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POINTS OF VIEW AND THE DAILY PRESS AT THE TURN OF THE 19TH AND 20TH CENTURIES

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1. The periodical as a distinct structure

The following article may be considered a sort of appendix to my book *Powieść w świecie prasy. Bolesław Prus i inni* [*The Novel in the World of the Press. Bolesław Prus and Others*].¹ For the sake of convenience, I will cite its main hypotheses:

1. In the last three decades of the 19th century the Polish press (particularly dailies and illustrated weeklies in Warsaw) provided space for the first editions of novels and, more generally, for short fiction forms.

2. The Polish press is not merely a neutral channel for communication but a separate carrier that is equivalent to a book and, at the same time, a separate whole, of which the literary work is a part.

3. Within the framework of this whole, distinct relationships are formed between the prose being published and the context of the journal's page, issue, or title. These relationships are of huge importance for the reading process and for the text's influence on the reader; they consist in formal imitation within the novel of elements of genres used in opinion journalism and in similarities in both the content of novel excerpts and that of the press context.

4. An individual newspaper title may be considered a distinct artwork characterised by a structure that varies depending on the type of journal (dailies,

¹ Przemysław Pietrzak, *Powieść w świecie prasy. Bolesław Prus i inni* (Warszawa: PWN, 2017).

weeklies). No matter what particular type we are dealing with, such a structure usually consists of a certain repertoire of genres, their characteristic layout, including any non-verbal page elements (vignettes, typography, graphic art elements), and the possibilities of individualising the writing subject (usually broader in the case of illustrated weeklies). Another issue is linked to literary fiction, which can, as a specific writing strategy, permeate forms and sections typical of opinion journalism.²

In the second part of my book, in which I considered the particularity of a periodical regarded as one work (a collective one, multi- and intergeneric, comprising a wide variety of subject matter and modes of writing), I omitted a question that was almost automatically referred to in some scholarly circles any time the issue of artistic prose was raised, i.e. that of points of view. Issues related to genres seemed to me to be of greater importance, although together with those linked to style, and particularly to the author's voice within a text, they can all be linked to the *point of view* theory.

What new things can we learn about the daily press at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries (similar and yet different when compared to that of our times) once we ask about the manifestation and mutual orchestration of various points of view in its structure as a whole? What, then, will distinguish it from a work of art in the standard sense of the term (e.g. a novel, treatise, picture, etc.)? On the other hand, what new aspects does an analysis of the daily press introduce to our knowledge about points of view as elements of an utterance (not only narrative ones)? What sorts of associations accompany a particular adjustment of the literary narrative perspective when it becomes a part of a journal page? And, finally, going beyond the temporal limits of my monograph, what happens with all of this in the first decades of the 20th century when ambitious literature is no longer a part of everyday journals (since it has 'escaped' to professional periodicals), while such papers as a distinct device of communication have become an object of interest in the arts, particularly the avant-garde.

Let us start with some preliminary assumptions.

² Quite a similar approach to the problem of fictional prose in journals is represented by the French scholar Marie-Ève Thérénty in her study on the newspaper and literature during the time of the July Monarchy in France: *Mosaïques. Être écrivain entre presse et roman 1829–1836* (Paris: Honoré Champion Éditeur, 2003). We should also mention her book on the poetics of the French 19th-century daily newspaper: *La littérature au quotidien. Poétiques journalistiques au XIX^e siècle* (Paris: Édition du Seuil, 2007). See also Sean Latham and Robert Scholes, "The Rise of Periodical Studies," *Publications of the Modern Language Association of America* 2 (2006).

2. Points of view, meaning what?

The literature devoted to this term and to various related concepts (narrative perspective, focalisation, voice) is so extensive that a thorough review would require writing another article on the topic.³ Meanwhile, here it is crucial primarily to establish several important facts. What does the so-called ‘point of view’ in fact signify? In whom or what is it vested? How is it manifested and by using what means?

