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OF EUGENIUSZ TKACZYSZYN-DYCKI

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VENESA KRASIMIR **PROF. PANAYOT DIMITROV, DSc**
NACHEVA **KARAGYOZOV**

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Scientific jury:

Assoc. Prof. Ani Burova, PhD

Assoc. Prof.. Dobromir Grigorov, PhD

Prof. Margreta Grigorova, DSc

Assoc. Prof., Kamen Rikev, PhD

Assoc. Prof. Ostap Slyvynsky, PhD

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INTRODUCTION

The tangible interest in the body in the Slavic art and literature of the late 20th and early 21st century was provoked by the prolonged neglect of the individual under totalitarian regimes. Having started as a century of the masses, the European twentieth century rapidly degenerated into a century of the dictators and the dictatorships that, in the name of class and/or race, sought to expand state boundaries, homogenize their subjects, and persecute otherness in all its manifestations.

The change in the political paradigm in Poland since 1989 has noticeably altered attitudes towards the body and otherness. Despite the elimination of socialist restrictions and taboos related to the human corporeality and otherness, societal attitudes towards them in Poland remain ambiguous. Eugeniusz Tkaczyszyn-Dycki (1962) became a spokesman for the people in liminal situations.

Born in the Polish-Ukrainian borderland in a family speaking Chachłacki (an informal name for a dialect spoken in the Podlasie), i.e. a mixed Polish-Ukrainian language, the poet with Ukrainian roots E. Tkaczyszyn-Dycki makes the periphery (in the literal and figurative sense) the central topos of his work. It becomes the basis and reference point of his search for his lyrical I, as it accumulates many autobiographical traits. Through his poetry, Eugeniusz Tkaczyszyn-Dycki creates a local narrative and expresses the interests of a marginalised social group. He portrays “otherness” but does not desire its “dictatorship” rather its equality with others; he expresses the idea that the Other/the Odd One must be accepted as an equal member of society.

From 1990 to 2023, the poet published 15 independent volumes of poetry and 5 poetry collections, bringing together various poems published over the years. Since 2008, his poetry has been translated into ten languages; it has been awarded numerous literary prizes and has been the subject of numerous monographs, critical articles and

studies. Of significance for the reception of the Polish poet in Bulgaria are the poetry collection *This Body Could Have Been Mine* (2017), compiled, translated and prefaced by Panayot Karagyozov, and the study *Dialogues with (Not) My Body in the Poetry of Eugeniusz Tkaczyszyn-Dycki* (2021) by Dimitrina Hamze.

The essence of “body” and “limit”, the way they relate to “corporeality” and “liminality” and how they interact with each other are some of the questions that prompted this research.

The variety of existing approaches to the body determines the need for a more precise definition of the concepts of “body” and “corporeality”, which will be used in the analysis of the specific artistic material. The body is to be understood not only by means of its physical characteristics in terms of matter, to which consciousness is related, but according to the phenomenologist Maurice Merleau-Ponty also as a term denoting “a system of systems devoted to the inspection of a world and capable of leaping over distances [...] possesses this world at a distance rather than being possessed by it” (Merleau-Ponty 1964: 67).

Corporeality is seen as an active agency through which the body manifests, albeit from a phenomenological perspective and as an element of the experience of self in corporeal terms. In the presented views on the body and corporeality, by means of which phenomenology changes the ideas about them, the relation of the corporeal to the liminal stands out. The role of the body as the intersection of the external world and the world of the human, as pointed out by phenomenologists, reveals its quality of being liminal.

In its interpretation of the limit and liminality the present work draws on Gergana Dineva's definitions. According to her, boundaries should be understood not only as limits but also as beginnings. The boundary separates, but at the moment of separation it connects, because it is the end of one thing, yet at the same time the point

of origin of another. It is located in the space “in-between”. This dynamic “of connecting/and/dividing, of crossing over and leading from/to” of the limit “in its unfolding action” (Динева 2006: 29) is precisely what liminality is.

The subject of the present study is the entire poetic oeuvre of Eugeniusz Tkaczyszyn-Dycki, published in the period 1990—2023. Its analysis is focused on the specificity of author’s poetics, which is distinguished by the recurrence of words, expressions and entire phrases over the years from poem to poem.

The object of the dissertation is the functioning of the categories of corporeality and liminality and the relations between them in the poetry of Eugeniusz Tkaczyszyn-Dycki. In the course of the dissertation, the forms of the body are traced with particular reference to its positioning in the so-called limit situations (according to the theory of the German philosopher and psychiatrist Karl Jaspers), as well as the forms arising in the interaction of the body with the Other and with the world, analysed in the course of the present study through the postulates of the phenomenologist Maurice Merleau-Ponty. The dissertation makes a topological analysis of the spaces depicted in the poetry and explores the relationship between them and the body. Thus, their mutual functioning and interplay is traced, using Michel Foucault’s spatial theories of heterotopias and Marc Auger’s non-places.

This research **does not** set out to prove the linkages between the writer’s work and regionalism, as it assumes this linkage to be unquestionable in view of the many references in the poems to actually existing toponyms from the border territories between Poland and Ukraine. This dissertation **does not** trace the poet’s relationship to regionalism, not least because it sees it as a direct rather than metaphorical manifestation of the idea of limit and liminality, which is not the focus of the work.

The hypothesis this dissertation seeks to prove is that corporeality and liminality are forms of action, dynamic manifestations of the body and the limit in the

poetry of Eugeniusz Tkaczyszyn-Dycki, and that their differentiation is impossible. This is so because, on the one hand, corporeality constantly provokes the limit and shifts its parameters, making it a limit in action, that is, liminality, and, on the other hand, the permeability of the limit creates the conditions for the body to expand and break out of its strictly established forms, which activates its agency, that is, its corporeality. In this way, the body simultaneously becomes a limit between the inner and the outer, but also removes this limitation by transcending it through its corporeality.

