

The Shadow of the Muselmann⁶⁴

In the latest art, a certain number of Polish artists turn to the past, dealing with topics which include the World War II and the Holocaust. However, this particular interest in traumatic history is not new in Polish art. It is possible that its stigmatization with war and the Holocaust is one of its most distinctive features⁶⁵. At the same time, this subject has not been thoroughly analyzed yet; the scholars would rather repeat the opinions that most of the works of the postwar period 'did not go beyond the traditional conventionality and banal pathos.'⁶⁶ In this text I would like to present the most important works created after World War II, in which the Holocaust symptoms are visible. Also, I shall discuss the problem of depicting the defeat of humanity, which, I believe, appears in this art as a shadow of the *Muselmann* figure.

Ghost bodies

The degradation of a man trapped in a strange geometricized world is already evident in the so-called camp art, including a series of camp drawings by Marian Bogusz in 1944. In one of them (No. 5) instead of a man, a silhouette appears with a head with large eye sockets, resembling a skull. The trunk of the figure is trapped by the bars pattern, formed by some partially shaded squares, and underneath there is a caption: "I'm blind" (it is possible that this performance can be seen as some sort of criticism of avant-garde utopias, referring to reason, order and organization of space). Another drawing (No. 2) depicts a stove, under which there is a great hand holding a flower, with an eye placed in the middle of it. In the works by Bogusz, but also by Zbigniew Dłubak, as well as

by other artists of the post-war period, a characteristic phenomenon can be observed: a human silhouette disappears, but its trace, shadow, outline, or monstrous, ghostly shape remains (in the works by Erna Rosenstein, Tadeusz Brzozowski, Jerzy Skarżyński, Jan Lebenstein, Alfred Lenica). It is a phantomic body, a puppet, a figure hanging on a Christmas tree, as in the picture of another inmate of Auschwitz, Xawery Dunikowski, *Christmas in Auschwitz in 1944* (1950). Dunikowski was sent to Auschwitz in 1940 at the age of 65, after the liberation of the camp in 1945 he underwent a long-term treatment. Later, in the years 1949-1955, he painted and drew reality, experiences and visions related to Auschwitz. *Christmas in Auschwitz in 1944* refers to the situation where obersturmführer Beer hung five prisoners who had tried to escape against a lit-up Christmas tree. The picture is painted realistically, but still the human figures seem completely "dehumanized". The art of the first years after the war, whose authors referred to the traumas of the past, was very diverse stylistically, claims Aleksander Wojciechowski, enlisting various types of deformity, grotesque and allusion used⁶⁷. The body, if at all present in this art, is degraded, incomplete, becomes a figure symbolizing human degradation (eg. *The Dream* by Zbigniew Dłubak from *The War* series of 1956, *Honegger Liturgical Symphony* Marian Bogusz, 1955). Human figures, if they occur, are devoid of balance, which is not a mistake of the artists, but rather a result of the attempts to show the rickety reality. What also appears is a dead body, a trace of it or its remains as in *Exhumed* (1955), resembling a horrid archaeological finding, by Alina Szapocznikow (a survivor of the ghettos in Pabianice and Łódź, then of the camps in Auschwitz, Bergen-Belsen, and Theresienstadt). All this pinpoints the degradation of the man by the Nazi death machinery, which reduced a human being to a camp number, a raw material, a waste, a wreckage with no limbs (in Szapocznikow's piece where a human body is devoid of hands). This degradation equals also a state of disillusionment about humanity, morality and human goodness, all of which had been

64 This text is an altered fragment of my book *Podróż do przeszłości. Interpretacje najnowszej historii w polskiej sztuce krytycznej*, SWPS Academica: Warsaw, 2010.

65 This suggestion appears in the first chapter of Anda Rottenberg's *Sztuka w Polsce. 1945–2005*, Stentor: Warszawa, 2006, p. 10.