The largest number of controversies is provoked by the first question as a result of the term’s double meaning which functions in many languages (including English, in which it was applied for the first time in a description of Henry James’ novels) as a common word for someone’s attitude, position, or opinion. Hence, speech, as the main system used for expressing one’s ‘views,’ is used on a par with perception (that which is literally ‘viewed’) in narratologist analyses. It seems, however, that the critical resistance put up by some scholars (Mieke Bal) to such a merging of meanings does not make much sense, as one may understand the term ‘point of view’ quite broadly.⁴ Thus it can be defined as a manifestation of someone’s perception (not only visual), knowledge, and thoughts (speech), and even of his or her position within the social hierarchy, under the condition that we simultaneously remember about the sophisticated relationships between these various spheres.⁵ What I can see usually influences my knowledge (and vice versa), which, in turn, together with my approach to what I can see and know, is expressed to a considerable degree through words. The distinctiveness of this evaluation, attitude, or approach arising from one’s perceptual (and social) perspective may vary considerably. In the novels from the second half of the 19th century, seeing was usually strictly tied to emotion, thought, and judgement (by both the character and the narrator). The ideal to which Alain Robbe-Grillet’s prose aspired in the mid-20th century was an exclusively perceptual description, to such an extent that any elements necessary

³ Mikhail Bakhtin, *Problemy tvorczestwa Dostojewskiego* (Leningrad: Priboj, 1929); Franz K. Stanzel, *Typische Formen des Romans* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1964); Michał Głowiński, *Powieść młodopolska. Studium z poetyki historycznej* (Wrocław: Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich, 1969), 82–147; Gérard Genette, *Figures III* (Paris: Édition du Seuil, 1972); Stanisław Eile, *Światopogląd powieści* [*The Worldview of the Novel*] (Wrocław: Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich, 1973), 81–128; Mieke Bal, *Narratologie. Éssais sur la signification narrative dans quatre romans modernes* (Paris: Klincksieck, 1977), 36–39.

⁴ Mieke Bal, *Narratology: Introduction to the Theory of Narrative* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2009).

⁵ Perhaps the widest understanding of this term was provided by Boris Uspensky in his book *Poetika kompozicii (Struktura chudożestwiennogo tieksta i tipologija kompozicijnoj formy)* [*A Poetics of Composition (The Structure of the Artistic Text and Typology of a Compositional Form)*] (Moscow: Isskustwo, 1970).

for coherence and understanding had to be introduced by the reader.⁶ We should also not forget that each element of such a cognitive perspective may be operated by different aspects of the text, e.g. a character may perform the act of looking and his or her thoughts may be formulated in his or her own language (or that of the narrator's), while the character's social role may be manifested by a particular garment or space (the street, a court, an office, a hut, etc.). In extreme cases, conflicts between these various elements in fact lead to an intersecting of various points of view.

Let us turn to another issue. In the simplest of situations, a point of view belongs to an individual subject (a narrator or a character in the work), i.e. the one who speaks or is spoken about. Nevertheless, when transferred to the field of a 19th-century newspaper, this category raises certain questions about its supra-individual dimension and not simply the personal one. In many press genres, and in particular in the journal as an integrated unit, a collective perspective comes to the fore – that of the whole editorial staff (the position of the daily or that of other titles cited in the particular paper), that of various entities with authority (regulations issued by the state or local authorities, official appeals, letters, and documents, and the like), that of a particular social group (a newspaper linked to a specific group, such as the aristocracy, intellectuals, articles written on behalf of scientists, financial circles, art lovers, etc.), that of various political factions (conservative or liberal newspapers), and that of the inhabitants of a town or quarter (noticeable in the territorial and content scope of the text or the whole newspaper). We can hardly overestimate the role of various collective entities in shaping the periodicals of those times once we realise the tendency then to anonymise the author (we shall return to this point below). At any rate, whether this applies only to journalistic forms or not is quite another question.

A point of view may be linked to a particular time. A daily newspaper, unlike a weekly, not to mention a monthly, is usually immersed in a perpetual 'now,' the current moment. This is where it seeks to encompass the largest possible amount of space (that of a city, state, continent, or world) and a complete social cross-section. The content of a daily is thus delimited by a calendar, predominantly a political one (illustrated weeklies are immersed in the 'long being' of history, science, and the arts). Hence the knowledge that is presented in a daily newspaper is the function of a day or even of a moment, a testimony to what is born by the very act of putting a date near a title's vignette and more detailed temporal information ('the morning/evening issue'). This knowledge can always be confirmed, further developed, or annulled by later reports.

⁶ See Michał Głowiński, "Nouveau roman – problemy teoretyczne," in M. Głowiński, *Porządek, chaos, znaczenie. Szkice o powieści współczesnej* (Warszawa: Państwowy Instytut Wydawniczy, 1968), 60–64.