The aim of this dissertation is to defend the hypothesis stated above by analysing the poetic texts of the Polish poet. The research methods used are analysis and synthesis. The analysis draws on approaches from the scientific fields of phenomenology, psychoanalysis, gender studies and queer studies, and on the collected empirical material, a collection of published poems by E. Tkaczyszyn-Dycki within the mentioned period. The employment of several different but complementary theories to the study of the Polish poet's poetry is conditioned by the specificity of the poetics under consideration, as well as by the nature of the analysed problematic, which at the end of the twentieth and in the twenty-first century became the object of increased interest on the part of many, often interrelated, scientific fields.

CHAPTER ONE. THEORIES OF THE CORPOREAL AND THE LIMINAL

Chapter One of the dissertation examines and summarizes various theories on the body and corporeality, as well as on limits and liminality, which emerged in the twentieth century and have found their development in the twenty-first century.

The work conceives of the poet's work as an artistic expression of the relation between the corporeal and the liminal, and assumes the fluidity that emerges at both the structural and content levels of his texts as its hallmark. The research considers the

overflow of identical topics and motifs from one poem to another, the difficulty of distinguishing between different images, as well as the problems of identity (heredity, memory, homelessness), love and death, which are characteristic of this poetry and are caused by the lack of stability in the poetic world, to be concrete manifestations of this interconnectedness. In order to clarify the nature of the corporeal and the liminal, this paper attempts to trace the theories it assumes to be most applicable to the topic of this research.

Concepts of the body and the corporeal

The theory of the French phenomenologist Maurice Merleau-Ponty, according to which the body mediates between the consciousness and the world, is fundamental for the dissertation. In his philosophical approach, the body is the source of the subject's psychical worlds, but also the means of communication with the world. The bodily experience of the world and the act of touching reveal the subject to himself and to others. This blurs the boundaries between inner and outer and turns the body into a “our general medium for having a world”¹ (Merleau-Ponty 2005: 169). The aforementioned characteristics are essential to the dissertation thesis and pertinent to the body depicted in the poetry of E. Tkaczyszyn-Dycki.

Another very important topic for M. Merleau-Ponty's theory and related to the body is that of sexuality. In his understanding of it, the phenomenologist comes close to some of Sigmund Freud's views, taking sexual life to be an essential element of existence. This interconnectedness indicates the necessity of also analysing sexuality

¹ The poems and critical texts quoted, except for the originals in English, are translated by me, V. N.

(the fulfilment of which takes place in and through the body) for a comprehensive understanding of identity, because it emerges as its manifestation.

Julia Kristeva's notions of the body and of child-parent attachment (especially bodily attachment to the mother) prove essential to the analysis of E. Tkaczyszyn-Dycki's poetry. With regard to the researcher's ideas, in which she expresses doubt about the very possibility of the existence of a purely feminine writing, Amelia Licheva suggests "to speak of J. Kristeva's theory as a theory of marginality rather than femininity" (Личева 2002: 260). This statement highlights the possibility of considering the French critic's theory as also applicable to the Polish author's poetry.

The last decade of the twentieth century is associated with the third wave of feminism, which focused on the nature and representation of different minorities—ethnic, gender, sexual. Thinking in oppositions weakens and the traditional dichotomies such as male/masculine—female/feminine are questioned. The aforementioned topic is at the centre of the new inquiries that define the field of Gender Studies. They form a common ground with queer studies. The present work finds similarities in the ideas of queer theory about equality and the transformation of non-normality into alternativeness and the explicitly and implicitly presented similar messages in the poetry of E. Tkaczyszyn-Dycki. The thesis accepts Judith Butler's concepts of the internal instability of gender identity (see БЪТЛЪР 2003) as well as those of queer researchers on the fluidity of sexual identity as fully applicable to the notions of corporeality in the Polish poet's poetry.

Notions of the Limit and the Liminal

In the 1990s, with the fall of the Berlin Wall and the "opening" of the previously closed and restricted Eastern Europe, a process of rethinking the construction and affirmation of borders both in their physical territorial sense and as a mental category in

the sense of boundaries and limits began. As they are redrawn, interest shifts from the universal to the local, from the centre to the periphery.

The periphery, in the broadest sense, is also connected to the work of Eugeniusz Tkaczyszyn-Dycki. The periphery is the inspiration and main subject of most of his poems. Themes such as overcoming boundaries, trauma, memory, identity can be fully applied to the work of the Polish poet.

The otherness immanent to E. Dycki's images is clearly a form of liminality, since one of the metaphorical meanings of the terms "limit and frontier is associated with the evaluative adjectives "other", "foreign", "own", "our" (sometimes denoting a stronger evaluation expressed in the superiority-inferiority opposition)" (Próchnicki 2012: 36–37).

As a possible manifestation of the boundary, literary studies also accept various aspects of K. Jaspers' concepts on limit situations such as those of "pain, suffering, pleasure, death, eroticism, sexuality, violence, hunger, madness" (Olejniczak 2010: 94).

The German philosopher and psychiatrist's concept of limit situations and the possible transgression of the personality caught in them is fundamental for the present research. The image of the body in the poetry of E. Tkaczyszyn-Dycki is in a permanent state of various limit situations, which it has to pass, asserting its otherness. As per K. Jaspers' theory, it is through them that the true essence of the personality emerges.

Bulgarian and Polish Theoretical and Artistic Concepts of Corporeality and Liminality

The body and corporeality became an important topic in Bulgarian humanities after 1989. This bodily emancipation after this watershed date finds direct expression both in artistic texts and in various critical studies.

In her book *The Heroic Body* (2017), Milena Kirova explores corporeal notions and focuses on an underestimated point in thinking about the body, namely the difference in Christian and Jewish conceptions of the body. The researcher emphasizes that, according to the Hebrew Bible, the sexuality of the body is not the result of a fall, but of knowledge, and that “the body is not unimportant when compared to the soul, rather it is the only possibility to fulfil the sacred contract postulated repeatedly by God” (Кирова 2017: 18). This notion of the body as a precious thing and as a mediator between the earthly and the divine finds its manifestation in the work of the Polish poet Tkaczyszyn-Dycki.

