks in the sphere of metaphysics the symbol and new cognitive possibilities of man. His texts deal, predominantly, with the ontology of photography. In the *GALLEY OF UNINTENTIONAL PHOTOGRAPHS* (An Attempted Eidetic Capturing of the Essence of Photography) he tries to prove upon the basis of an analysis of involuntarily made photographs (which he distinguishes from mechanical registration) that photography is always intentional and determined by subjectivity. The *BLACK BELT* discusses the connection between photographic image and photographed reality. Here the pretext is an attempt at rediscovering photographs-self portraits made wearing a sweater which one day was turned into a floor rag. A similar problem is examined in *WHITE SIGN. RESPONSE* draws attention to the symbolic dimensions of photography.

Ryszard Ciarka TO SEE, FEEL AND THINK — AN INTERVIEW WITH JACEK OŁĘDZKI

Jacek Ołędzki is one of the very few Polish ethnologists who for years have devoted themselves to photography and ethnological films. His works (over 20) deal, above all, with rituals (Poland, Africa, Mongolia). Both films and photographs are always accompanied by analytical articles. Ołędzki was able to reach the very essence of phenomena in an extremely synthetic fashion, sometimes attempting a rather bold comparison, for example, between the humanism of sheep sacrifice in Mongolia and the sacrifice of Christ in a sequence showing a Catholic priest performing the *mea culpa* gesture (*Agnus Dei* 1984). One of Ołędzki's mottoes is to teach to see, and moderation in excess — a striving towards the capturing of form and mood from visual reality.

Krzysztof Kubiak COLETTE'S „REGARDS” — COMMENTS BY A PARTICIPANT FROM THE EAST

The article contains reflections by a participant of the „Regards sue les sociétés européennes” film seminar held for many years now (1983—1992) by Colette Piault in various countries. The unique nature of these seminars consists of the possibility to see a large number of films with a simultaneous opportunity to discuss with the authors their cinematic and anthropological strategies. This is also an occasion for presenting 'works-in-progress' — films which are still incomplete. Thanks to constructive criticism attendants of the seminar perfected their workshop. The last part of the article is composed of the author's comments about several anthropological films as yet not screened in Poland.