It seems that a point of view may also, in a way, be connected to a genre. In the world of the press, this may be noticed in that some forms specify their topic and the modes through which it is expressed. Thus they also determine the approach of the subject(s) hidden behind them, e.g. a comparison of a news item, a report, and a chronicle (column) shows three different degrees of individualisation and of the personal character of a particular utterance. A news item, report, and reportage, in turn, represent three different degrees in the proximity of a view to some event, from the outside to the inside perspectives. A column is a form that is usually based on many points of view (through the citing of rival titles and incorporation of the words of either real or fictional characters representing various social types). The same refers to the article, except that this form does not need (in the times discussed) to manifest the author's perspective. At least virtually, the 'lead' should provide the 'objective' position held on a topic by different persons or the particular journal's collective perspective on the subject, whereas a column usually presents a writer's personality.

Travel reportage (which in that era was rather predominant within the weeklies) introduces a sophisticated play of perspectives. It assumes a close view of the described object according to the rule of gradual approximation: starting with encyclopaedic data (geography, statistics) up to thoroughly local details, also in a humanistic sense (such as establishing contact with a local population). Simultaneously, the author-traveller, even when he or she is 'inside,' frequently remains an 'outsider,' always 'one of ours' (a Pole, a European, a city-dweller) among the 'others'. He or she adopts a point of view close to that of the reader and, at the same time, the position of an 'expert' (often one being shaped under our very eyes).

We can already notice here, as our third preliminary issue, that a particular point of view (combined with a particular subjective perspective, be it an individual or a collective one), understood as a certain cognitive and/or judging perspective, can be manifested in several ways.

In a literary text (not only in the narrow sense of the word), perspective is basically revealed within someone's direct utterance (speech), i.e. someone to whom a particular perspective belongs. This refers to an utterance in each of its aspects, both that of its content and of its form, which can reveal a speaker's thoughts, perceptions, and social position, his or her cognitive comprehension, current emotional state, and so on.⁷ This can also be someone else's utterance

⁷ An exhaustive analysis of 'implied information' in this aspect of the utterance was delivered by Aleksandra Okopień-Sławińska in her "Relacje osobowe w literackiej komunikacji" ["Personal Relations in Literary Communication"], in A. Okopień-Sławińska, *Semantyka wypowiedzi poetyckiej (Preliminaria)* [*The Semantics of the Poetic Utterance*] (Wrocław: Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich, 1985).

about the person reporting any of the above-listed elements; therefore, their selection depends on the narrative strategy chosen by the author. This sophisticated game, usually undertaken by the intersection of both of these levels, i.e. that of the character and that of the narrator (the person and the author in a non-fiction text), usually with the predominance of one of these or several levels of double, hybridised speech, are all issues that have been the subject of passionate studies, thus there is no need to repeat them. They have all, in fact, focused on the same case, i.e. particular utterances made by various subjects. We should also ask what else the adoption of one or another perspective or point of view may indicate?

The above can certainly point to the concept that everything is related to the supraindividual subject and refers to any community, and at the same time manifests itself within a particular level of the text. Such a community takes on a more or less concrete form (starting, say, from the editorial staff of a periodical up to the social sections, professions, and degrees in the hierarchy of the local or state authorities) and may be indicated by the thematic sphere as well as by the formal aspects of speech. The role of such a clue may be performed then by the selected and described (or merely referred to) space, which is automatically associated with a certain community (e.g. a living room, the street, an office, poor neighbourhoods, the opera, a road outside the town) and that which fills it (the inhabitants, guests, passers-by, etc.). It may also be performed via the stylistic and generic elements of an utterance. When a new book is presented on the pages of a daily newspaper within the framework of a review, the voice of the critics comes to the fore (who, by the way, usually attempt to adopt the position of potential subscribers). When the same book is subject to a more in-depth analysis as an example of a particular genre, inscribed into the history of the nation, within an author's biography, and among the remaining part of his or her achievements (to cite the most characteristic tendencies in the discussed period), we have an expert's voice, in other words – that of 'science' (usually in the popular version). Finally, if our book is announced in the advertisement section, this will be a trade matter, particularly for booksellers. In accordance with the same principle, an extended article (the lead article, *le premier-Paris*) presents the editors' attitude towards a certain fact. A mere paragraph on it in the short news section reveals the position of a foreign press agency or newspaper (considered the voice of the country serving as an arena for a certain event) or of the institution that has made the statement, etc. The same refers to the following sections: local or international news, literature and art, press reviews, stock exchange quotations, and letters and responses, as all of them, so to say, adjust the lens in different ways (including in terms of the social parameters). And, last but not least, the press as a whole, which is an important matter for the considerations below,

may be received as simply a sign of the information media in action, of the 'Fourth Estate', the mass culture, or as instruments of a democratic discussion or manipulation conducted by an 'unknown but very powerful' group.