An important milestone in thinking about the body in a Polish environment is the derivation of secret gender codes revealing hidden homosexual messages in artistic texts, carried out by the pioneer of homosexual studies in Poland, German Ritz. He considers the cryptic nature of the text, references to traditional images related to gender issues, and associations with the author's real existence as secret signs. This dissertation assumes that such characteristics can also be found in the poetry of E. Tkaczyszyn-Dycki.

With the collapse of grand narratives in the 1990s and their replacement by personal (“small”) stories, there has been a process of unravelling of notions previously accepted as universally valid. Their meaning is becoming more and more personal. An example of such kind of substitution of the universal understanding with the individual one is the significant, for the Slavs, notion of the boundaries of Central Europe, commented upon by Ani Burova in the introduction to the book *Central Europe in Three Essays* (2020), in which the researcher stresses that their instability “is aggravated above all by the (auto)biographical logic of their definition; sometimes it literally has the dimensions of subjective arbitrariness” (Бурова 2020: 13). Thus, the individual

reimagines the outside world, and boundaries become sites of recollection where personal experiences and memories displace history.

Representative of the aforementioned intensified personal spaces of recollection are the frontier territories, around which the so-called “phenomenon of liminality” is formed (see Grigorowa 2013), characterized by the motifs of the difficulty of self-identification, the intensified role of memory, the dislocated notion of homeland, the importance of language, etc., which are also essential to E. Tkaczyszyn-Dycki's poetry.

CHAPTER TWO. THE BODY IN LIMIT SITUATIONS

Chapter Two traces the subject of the body in Polish culture and literature, focusing on its most significant manifestations. In this chapter, the corporeal modalities through which the body functions in E. Dycki's poetry are also examined, and these modalities are analysed as possible embodiment of corporeality in “limit situations”.

The subject of the body is not new to Polish fiction, and although it has been restricted throughout particular cultural periods, it is present in the overall development of Polish literature, focusing on one manifestation of the body and developing it, rather than realizing the possibility that all these cultural attitudes about the body can coexist in a given work and create different images of the body.

Closely related to the theme of the body and corporeality in contemporary Polish literature is Eugeniusz Tkaczyszyn-Dycki, in whose work their various manifestations often coexist. They trigger problems of the highest order, including those of identity, morality, knowledge and self-knowledge, etc., which become essential to the Polish poet's poetry.

In this section, the research aims to prove the hypothesis that through the images of the body in limit situations presented in E. Dycki's poems (experiencing one's condition in the limit situations of death, struggle, guilt), the body manages to reach a state of possible existential realization, called by K. Jaspers "Existenz".

Limit Situation: Existence in a Limit Situation

The forms of "body-field of knowledge and self-knowledge", "not my body" and "body-memory" manifested in E. Tkaczyszyn-Dycki's poetry can be taken as variants of the first limit situation, since through them, as in the experience of the limit situation, self-knowledge is reached.

The conscious existence of the body in its aforementioned manifestations in E. Tkaczyszyn-Dycki's poetry leads him to understand that he is always in limit situations, as a consequence of which he manages to make the transition to maximum authenticity. The limit situation and corporeality succeed in eliciting this possible self-attainment.

In his work *The Visible and the Invisible* M. Merleau-Ponty stresses that "[t]he opacity of the body, without at all rivalling that of the world, is on the contrary the only way I have of going to the core of things" (Merleau-Ponty 2000: 142). Conscious existence in a limit situation accomplishes the same.

Limit Situation: Death

Death is an objective fact, but there are two occasions, according to Karl Jaspers' theory, on which the person experiences it as a limit situation. It happens in the moments of "death of a loved one" or those of "my own death". These two situations are reflected

in the poetry of E. Tkaczyszyn-Dycki and in particular in the representations of the “sick body” and the “dying body”.

The motif of illness is represented explicitly in the work of the Polish poet through the images of the closest to the Self, his mother, his friends-lovers, as well as implicitly in the image of the lyrical subject himself. Based on the foregoing, we can conclude that the theme of illness is closely tied to that of love in all its manifestations. The sick body in E. Dycki's poetry is the beloved body that has taken different degrees of progress towards death.

The suffering of those closest to us is equivalent to one's own, and this creates the preconditions for getting closer to one's own self and is a kind of self-attainment, since according to K. Jaspers, “[w]hen a man is unhappy, being himself will be easier than when he is happy” (Jaspers 1970: 203).

The relationship between bodies in the poetry of E. Tkaczyszyn-Dycki is one of the main themes in the work of the Polish poet. In many of the poems, the line between the sick/dying/dead body of the partner and that of the lyrical subject is blurred. The sensations experienced by the dying body are transferred to the living body. Thus, through death, the two bodies seem to be unified. The final phase of this assimilation is the attainment of the living person's own death.

By default, the body is limited due to its physical characteristics by which it exists in the world. The strongest constraint that characterizes it is its inevitable end, but as Georges Bataille points out “[t]wo things are inevitable: we cannot avoid dying, and we cannot avoid “leaving the confinement of limits”. Dying and leaving the confinement of limits are the same thing” (Батай 1998: 139). It follows from these words that death is the final form of all corporeality, but it is also precisely thanks to it that corporeality manages to extend, even to obliterate, its limits. By dying, the body comes close to the liminality and goes beyond it.

Limit Situation: Struggle

In his definition of struggle as one of the limit situations, K. Jaspers includes both the constant process of acquiring various goods, which are the material basis of human life, and the continuous struggle developing within the individual. This incessant self-doubt and the inner conflict it generates with the aim to reach the essence of what the Self is and what it can be, are the realisation of the struggle that in the poetry of E. Tkaczyszyn-Dycki manifests itself through the forms of the “self-injuring body”, the “dismembered body” and the “body of verse”.

The aforementioned forms of the body are its variants through which it tries to cope with the accumulated difficult experience. The different types of deconstruction of the body, represented by the bodies discussed, appear as diverse approaches in the struggle of the body placed in a limit situation to overcome the resulting traumas, as well as a type of punishment for the mistakes made in the past. Dissection and decomposition in E. Tkaczyszyn-Dycki's poetry are intimately tied to getting to the core and forging true connection to the self and to the other.

