

Summary of doctoral dissertation

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Theme: Towards literary and philosophical *koinè*. Study of Karol Libelt's writings

Karol Libelt (1807 - 1875) was a philosopher, social and political activist and educator of the Romantic period, who despite being present - to a small extent - in the awareness of Polish people, could simultaneously be recognized as a forgotten scholar. Overshadowed by the Polish national poets, not being *primum inter pares*, a thinker, whose writings were considered secondary by twentieth-century scholars, is however an author marked out for his work to be described in the context of complex nineteenth-century consciousness transformation affected both by the sense of modernity crisis and enthusiastic awakening of the identities of oppressed nations. The above statement includes two objectives of this study: to recap the ideological content of the forgotten philosopher's writings - i.e. to reread philosophical literature by Karol Libelt and to position these works in the European perspective of thought. The deliberations in this dissertation meet both the need to analyse theoretical problems of the relationship between philosophy and literature as exemplified in writings by Karol Libelt, and to find an answer to the question of how scholars and writers approach conceptualization of their cognitive experiences. Following this path is necessary to grasp the mental and aesthetic transformation which has clearly been influencing the shape of Polish cultural, social and political mindset until today. The analysis of a philosophical statement presented here is based on the belief that the language, despite modern "breaking of the covenant between word and world", which George Steiner writes about in *The Broken Contract*, has epiphanic potential that makes it possible to describe the cultural mechanisms behind creating formulas corresponding to human needs and relationships.

Thinking about permeability of literature and philosophy as presented in this work matches the formula of *koinè* (from Greek *ἡ κοινὴ διάλεκτος* - common dialect) applied in the

title of the dissertation. The formula, common form of Greek *ex definitione*, which with time gained the status of *lingua franca* of the times stretching from the beginning of the Hellenistic era and the late antiquity, is a resonant scientific and cultural metaphor whose fundamental core has been shaped by linguistics. This term is primarily applied to a language or dialect formed as a result of l o n g - t e r m contacts between users of two mutually understandable language systems.

In this work two overriding strategies of reading philosophical statements have been used falling within the literary optics looking at this type of work. These are comparative and rhetorical strategies, corresponding to the belief that a reliable literary study is a resultant of philological precision and hermeneutical experience. Strategies of cultural comparative studies encompassing imagology, cross-cultural psychology, intertextuality and anthropological concepts of "the third place", allow for Libelt's considerations to be positioned in the context of a search by the Polish scholars for the place of Slavs in history and histories, at the same time treating comparison, not only as a rhetorical effect, but primarily as a way of thinking about the surrounding reality.

Rhetorical strategies consisting in the rhetoric of sublimity, metaphorology and myth make it possible to read a philosophical statement as a rhetorical creation oriented not only towards persuasion but also conceptualization of certain experiences and perceptions. Figures of sublimity, metaphors, mythical and biblical reinterpretations used by Libelt illustrate the desires and fears of the nineteenth-century generation of thought, at the same time conveying the desire to master broad horizons of cognition and knowledge which, together with the modernity transformation experience seemed to recede inevitably. What connects the two strategies adopted in the dissertation is the holistic view of thinking about culture, philosophy and literature (including the language), which could fall under the general category of hermeneutics.

The work has been divided into three parts: *Introduction: methodological motivations*, *Part I: Writings by Karol Libelt against nineteenth-century cultural and literary currents: strategies of cultural comparative studies* and *Part II: Rhetorical ordering of the world*.

Introduction: methodological motivations, divided into four parts, is not only a schematic presentation of the selected methodology and objectives, but also a detailed discussion of methodological motivations, objectives of the work and preliminary results of studies on the thinker's philosophical legacy. Here it presents the voices of twentieth-century scholars in the debate over the relationship between philosophy and literature, an extensive reflection on hermeneutics as a way of reading both literature and philosophy, views on

comparative studies and the rhetoric of sublimity, within which there are also some reflections on the concept of the metaphor and the poetics of myth. The methodological search included in this part of the work is an attempt to find an answer to the question of how to talk about the romantic philosophical discourse. It is also an attempt for the research area to be outlined, identified and put in order. The reflection is primarily aimed at the determination of the field for a detailed analysis of Libelt's treatises and is of itemized character, constituting representative examples of the most common interactions occurring between philosophy and literature. The *introduction* also contains the fifth part which is a map of the writing system of Karol Libelt's philosophy. It allows you to gain insight into a complex philosophical system developed by the scholar and the logic of this work. The scheme in question consists of four associograms, which subsequently represent the essence of the concept of *umu*, i.e. the total power of shaping and *primary forms, derived forms* and *transition forms*.

Part Two: Writings by Karol Libelt against nineteenth-century cultural and literary currents: strategies of cultural comparative studies consisting of three chapters, is devoted to romantic comparative studies, the issue of the positioning of its creation in the context of cultural and social transformations of the 19th century, and its inclusion in the general philosophical and cultural programme of the Romantic period. It is also dedicated to the analysis and interpretation of the scholar's most important treatises. Its major part constitutes an analytical and interpretive study of the issue of intertextuality of Libelt's writings, and especially the presence of comparative parallels and their importance for shaping the consciousness of the period. In this part of the dissertation works by contemporary sociologists, philosophers and psychologists (Antonina Kłoskowska, Zygmunt Bauman and Paweł Boski) have also been used raising issues of national culture, cross-cultural psychology, stereotypes and identity creation as a result of interaction between "WE" and "OTHERS". It also touches upon the question of imagological vision of the national map of the nineteenth-century Europe, the romantic search for the third place and the reasons for interspersing literary quotations in the course of philosophical statements with the clash of works by classical ancient creators with the works by Polish poets of the 18th and 19th century leading the way.

The third part of the dissertation, *Rhetorical ordering of the world* has been devoted to the analysis of the scholar's writings in a rhetorical dimension, i.e. the treatises have been analyzed with the use of staffage of the rhetoric of sublimity, metaphorology and the poetics of myth. It has been divided into two chapters: *The world is coming apart at its seams and is threatened with collapse - the rhetoric of sublimity against the experience of cultural crisis*

and *The order within chaos or Libelt multiplying metaphors*. The analyses conducted here are accompanied by the conviction that the rhetoric is not only an art of beautiful speaking, a technical tool of manipulation and control, but also a dynamic ability of a rational man. Libelt's texts are therefore treated as a mirror of the scholar's certain store of knowledge about the world, as a representation of his emotional states, as well as an analogue of reality, a form of access to the nineteenth-century mentality (not just Libelt's, but also the one of the whole generation of thought).

Markus Nijm