I believe that we should form the following hypothesis: the clearer the opposition is between several utterances representing different genres (and, consequently, various communities), the stronger the connection is between a specific collective point of view and a generic aspect of a particular utterance (the same can probably apply to, although on a smaller scale, speech regarded in the individual dimension). A letter is a form that anyone can use, yet printed on the page of a daily newspaper and set in the 'Letters to the Editors' section it ceases to be merely the voice of the person who has signed his or her name under it. As a specific genre, it reveals the position of the newspaper's subscribers.

3. Points of view in the press

It seems that in this context the specificity of the press (usually a daily newspaper) is contained not so much in the presence of individual points of view or in their arrangement within the framework of a unique utterance as in the considerable function of collective subjects and perspectives, and in their characteristic orchestration within the entire journal.⁸ Only in this very Bakhtinian polyphony do individual subjects obtain specific positions, for instance those that come to the fore in the literary works, reportages, and chronicles published in the column (*feuilleton*) section.

Unlike monthlies and weeklies (including illustrated ones), daily journal pages obtained a high degree of diversity as early as in the second half of the 19th century. Reports from abroad and from 'just around the corner' were placed on the same page, news from the world of great politics coexisted with a chronicle of accidents occurring in the neighbourhood, and articles were placed side-by-side a series of telegrams, a review of a theatrical play, or a column authored by a well-known writer. The page was divided into sections, more and more distinctly separated with lines and the appropriate typeface. The typesetting in dailies, arranged in several columns (sometimes as many as six, as in *Le Siècle* since the 1850s or *Le Figaro*, *The Times*, and the *Daily Telegraph* since the 1860s) or involving experiments with print in various directions (in advertisements), began to be reminiscent of a painting, and as a matter of fact included increasing amounts of iconographic elements.⁹ The French *Le Matin* began to use

⁸ Collectivity is one of the key words in Thérenty's study *La littérature au quotidien*, 61–77.

⁹ The Canadian scholar Christian Vandendorpe uses the term *tabularité* with regard to this aspect of the press: Christian Vandendorpe, *Du papyrus à l'hypertexte. Essai sur les mutations du texte et de la lecture* (Montréal, Paris: La Découverte, 1999).

photographs as early as at the beginning of the new, i.e. 20th, century. Before that, sketches were applied, as in the case of many Western dailies at that time.

The leading dailies in Warsaw, i.e. the most flourishing press centre within Polish territory at that time, such as *Kurier Warszawski*, *Kurier Codzienny*, *Gazeta Polska*, or *Słowo*, went through the same evolution with a distinct delay, yet by the end of the century their content and typesetting followed the same tendencies.

Diversity in the topics, space, genres, and typesetting of a daily – its unique heterogeneity – reflects the complexity of the whole world captured at that particular moment, in its ‘now.’ However, such a granting of equal rights accompanies hierarchisation as manifested in the relatively stable though variable arrangement of the material. The editorial staff decides what goes on the front page (the lead article, column, most crucial reports) and what deserves only a more distant position (advertisements, stock exchange news, railway schedules), as well as which topics and territorial zones form the centre of interest for a newspaper and what is situated on its margins. At the beginning of Bolesław Prus’ writing activities (the 1870s), *Kurier Warszawski*, a daily newspaper which lent him its pages (1873–1887), used to ‘operate’ predominantly in the city’s exclusive quarters, the so-called ‘Royal Road,’ i.e. the Krakowskie Przedmieście and Nowy Świat streets together with Ujazdowskie Avenue. This was the stage for the activities of the local authorities or societies (scientific and charitable), an arena providing entertainment to the aristocracy and Warsaw’s *crème de la crème*. News from outside this zone tended to be pushed to the final pages of the newspaper or to the bottom of separate sections.

Last but not least, we must not forget that the temporal perspective of a journal, issued in a telegraph era seven times a week and even three times a day, leads in particular to informational genres functioning according to the principle of non-closing, perpetual opening, feverishly waiting for a continuation, and for the unknown of tomorrow that can be erased today.