Limit Situation: Guilt

Guilt, as part of the limit situations presented in the theory of K. Jaspers, is strongly tied to the person and is accepted as impossible to avoid. It can be overcome by consciously accepting the consequences and seeking the opportunity to purge it. The purification process it provokes is a path to self-attainment. The images of “the body as a field of pleasures” and “the body, a connection to the divine” in E. Tkaczyszyn-Dycki's poetry can be taken as manifestations of the limit situation of guilt and seen as pathways to self-knowledge.

Although the opposition of the spiritual and the corporeal has persisted since its ancient and Christian conception into modern times, E. Dycki's poetry unites these two categories, polemicalises with them, and considers them as two constitutive parts of the human being, as if following the theological idea "that it must not be forgotten that the whole work of Christ's incarnation and our redemption was not accomplished except in and through the human body" (Chmielewski 2008: 12).

The corporeal in Eugeniusz Tkaczyszyn-Dycki's poetry is not perceived in itself as inferior to the spiritual, but as an integral part of it, even as a path to the sacred. The themes of guilt, sin and temptation, purification and sacrifice are common motifs that are also present in E. Dicky's works as well as in the Holy Scripture.

Unlike biblical texts, however, in E. Dycki's work the introduction of the mentioned themes and images is often done through a colloquial vocabulary that places them in the semantic field of the immoral and the marginalized, and thus established biblical symbols, images and themes receive a different semantic load. Such is, for example, the image of the fruit of paradise, transformed in Dycki into a "bared orange" ("29.", Tkaczyszyn-Dycki 2017: 42), which is able to replace the touch with the divine "she sought God though an orange would have completely satisfied her, too" ("30.", Tkaczyszyn-Dycki 2017: 60).

The high allegorical quality of Dycki's work, acting in parallel with the formal unconventionality of the poems, presents scholars with an irresolvable problem. Despite some obvious clues, it seems impossible in principle to ascertain the exact passages and the extent of the irony and parodic strategies used in them, which build on or outright modify the literal messages in the works. The interpreter of the poet is forced to guess where and to what extent ironic or affirming intertextual connections, and in some places even parody, extend in particular verse units. In this sense, Dycki's poetry promises to remain an exegetical challenge for future critics and historians of literature.

The naturalistic descriptions in E. Dycki's poetry of some of the most intimate moments of human communication do not alter the possibility of seeing it as connected to the sacred, for religiosity is not only about observing the rules established by religion, nor about establishing or re-establishing a relationship with God; it is important for the believer to live out this relationship, for “he is absolutely non-self-sufficient in himself, just as the world he inhabits is absolutely non-self-sufficient” (Рижев 2020: 16).

Dycki's images of the body as a field of pleasure and the body appearing in relation to the divine suggest the idea of the sinfulness of the corporeal, and hence implicitly that of human guilt, but at the same time appear as necessary conditions for the purification aimed at self-attainment.

The manifestations of the body in Eugeniusz Tkaczyszyn-Dycki's poetry discussed are forms through which it exists in the limit situations discussed. Through them it manages to transcend its limitations and go beyond them.

CHAPTER THREE. “ALL POSSIBLE BODIES”

Chapter Three reviews the various images through which the lyrical I exists in the poems of Eugeniusz Tkaczyszyn-Dycki. Images identical and close to the poet are explored, but also images of the mother, the father, God, Norwid, the kin, the friends/lovers who have traditionally been interpreted as other and alien to the lyrical subject. This dissertation, however, accepts these images as constitutive of the lyric Self, as components of its multilayered identity, and not least as its equivalent bodies.

The relationship between body and identity has been a relevant subject throughout the 20th century. The desires of the body begin to be considered independently in their function as bearers of certain meanings concerning the human self precisely in this period. Self-discovery is a process that goes through searching for roots,

looking into the past and the ancestry, discovering passions and indulging desires, experimenting with the body and making sense of the relationship with the other.

These themes and issues related to cognition and self-knowledge of the personality are vividly reflected in the work of Eugeniusz Tkaczyszyn-Dycki. The subject of identity is key in his poetry and through it he, “in getting to know himself and others, recognizes duality, triplicity and diversity as different hypostases of his integral human and creative self” (Карагъзов 2017: 4). The complicated identity of the lyrical subject presented in the poems is the object of study of this chapter.

The Lyrical I

The lyrical I in the poetry of Eugeniusz Tkaczyszyn-Dycki is amorphous. It exists in a multitude of different mutually occurring and sometimes mutually exclusive images. Instability is its permanent condition. The fluidity presented in the definition of the I's gender is associated with queer theory's ideas about the continuous process of identity creation.

The identification of the poet with a literary image reinforces notions of his disposition between reality and the imagination, and the manifestation of his image in other poems as a poet further reinforces his relationship to fictionality.

He is simultaneously an abandoned child, as well as a protective father to his sick mother who cannot take care of herself. The son's incomplete total separation from the parent results in his continued identification with her, and thus he “remains fused with his non-conscious: he is his own desires, impulses, ideas, and has no sense of them as internal objects to which he does not necessarily have to submit” (Корно 2017: 46). This statement highlights the importance of exploring the relationship between son and mother and necessitates a detailed analysis of her image for a more comprehensive understanding of the nature of the Self.

The Mother

Eugeniusz Tkaczyszyn-Dycki's poems abound with alternative, often unflattering images of the mother, who is permanently present in various manifestations in his work. It is through their variation — sinner, saint, vulnerable, inspirer and co-creator, belligerent, missing and duplicitous — that E. Tkaczyszyn-Dycki creates one of the most complete poetic incarnations of a particular multifaceted mother in Polish literature.

Polish literature until the poetry of E. Tkaczyszyn-Dycki seems to have emphasized only one side of the relationship between the Virgin Mary and Jesus, the relationship between mother and son. But the Polish poet with Ukrainian roots's poetry explores this relationship in its versatility.