The tension in which a daily functioned was manifested in the play of points of view. First, a newspaper dismembered reality, predominantly by means of genres and sections, the latter in fact being a sort of ‘metagenre.’ This is easily noticeable in the titles of the sections: ‘Local News,’ ‘Political News,’ ‘Casual Matters’ (*Kurier Warszawski* in 1877), ‘Current Matters,’ ‘Warsaw Theatres,’ ‘From the Whole World,’ ‘From the Russian Press,’ ‘Political Chronicle’ (*Kurier Codzienny* in 1889), ‘At the Moment,’ ‘From the Town,’ or ‘From Various Parts’ (*Gazeta Polska* in 1895). The range and manner of providing information were additionally indicated by the place granted to a particular section within the structure of the paper. Thereby, a subscriber of *Kurier Codzienny* knew that ‘Current Matters’ on the second page referred to local facts, whereas the ‘Telegrams’ in *Kurier Codzienny*, usually printed on the front page, to those from abroad.

In turn, a reader of *Gazeta Polska* looked for international events in the 'Latest News' section on the third page (in a four-page structure). The same applied to the layout of a particular section, i.e. to its inner order. An extremely peculiar example were the short humorous anecdotes, frequently based on fictional characters and situations, located towards the end of the 'Current Matters' section in *Kurier Codzienny* (sometimes distinguished by additional graphic marks).

Yet such significant elements of the arrangement were subjected to some general tendencies. The most popular was the '*feuilleton*' section at the bottom of the page, separated from the *haut-de-page* by a horizontal line and sometimes with its own division into columns. Usually located at least on the first two pages, it was clearly distinguishable against the background consisting of plain paper. This was where chronicles, reportages, reviews, or even advertisements in the early stage of this section's development used to appear. Later, this was supplemented by the *feuilleton* as a genre (column), and literary instalments. Soon, each title's more advertising-related material was pushed to the last pages, and it was not until the interwar period that this tendency changed. At the turn of the centuries, the last pages were marked by a more vivid typesetting, a considerable participation of graphic elements, and were generally more motley in terms of the colour scheme. A more homogeneous and 'calm' appearance of the front pages gained an additional meaning in this context, i.e. it became a sign suggesting that these elements were important and accurate information.

Thereby, as early as in this period a daily newspaper became a text in which a genre, functioning among other things as a template for a certain perception of reality and for a specific approach to it, cooperated with the section, the space in an issue and on a page, together with a special graphic layout. I dare say that all of these elements played a considerably more decisive role than in the case of texts published in books. The reader then receives a whole that follows certain principles to which he or she as a subscriber must become accustomed. While he or she might perceive it as quite complicated, it is subjected to several rules that usually assume a sort of hierarchy, sometimes different for individual titles (a typical example is the choice between world and local news as material featured on the front page). These rules suggest a selection of material as well as of the place and type of facts, a temporal perspective ('current' or 'last' telegrams, 'received after the issue was closed'), a subject (usually a collective one) concealed behind a text, and that subject's attitude to the newspaper's content.

Sometimes one and the same fact can be clarified from a few journalistic points of view. Such opportunities were supported by huge urban events, such as rural and industrial expositions to which whole pages were devoted (e.g. *Kurier Warszawski* in 1874 and 1885). Each person was able to find some described aspect of the event that corresponded to his or her interests, be it a technician,

a financier, an urban adventurer, or a humorous anecdote lover, but also to those looking for an accurate schedule of the whole event. These diverse perspectives did not need to avoid evaluation of the described element. This applied to politics in particular, although for well-known reasons such subject matter frequently appeared in those times as the topic of the lead article manifesting the editorial staff's opinion. One exception would be facts that were relatively indifferent to the Russian Empire, such as Georges Boulanger's election to the French parliament in January 1889. In the 30th morning issue of *Kurier Codzienny* from 30 January, a meaningful article titled *Mene, tekel, fares*, signed by a certain 'Ol,' concluded as below:

Let France send representatives worthy of French citizens to the House, and let an efficient and enlightened government come out of this House's bosom, and Boulanger will no longer be dangerous, and he will disappear as soon as today's darkness passes. (*Kurier Codzienny* no. 30, 1889)

The same issue, however, contained a supplement opened by a series of telegrams presenting the statements of European capitals, including Paris, concerning the victory of a conservative populist who did not mask his retaliatory plans against Germany. Two examples testify to their diversity:

'Berlin, 29th January – The dailies here discuss Boulanger's election in a rather indifferent way. They say France today is less capable of attacking than at any time before.'

'London, 29th January – Minister of War, Lord Stanhope, announced during his speech in Brigg that the main goal of the Parliament is to reinforce the military power of the country in the face of war threatening all of Europe' (*Kurier Codzienny* no. 30, 1889; morning supplement to the issue)

Nevertheless, let us not be deceived by the apparent objectivism of this variety of reports, i.e. those of the *Kurier*, the government, and journals from abroad. It is sufficient to stress that the last one closed the whole series in order to understand the huge significance of such an ending to the fragment.

Such collective points of view as provided to readers served but one goal – to shape the reader's perspectives, including his or her temporary view of a situation, as attested by the very act of using headings that suggest urgency ("Last Minute News") and appropriate subtitles ("Morning Supplement"). It was not the authors, usually unknown by their names or who functioned merely as a series of characters that were very difficult to decipher, but the journal as a whole that tended to adjust the reading parameters. Although we may come across evidently personal arguments in journalistic forms other than the *feuilleton*, in which the discussants used their regular pen names or even their real ones (e.g. the debate around the feminine issue in *Kurier Codzienny* 1892), the column section was the space in which one could be truly distinctive, and this allowed for more pronounced expressions of individuality.

First, the column was the natural spot within a daily paper chosen to publish texts belonging to the genre of chronicle. Hardly any other forms in the dailies of that period were signed with the author's genuine name or with a regular pen name (Poseł Prawdy, Litwos, Bolesław Prus). The author was portrayed not only as a commentator but also as a town resident with the same problems as the readers, contending with similar obstacles when attempting to obtain information, and arguing with ill-disposed people – this is indeed one of the key features of the genre. This was accompanied by a stylistic freedom that involved breaking numerous rules typical of the rest of the newspaper's page (in Prus' chronicle this was scathing irony, humour, dialogues, now and again the introduction of verse forms and short dramatic scenes). Finally, another characteristic feature was their thematic freedom – a column could be about anything and everything.

All of this was even more intense when literary prose appeared in this section, sometimes imitating a chronicle in its form and theme. *Szkice warszawskie* [Warsaw Sketches] by Bolesław Prus printed in *Kurier Warszawski* in 1874 presented content on the front page that, in general, would have never been placed there. This allowed for the spatial and social cross-section as covered by the daily to be exponentially extended (e.g. by writing about poverty in the Powiśle quarter in *Pod szychtami* [Under the Piles]) as well as revealing the less notable behind-the-scenes activities during a certain exposition devoted to agriculture and industry (*Wystawa* [Exhibition], *Po co przyjechali?* [What Did They Come For?]), or providing malicious answers to questions posed in other sections of the paper. This last case may be illustrated by the short story *Konkurs żniwiarów* [The Harvesters' Competition] in *Kurier Warszawski* (10 and 11 August 1874), published a day after the outraged report on the lack of transparency concerning the criteria applied by the jury in a competition that had taken place. It was suggested that due to this lack of transparency the Polish "warszawianka" machine was not able to win (*Kurier Warszawski*, August 9, 1874). In his characteristic manner, Prus implied in his short story that the reason could have been the overly strong drinks the jury had been served at dinner...

In literary texts, the narrator's individual point of view functioned in the same way. It introduced into the collective polyphony of a newspaper a perspective usually omitted, infrequently present, or even forbidden for various reasons. In *Pod szychtami* [Under the Piles] in *Kurier Warszawski* (24 July 1874), the narrator-reporter uses elements of free indirect speech to start his story, applying language elements well known to the inhabitants of Powiśle, a poor neglected quarter of Warsaw (as attested, for example, by the incorrect and spaced-out typed form 'spod szychtów'). This group was, by its very nature, deprived of its own voice in the newspapers of this period. In turn, Henryk Sienkiewicz introduced elements of war reportage in his *Selim Mirza* as serialised in *Gazeta*

Polska (9 July 1877). This variant of the reportage, considered to be the core of this genre in the 19th-century French and British press, did not appear frequently in the daily papers in Warsaw, although it should be noted that the Franco-Prussian war (the background for the last part of Sienkiewicz's cycle *Z życia i natury* [*From Life and from Nature*]) is seen here through the eyes of a former Polish insurrectionist, now fighting as a *franc-tireur* with one of Poland's occupiers.

Thus we can sum up our considerations so far by stating that in the last three decades of the 19th century in Poland, daily newspapers functioned as series of various collective points of view that influenced the selection of the subject matter as well as its social, temporal, and spatial form. Opinions also appear as collective positions, usually those of the editors. In addition, such collective points of view are strictly associated in the press with a specific genre or section, a certain placement within the paper, and a particular typesetting. An individual perspective is introduced into this system as a counterpoint, associated mainly with the column section of the paper. To understand its value and its approach, which is to a slight degree in opposition to the collective perspective, we need to consider the individual point of view in strict correlation with the rest of the paper.