Dycki brings out new connotations related to the image of the mother by moving from its glorification to its individualization. In doing so, he shows its possible manifestations, its otherness, while at the same time preserving its connection to tradition.

The Father

The image of the father in E. Dycki is not central, but only a function determining the son's behaviour in life. The father is absent from Eugeniusz Tkaczyszyn-Dycki's earliest poetry volumes, but his figure appears in the poetry volume *Name and Mark (Imię i znamię, 2011)*. In view of the major concerns in the Polish poet's work about memory and identity, this lack is itself a significant theme.

The absence of the father alters the roles in the family, transforming the son into both child and partner of his mother, who, in turn, combines both the female and male figures in the construction of the heir's identity. This complicates the gender identity of

the son, who begins to experiment in intimate relationships in order to succeed in getting to know himself. In these attempts he crosses various moral boundaries established by the community, but this is normal in the absence of the father, since as Sigmund Freud notes, the father is traditionally associated with the logos, that is, with norms (see Фройд 1995), and his absence causes man to return to the untamed, the primal, and succumb to primitive desires. The absence of the father can also be taken as a condition for the continuation of the Oedipus complex characteristic of the early years of childhood.

Absent, fragmented between the Polish and the Ukrainian, utterly aggressive, the father in E. Tkaczyszyn-Dycki's poetry is far from the notion of a protector, a patriarch, a guarantor of family stability and comfort. If, however, we follow up the idea, introduced by the images of the son and the mother, of their divinity and their explicit identification in some of the verses with the Son of God and the Virgin Mary, we can also accept the image of the father as a likeness of the image of Joseph. The comparison with him only reinforces the negative traits of the image of the father Dycki's poetry.

God

In many of the Polish poet's poems, God is presented as a close friend of the lyrical subject, with whom he talks and whom he asks to help others. This intercession for the people implicitly suggests the idea of the poet's identification with the Son of God, thus making the I a mediator between God and the people.

There is no distance between the I and God. The connection between them is made through the body, which Leszek, one of the companion characters, "said was from God for spying" ("VII. Pan Gemlaburbitsky 5.", Tkaczyszyn-Dycki 2022: 13). The body is tempting and tempted. With its beauty, it distracts even God himself, who, seeing three half-naked soldiers, cannot focus and "creates anew the beginning and the end of the cosmos" ("XXXI", Tkaczyszyn-Dycki 1990: 19). God thus takes on human

characteristics that emphasize the bi-directionality of likeness—not only is man made in the likeness of God, but vice versa.

God is omnipresent. He punishes, but He forgives and inspires. With His help, the lyrical I, deprived of maternal caresses and support, wishes to become a poet. Through God, the lyrical subject tries to understand more about himself and others because inspiration comes from God and naturally leads to Him.

Norwid

The image of Norwid is important to E. Tkaczyszyn-Dycki's poetry because it blurs the already almost non-existent boundaries between fiction and reality. Norwid is present both in the poems and in the accompanying texts, written in prose and framed as separate commentaries and paratexts. His presence in both types of texts reinforces the sense of the author's play with the reader and the possibility of considering the commentaries as part of his work.

Norwid, like God, fulfils paternal functions in his relationship with the lyrical I. But while the biological father is more associated with corporeality, Norwid is a spiritual mentor to the presented budding poet. The “Polish father”, like other images charged with paternal functions, does not provide stability in the lives of mother and son. The impermanence and passivity through which Norwid is present in some of the poems does not negate his importance to the I, who rhetorically asks: “to start life/ all over again but what life at all without Norwid” (“L.”, Tkaczyszyn-Dycki 2016: 52).

The Kin

The lyrical I in E. Tkaczyszyn-Dycki's poetry goes back to his roots in the hope of finding in his ancestors a stable foundation for the formation of its identity, and

through it to rebuild itself. The images of the grandmother, the grandfather and the ancestors, introduced through the common name of kin, are the bearers of the I's past, its heredity and its origin; they are components of its identity. The lyrical I is an extension of them, and they are a part of it.

The exploration of family history leads to the figure of the grandmother. This image, traditionally placed in the meaning field of comfort and preservation of family values, is ambivalent in the poetry of E. Tkaczyszyn-Dycki. On the one hand, the grandmother urges the I to accept the Polish, although in its mind this is associated with betrayal, but on the other hand, she emphasizes its otherness and its belonging to the other, calling it a "chachłacz".

The grandfather is labelled a "bandit", a "marauder". After the discovery of this long-kept secret of the species, this noun would become the most important characteristic of its ancestor for the I.

Communication between the dead ancestors and the living I blurs established boundaries and calls the end into question, for each successor appears as a continuation of the predecessors and their guarantee of eternity.

The hard-to-define heredity that the subject possesses makes it want to go back in time when it did not know the family secrets related to the complex family history. The family history, however, is necessary to him, for through it the subject reaches his true self.

The Friends/ The Lovers

The lyrical I tries to build a relationship with the other, and this other in the work of E. Tkaczyszyn-Dycki are friends/lovers. The plurality of the images mentioned underlines the impossibility of drawing clear boundaries between them in this poetry and makes it necessary to analyse them in general terms. The longing for wholeness and completeness of the I makes it difficult to distinguish between it and them. The images

of the friends/lovers not only merge but also become constitutive of the I. They physically merge with each other and become interdependent. The lover in the poem “XII. 1.” (Tkaczyszyn-Dycki 2022: 20) is physiologically connected to the I through his umbilical cord, which places him in the role of a child needing the other to survive.

The importance of the relationship between the body of the lyrical subject and that of others is evidenced by their explicit identification: “and I left my friends far from here/ [...] / far from here I left my former/ and present body and it is no longer connected to me” (“XI.”, Tkaczyszyn-Dycki 2016: 13). The I is the other and the other is the I.