4. A glance at subsequent decades

Finally, I would like to write a few words on how this heterogeneous newspaper system was discovered by and for the arts at the beginning of the 20th century. This refers to the period when elite literature gradually left the pages of daily papers while the latter became much more diverse and involved the mixing of various perspectives. This was manifested mainly in papers that had a 'hotchpotch' appearance, as a result of having advertisements placed any which way (including on the front pages), as well as by the growing participation of photography and increasingly more daring experiments with typesetting. Particularly the last case became the object of much fascination among the European avant-garde movements at the beginning of the new century.

In Warsaw in 1924, Henryk Berlewi, a would-be member of the editorial staff of *Blok*, published a small booklet titled *Mechano-Faktura* [*Mechano-Texture*], in which he wrote:

A printed newspaper as such makes certain sense to us: we can read it; whereas as an element of texture it is completely devoid of this utilitarian sense, turning instead into a specific typographic rhythm, with absolutely no reference to the content comprised in the printed letters.¹⁰

¹⁰ Henryk Berlewi, *Mechano-Faktura* (Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Jazz, 1924), 9.

Berlewi is referring here primarily to the technique of cubistic collage, in which newspapers tended to appear as one of the collage elements at least as in 1912–1913 (various compositions by Picasso, such as *The Bottle on a Table*, or Georges Braque's *Still Life with Tenora*). Newspaper pages would soon become one of the materials that was most widely applied in Dadaistic experiments (John Heartfield's [Helmut Herzfeld] 1919 *The Sunny Earth* or Johannes Baader's 1920 *The Great Piasto-Dio-Dada-Drama*). This application was not limited merely to the literal use of newspapers as *ready-made* material. It seems that it is precisely the diversity and multidirectionality of newspaper typesetting that became, in a way, a model for compositions that could be categorised as something in between literature and painting. It was not in vain that Berlewi cooperated with Aleksander Wat, with whom he designed a series of advertisements for 'Pluto' and 'Mocca' chocolate as part of a 'Mechano-Advertisement Office' project. These were, in fact, applied art compositions using fonts with diverse sizes, typefaces, colours, and text directions.

This was certainly nothing new then. In 1921, the Dadaistic periodical '391' was based on the exposition of typography imitating and at the same time amplifying the typography of a daily paper. The 14th issue was prepared by Tristan Tzara who used a similar approach. Slightly earlier, several compositions based on different typesetting, at first glance with no relation to newspapers, were made by the Italian futurist poets Filippo T. Marinetti and Ardegnò Soffici (the latter in his 1915 poetry book *Simultaneity and Lyrical Chemistry*). The same model can be observed in the collective and quite spontaneous work *L'Oeil Cacodylate* by Francis Picabia from 1921.

In Poland, a relatively similar parody of a newspaper – though on a much more modest scale – came in the form of a famous futurist one-off issue from 1921 titled *Nuż w bżuhu* (with deliberately incorrect Polish spelling, e.g. in English this could be *Knaif in the Stomak*). Below the title vignette, where typically basic information about a newspaper was given, the editors placed an odd appeal with a provocative rallying call at the end: "We want to piss in all colours!" Instead of news and reports, the pages contained manifestoes and poetry using exaggerated typography that nonetheless put up pretences of in a way being normal press announcements, e.g. in the advertisement section we can find the appeal: "Let us futurise advertisement!" All of the texts were written with the deliberate use of 'anti-orthography'. These elements gain more sense and a clearer function when observed in their former context, i.e. on a pseudo-newspaper page (we are, however, familiar with the poems from *Nuż w bżuhu* and several other futurist ideas by Aleksander Wat, Tytus Czyżewski, Anatol Stern, and Bruno Jasiński, as their works were reprinted later on the pages of a book).

We can follow similar tendencies in the arts (usually in imitations of press typography), for example, in the visual artworks of Mieczysław Szczuka, which

Władysław Strzemiński called ‘poezjografia’ [‘poetic-graphy’],¹¹ in his graphic elaborations of Stern’s poems, in the artwork of Strzemiński himself, and generally among the group associated with the periodical *Blok*.

I believe that our perspective makes us all perceive such phenomena from two perspectives. First, this is a period when newspapers managed to establish themselves in the social consciousness as the only source of everyday information (the radio was only just entering the scene), with all its various advantages and many more disadvantages. Criticism of the mass press – as leading to increased commercialism and brutalised content as well as to the manipulation and imposition of mass opinion – thus achieves its highest point (Benjamin, Krauss, Heidegger, Władysław Wolert).¹² Becoming a part of an artistic composition, by using a fragment of such an artwork through imitation or parody, functions perhaps as the synecdoche of mass culture, of speech and language mechanisation. This is not at any rate always presented in a critical tone but rather almost always as a representation of the whole, **as the point of view of the press as such.**

This should be distinguished from the fascination with complex typography. It was in the 19th-century press pages, usually those in the daily papers, that such typography developed. As observed above, its role was to mark separate texts and sections, in other words, and in accordance with the logic presented above, to mark particular fragments of reality requiring a specific adjustment of the journalist’s pen. When transferred outside the press format, i.e. to the poetic books or artistic manifestoes on the outskirts of literature, this mechanism proved to not only be a search for a form representing the technologisation of modern lives (the press and print as a contemporary machine), but also comprising, as in the case of daily newspapers, the complex entirety of the world. Poems such as *Tipografia* by Soffici (1915), *Hamlet w piwnicy* [*Hamlet in the Cellar*] by Czyżewski (1922), or the *New Art* exposition catalogue (Vilnius, 1923) brought to life at the level of print a principle that was frequently associated then with cubism, namely the principle of placing an object seen from various perspectives onto a single surface. Both small and capital letters, printed horizontally, vertically, diagonally, or in dispersion, and accompanied by additional graphic elements, used to divide the page into separate zones as if presented from different positions, e.g. a closer view or one from further away, a sidelong glance, etc. In a sense, this foreshadowed a technique that

¹¹ Władysław Strzemiński, “Wystawa Nowej Sztuki w Wilnie” [“The Exhibition of New Art in Vilnius”], *Zwrotnica*, no. 6 (1923), 193.

¹² Martin Heidegger, *Sein und Zeit* (Tübingen: Max Niemeyer Verlag, 1927); Władysław Wolert, “Mechanizm i dusza prasy współczesnej” [“The Mechanism and the Soul of the Modern Press”], *Przegląd Współczesny*, no. 87 (1929); Walter Benjamin, “Karl Krauss,” *Frankfurter Zeitung*, March 1931.

was well known from Leon Chwistek's paintings and described as 'strefizm' (literally: 'zonism'). His art can indeed be described as a variety of colours in pairs with several overlapping perspectives, noticeable in the differentiation of the sizes of the characters and objects (*Parade*, 1935).

S u m m a r y

The following article concerns the issue of point of view in Polish daily newspapers at the end of the 19th century. The daily is considered here as a coherent and cogent literary work based on fictional as well as non-fictional genres and their specific layout. The author proves that what makes the press characteristic in terms of points of view is not so much the introduction of a new, individual voice but rather the introduction of a collective perspective in several variants. Literary fictional genres serve as an instrument of the counterpoint in that they provide an individual position, usually one that is opposed to what one can read in the feature sections.

PUNKT WIDZENIA A PRASA CODZIENNA NA PRZEŁOMIE XIX I XX WIEKU

S t r e s z c z e n i e

Studium dotyczy problemu gry punktów widzenia w czasopiśmie codziennym przełomu dziewiętnastego i dwudziestego stulecia. Czasopismo zostało potraktowane jako szczególne dzieło – zbiorowe, wielogatunkowe i periodyczne. Z kolei termin „punkt widzenia” odnoszony jest tu nie tylko do indywidualnych podmiotów osobowych, ale również do zbiorowości, przestrzeni, czasu i form gatunkowych. Autor dowodzi, że tym, co charakteryzuje prasę codzienną w omawianym okresie i co jako wypowiedź różni ją od ówczesnych dzieł literackich, jest duża rola zbiorowych punktów widzenia, ich wielość oraz szczególne zorkiestrowanie. Są one powiązane silnie z gatunkiem, działem, miejscem jego umieszczenia w piśmie i typografią. Pojawiające się wówczas na gazetowych łamach utwory artystyczne przemycają często punkty widzenia indywidualne lub po prostu nieobecne w pozostałym materiale czasopisma.

Na koniec autor przygląda się awangardowej sztuce z początku XX wieku, która wykorzystywała czasopismo jako znak perspektywy masowej, ale także jako graficzny przejaw wielości perspektyw (typografia).