No clear line can be drawn between the different images discussed in this text. Not only do they constantly communicate with each other and with the world through their corporeality, but through it they constantly shift their limits, thus forming new forms and unions. The emphasised corporeality of their relationship is a sign of their strong interconnectedness and of the need to consider them collectively, like the individual poems in the Polish poet's oeuvre. The individual image is incomplete. He is the androgynous half, just one component of the whole.

CHAPTER FOUR. “LIMINAL” SPACES

Chapter Four focuses on the spaces that shape both the individual in E. Tkaczyszyn-Dycki's poems and the world in which it resides. The analysis establishes their interconnectedness, which highlights the difficulty of identifying the individual in the Polish poet's poetry and liminality as its immanent characteristic.

The aim of this chapter is to typologise and analyse the spaces in Eugeniusz Tkaczyszyn-Dycki's poetry and to trace their various characteristics, to verify whether they are distant, close or even identical to those of the presented lyrical I. This dissertation builds upon Maurice Merleau-Ponty's argument from the 1960s on the

essential importance of place in the formation of the personality, in which he clarifies that “[t]o be a body, is to be tied to a certain world [...] our body is not primarily in space: it is of it.” (Merleau-Ponty 2005: 171).

The research does not focus on the specific geographical spaces (from the areas of Lublin, Warsaw and the Polish-Ukrainian borderlands) mentioned in the poetry under discussion, but rather draws attention to the topoi inhabited by the lyrical I, of the home, the room, the toilet (the loo) and the outhouse, the brothel, the library, the railway station, the hospital/ psychiatry, the church, the city, the forest and the cemetery. The term “liminal” is used in this case to name places that bring opposites together in a variety of ways, such as the oppositional pairs of inside-outside, intimate-public, sacred-profane, moral-immoral, protected-unprotected, open-closed.

Using an approach that incorporates methods from the fields of psychology, literature and philosophy, the text makes a topoanalysis of the spaces inhabited by the lyrical I, and attempts to highlight their influence on the artistic images.

The Home

The connotations that the home evokes in the work of E. Tkaczyszyn-Dycki are ambiguous. In some of the poems it is completely absent, in others it is portrayed as the permanent abode of death, sometimes being voluntarily or forcibly abandoned, other times the home is transformed into abstract concepts such as “anxiety” and “schizophrenia”. The home could even be the poem itself. The space of the home emerges as both a lonely place, sheltering mother and son, but also a crossing point for encounter with the other, the friend who breaks this loneliness. The home depicted in Tkaczyszyn-Dycki's poetry is an enclosed space that conveys a sense of separateness from the world, but at the same time can be taken as an open topos insofar as it tolerates various incursions from the outside.

All these ambiguous and heterogeneous forms of the home (together with the dwelling and the house, spaces both similar and derivative) create a disjointed idea of it and bring a sense of constant change and instability. Presented as a collection of disparate, contradictory small spaces, it creates a sense of fragmentation and decay in its inhabitants. Domestic space in E. Tkaczyszyn-Dycki's poetry is a "liminal" space, an intersection of extremes that deprives its inhabitants of a sense of stability.

The Room

The space of the room, although a part of the space of the home (the dwelling and the house), deserves separate attention, as it is often reflected in its own right in E. Tkaczyszyn-Dycki's poems. By focusing on the room, the imagined domestic space seems to shrink. It increasingly dwindles in volume to reach ever more intimate physical, and through them spiritual, places in the character's personal geography. The particularisation of personal space is an act of disclosure, of exposure.

The most common connotation with which the room is associated in E. Dycki's poems is death. The incessant process of the mother dying, which takes place in the next room, becomes one of the constant themes in his poetry. This room, a space of death, becomes a separate world in which its inhabitants, mother and son, exist in loneliness.

One of its manifestations is the bright room, which is not depicted as real and realised, but is laid in the field of the imaginary. Unlike the aforementioned bright room, which remains in the field of the dream, the dark room is the reality in which the lyrical I resides and to which it returns with everyone but itself.

The room in the poetry of E. Tkaczyszyn-Dycki is also depicted as the abandoned room. It is a space forcibly abandoned as a result of the intrusion of others, of outsiders into it.

The forms of the room presented are not in opposition to the forms of the home, but on the contrary, they appear as a continuation and concretisation of the options already considered. They testify to an ever deeper penetration into the depths of the private world. The home and the room as exhibited in the poetry of E Tkaczyszyn-Dycki seem to shrink the domestic space further until it reaches the most intimate possible physical place of human life, namely the toilet/ the loo.

The Toilet (the Loo) and the Outhouse

In Dycki's poetry, the toilet has various spatial and cultural/civilisational dimensions. It may be an outhouse, a loo, a part of the dwelling, a hospital or public restroom, and also a station urinal. In all its iterations in E Tkaczyszyn-Dycki's poetry, the toilet is the most interior space. A place that most clearly separates the individual from the outside world and even from the world of the community's most intimate inhabitants. In certain cases, however, the toilet is a meeting place with oneself and one's peers. It is another place where the poet contrasts and intertwines the high and the low, turning reality into a metaphor.

Whether it is part of the domestic space or part of the public space, the loo is a place of mutuality. Reflection on one's own actions and existential problems also takes place in it. This also makes it possible to see it as a kind of purgatory in which one comes to the truths of life.

The toilet and brothels are the topoi in E. Dycki's poetry where liminality and corporeality intertwine most visibly.

The Brothels

The domestic space with its constituent elements, as represented in the poetry under discussion, extends to the topos of brothels. The plural through which they function in this work amplifies the perceived openness of these spaces. On the one hand, they are related to the common, the public, but on the other, it is in them that the I lets the other into its most intimate space.

Often situated in the “Lublin brothels of his friends”, the lyrical subject reveals himself to be open to every relationship and possibility of indulgence. In them, the I seeks intimacy through carnal pleasure, not limiting itself to the opposite sex — “tilting my baton towards / my own sex it appeared that I had scored a sonnet” (“71.”, Tkaczyszyn-Dycki 2017: 83). This type (essentially private residential properties) are communal spaces, both someone's and no one's, in which the individual finds himself.

Brothels being part of non-places are spaces that construct a world of “solitary individuality, to the fleeting, the temporary and ephemeral” (Auge 1995: 78). But at the same time, in E Tkaczyszyn-Dycki's poetry, they are also places that serve as memory repositories, as spaces of memory, for it is in these places that the bodily sensations that keep the memories of the past alive the longest are preserved. In this way, brothels become “liminal” spaces, topoi of paradox, because they are the intersection of the fleeting (resulting from their characterization as non-places) and the eternal (the function of spaces of memory to preserve).

The Library

In some of the poems, the library is presented as the welcoming space of the National Library, which is always open to those who wish to step inside. This notion makes the topos of the library a constant in an unpredictable and changing world. In

terms of hospitality, the space of the library is reminiscent of brothels. This atypical comparison is not unfounded, as the library in this poetry is repeatedly implicitly and explicitly represented as a place of seduction, a space in which you can lose your innocence. The humanities reading room of the university library becomes the starting point of the lyrical I's erotic fantasies, where he meets the object of his desires. The library focuses the temptation for knowledge, and the librarian Truskolaska provokes the quest for knowledge and getting to know oneself and the other.

Historically, collections (of books and stamps) used to be vital to man, but nowadays they are seen as unnecessary. This change can be perceived as a manifestation of a process of abandoning fictionality and focusing on reality.

In Eugeniusz Tkaczyszyn-Dycki's work, the library, books, letters and obituaries become a space of transition from accumulated and shared personal and collective experience. They materialise, objectify and preserve speech.

The Railway Station

The railway station is nobody's space, which cannot offer belonging to its visitors, but this is what makes it a space of multiple identities in which “we pretend to be crying babies [...] / we pretend to be boys out of fairy tales” (“XXXVII. Piosenka. 1.” / “XXXVII. Song. 1.”, Tkaczyszyn-Dycki 1992: 14).

The railway station is also represented as a home. It is the home of the different ones that have temporarily become equal. Therefore, only in there does the lyrical I feel accepted and only it evokes in him the desire to return to the mother's house.

The railway station in E Tkaczyszyn-Dycki's poetry thus becomes a transient place, a space of fleeting connections, but also a topos evoking memories of the most intimate human notions, those of home.

The Hospital/Psychiatry

The forms in which the hospital is present in the work of the Polish poet implicitly and explicitly suggest various biblical themes and thus refer to the topos of the Garden of Eden.

The hospital space takes away the need to determine orientation as it is dominated by an already created order. As in the Garden of Eden, prohibitions exist in the hospital, too. The hospital space also becomes a kind of purgatory in which, purifying himself, man seeks God.

The psychiatry is presented as a living being, a stalking predator that rejects the possibility of liberation from itself. But exiting the hospital space itself does not seem entirely desirable, as the I believes it will see “the darkness/ in its beginnings and the brightness/ of dawn from the hospital bed” (“CVIII.”, Tkaczyszyn-Dycki 2010: 132).

Michel Foucault calls hospitals, and psychiatries in particular, heterotopias of deviance, as they are home to “individuals whose behavior is deviant in relation to the required mean or norm are placed” (Foucault 1984: 5). The topos of the hospital in the poetry of E. Tkaczyszyn-Dycki is no exception. In it, the sick man, traditionally placed on the periphery because of his illness, which makes him different, finds shelter. On account of his condition, he becomes a mediator, situated simultaneously between two worlds, because “[s]ickness, and the time during which one is sick, is a liminal space: one is neither here nor there, one’s whole life is on hold” (DeMello 2014: 25). But contrary to common perception of the isolation of the patient, of loneliness in the hospital space, the topos of the hospital in the Polish poet's poetry is a place of rapprochement with God, with the mother, with the other and with the world. It occupies the boundary between life and death, the beauty and the ugliness, the sacred and the profane.

The Church

The sacred space in the poetry of E. Tkaczyszyn-Dycki is stratified. This division is evidenced by the many sacred spaces representing different Catholic orders, in none of which God is present. The large number of sacred places makes it difficult for the individual to orient himself in the surrounding world.

The ecclesiastical topos, likened to the mother, manifests itself through various forms in the poetry of E. Tkaczyszyn-Dycki, but never completely breaks its connection with the sacred. Like the mother, the church is also associated with notions of the liminal. It is a dimensional mediator between the earthly and the divine, just as the introduced mother is.

In his employment of associations with the temple and the ecclesiastical practice, Dycki reveals the lyrical subject as distinct not only in terms of its ethnic, linguistic, sexual, and cultural nature, but also as the bearer of a specific Christian identity. This identity is in constant and immediate contact with the manifestations of Polish Catholic religiosity, but realized as distinctly and even conflictingly different. From the position of a bearer of the Uniate historical tradition, the I bluntly qualifies the palpable reality of Catholic temples as Baroque clutter and butaphoric (with “Baroque clouds” floating “nowhere”), undeniably godless (there “the Most High is nowhere to be found”). In this respect, both the sexual context and the religious themes in Dycki’s poetry suggest nonconformism and an individual, deeply conscious rebellion against the inertia of social propriety.

The City

The city in the work of the Polish poet appears as a kind of transition from the native, rural and provincial to the foreign, urban, metropolitan. It is portrayed as a place

of communication and exchange between people, but also as a territory that provides anonymity, allowing the individual to create or choose a new identity.

In some of the poems the urban space narrows down to the topoi of the square and the street. The square, like the city, is placed in the semantic field of the erotic and reactivates the notions of debauchery prevailing there. Wandering through it is the confused youth, falling victim of lustful adults.

The street, on the other hand, is a place of sorrow. It is a transitional space connecting life with death, the present with the past. It is also portrayed as a place revealing the truth. There he meets his future lovers, but also encounters the judgemental comments of others. It is a space of encounter with society and a representative of social norms.

Urban space, conventionally associated with teeming life, is represented as the last abode of the languishing sick who have succumbed to the temptations of the body in the poetry of E. Tkaczyszyn-Dycki. Its forms (the square and the street) emphasize the sense of the approaching end, resembling a labyrinth with no way out, in which the urban man constantly wanders, situated between lust and death.

The Forest

In some of E Tkaczyszyn-Dycki's poems, the forest is presented as a space of attraction for the I, a space that appears as the preserver of his personality: "and now I am drawn to the forest/ to return to myself" ("XXI. Epitalamium", Tkaczyszyn-Dycki 2022: 33). The lyrical I of E. Tkaczyszyn-Dycki in the quoted poem, however, is not situated in the forest space itself, but is presented as remote from it. This gives rise to a suggested separation of the personality from its real self and its perceived difficult union with it. The forest as a topos, directly related to nature and the primordial, is the guardian

space of the authentic human self whose call haunts the I. But it does not cross its border and remains wandering in a world unknown to it.

The forest space in E. Tkaczyszyn-Dycki's poetry is both an open and a closed space, a border between the outside world and the inside of the I. It is a place of hiding, but also of revealing; a topos of otherness, but also of connection with the self.

The Cemetery

The city, the forest and the cemetery are among the most open and common outdoor spaces in the Polish poet's poetry. The graveyard is found in many of his poems, as his work is largely subordinated to the theme of death.

In the poetry of E. Tkaczyszyn-Dycki it is inhabited by both the living and the dead. It becomes a place of coexistence. Corporeality in this poetry is not a distinguishing characteristic between the living and the dead; on the contrary, it is a unifier of the two worlds. The physiological needs of the living are intertwined with the physiology of the dead body.

The burial space becomes a more significant location than the process of "the dying of the mentally ill mother than the dying with which/ your death and your death alone occurs" ("XLVI", Tkaczyszyn-Dycki 1990: 46). Its significance can be sought in the fact that it is a place where death is a shared condition among the deceased. It does not focus on individual death, but becomes a place that reflects collective death. The cemetery is a space of various religious cults. It reflects the culture to which the dead belonged. It becomes a place of memory for a certain group of people.

The cemetery is a heterotopic location, allowing the simultaneous unfolding of the mythical and the real within its boundaries. It is simultaneously situated outside, but also inside the person. It is introduced as a space with imprecise coordinates,

heterogeneous and unbounded, which is of key importance for the work of the Polish poet.

The idea that locations are intimately connected to their inhabitants and that they reveal much about the human self is expressed in Merleau-Ponty's assertion that "[t]he body is the soul's birthplace and the matrix of every other existing space" (Мерло-Понти 1996: 173). The relationship between place and person is also found in the prevalence of enclosed/internal spaces in E. Tkaczyszyn-Dycki's poetry, which highlights that the otherness represented (of the I and others) cannot yet be fully exposed. Simultaneously concealed and revealed, it is another testimony to the ambiguity characteristic of both images and spaces in the analysed poetry.

CONCLUSION

Subject to this research were the implications and manifestations of the body, as well as those at the boundary, which the thesis assumes are inextricably linked. Its task was to trace and analyse them in the poetry of the contemporary Polish poet with Ukrainian roots Eugeniusz Tkaczyszyn-Dycki.

Central to the research was the understanding that corporeality and liminality are forms of the body and boundary, their active agencies through which they manifest themselves.

The various manifestations of their relations were traced in the individual chapters of the thesis, proving the hypothesis that corporeality and liminality are interrelated and complementary categories in the poems of the Polish poet. In the course of the analysis, the interconnectedness of the concepts discussed with other issues of the highest order, such as those of identity and memory, was highlighted, which necessitated their thorough examination in the individual chapters.

The study also analysed the relationship between spaces and images and confirmed the hypothesis that the two categories are similar in their ambiguous nature and in the fluidity of their boundaries, leading to the difficulty of distinguishing between them.

The examination of the subject matter has led to the notion that the cyclical and repetitive nature (at both the structural and content levels) characteristic of Eugeniusz Tkaczyszyn-Dycki's poetics can be viewed through different theoretical discourses, each time revealing new and different meanings for the researcher. In itself it creates the image of poetry as a living organism that is constantly growing and evolving, changing its forms.

The poetry of Eugeniusz Tkaczyszyn-Dycki presents a torn, dismembered lyrical I that cannot overcome the lack of stability, love and closeness in one's life. The only thing that he is certain about is his otherness, he fights for its acceptance by himself and by others simultaneously. Through the characteristic reorientation of his poetry from the national to the personal, from the typical to the individual, he manages to affirm the "ideology of otherness" and to show it as an inseparable part of the (common) Polish.

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Contributions to the Dissertation

1. The present dissertation is the first monographic study of the poetic works of the contemporary Polish poet of Ukrainian origin Eugeniusz Tkaczyszyn-Dycki within the Bulgarian context.
2. A large volume of empirical material has been analysed and systematized. For the purpose of this research, numerous poems by Eugeniusz Tkaczyszyn-Dycki were translated and interpreted by the PhD candidate into Bulgarian. Many of them have never been the subject of such scholarly attention.
3. Notions of the body and the boundary are historicized in the context of Polish culture and literature, in contemporary Polish literature.
4. Corporeality has been conceptualized both in terms of the classical models of the French phenomenology of Maurice Merleau-Ponty and via contemporary theories related to gender studies and queer studies.
5. Themes of identity and otherness are explored in the context (and at the intersection) of corporeality and liminality.
6. The dissertation thesis analyzes Eugeniusz Tkaczyszyn-Dycki's interpretations on the traditional images of death and the image of the mother from centuries-old Polish literature.
7. The metaphorical cartography of the places presented in the poetry and the detailed analysis of their inhabitants show their interconnectedness and the necessity of their collective study.

Publications on the Topic of the Dissertation

1. Начева, В. Полемии за тялото в поезията на Еугениуш Ткачишин-Дицки. – В: Ред. Дараданова, Е. и кол. *Полемии и избори. II Т. Литературознание. Културна антропология*. София: УИ „Св. Климент Охридски“, 2024, с. 308–316.
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Other publications; translations; participation in scientific projects, conferences and compilation activities

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