66 Ibid, p. 9.

67 Wojciechowski, A. *Młode malarstwo polskie 1944–1974*. Zakład Narodowy imienia Ossolińskich: Wrocław–Warsaw–Cracow–Gdańsk–Łódź, 1983, p. 12.

unable to stop the unimaginable evil from happening. Immediately after the war, those who survived and the eyewitnesses (as Władysław Strzemiński in the cycle *To My Jewish Friends*, 1945) talk about the tragedy. Their works can be described as documentary, therapeutic, mourning. Such a mournful lament are a picture and a series of drawings by Bronisław Wojciech Linke (1906-1962) titled *Stones Scream* from the years 1946-1956. Reproductions of the works from this series were published in 1959 in the album *Stones Scream* with an introduction by Maria Dąbrowska. The artist depicted the ruins of Warsaw, which had been given human shapes. One could say that the city mourns its Jewish inhabitants here. The most famous representation of the series, the ruins take the form of an Orthodox Jew with a tallit, thrown over his head, grieving after the departure of their loved ones. The artist emphasized the tragedy of the ghetto and its inhabitants, the fact that only the ruins and ashes remain, that there is actually no one who could celebrate the mourning (thus this function is taken over by the ruins). Tallit – the main theme of this depiction, is a prayer shawl made of white wool, silk and cotton, with fringes (tzitzit), who at the time of prayer are to protect a human against too direct influence of the presence of God. In this case, it seems to act as a protection against too direct trauma. The despair and powerlessness present in these works can be compared to Francisco Goya's *The Disasters of War* (1810-1920). One of the paintings by Linke from 1946, is called *El mole rachmim*, which literally means: "Oh, merciful God". It is an invocation being the beginning of the Jewish mourning song, usually sung at funerals. Linke took his idea from the work by Julian Tuwim called *We, the Polish Jews* (London 1944). The nightmare of the ghetto was also a topic of the paintings by Alfred Lenica, Marek Oberländer and Izaak Celinkier.

Decomposition and a skull behind a human face

The defeat of humanity, as well as the rejection – at least a partial one – of the avant-garde language was clearly expressed in the art of Andrzej Wróblewski (1927-1957). Personal traumatic experience triggered him to create the most famous series of paintings of this artist, *Executions*. In 1941, during

a search carried out by the NKVD in Wróblewski's family apartment in Vilnius, he was a witness of his father, Bronisław, dying of a heart attack. Wróblewski was 14 years old at that time and this event left a deep mark on his personality (the artist was plagued by recurring depression through his whole life and his premature death in the Tatra Mountains, near Morskie Oko, in 1957 still remains mysterious). *Executions* have become a record of the horrors of war and the Holocaust⁶⁸. The paintings in the series differ stylistically; some – painted in a more traditional way – show those who await an execution, others show the moment of the shooting – a body falls apart, loses its cohesion, unity. One is not to find the majesty of death here. 'The bodies are dismembered, deformed, legs have been cut off, but they still remain in the trousers, thrown to the ground like useless prosthesis, shadows crucified on the walls like real bodies and people depicted like ghostly shadows – everything is portrayed in a sketchy, primitive, expressive, form, shocking with its intentional awkwardness' – this is how Wojciechowski characterizes the style of these paintings⁶⁹. One of the tools used by the artist to illustrate the horror of death, is the decomposition of the body, its "fragmentation". One of the figures in the picture *Execution VIII* is described by Piotrowski in this way: 'A jacket is put on as if back to the front. On the other hand, legs in the calves are twisted to the front, as if the man was standing sideways to the viewer, which is however not confirmed by the setting of hips and thighs.'⁷⁰ In the

68 Katarzyna Bojarska (*Obecność Zagłady w twórczości polskich artystów*, available at Culture.pl, http://www.culture.pl/pl/culture/artykuly/es_obecnosc_zaglady [dostęp: 14.08.2014]) links this series with the Holocaust. A similar suggestion was put forward by Dorota Jarecka, claiming that at least a part of these scenes are taking place in the ghetto – this of course relates to *Execution II* from 1949 (see also (*Nie)winnia inwentaryzacja*, in: *Tolerancjini. To się dzieje!*, ed. Szotkowska-Beylin, K., Białek-Graczyk, M., Towarzystwo Inicjatyw Twórczych „ę”: Warsaw 2009, p. 90). This suggestion may be proven by another painting by Wróblewski, *Liquidation of the Ghetto* from 1949, stylistically relating to the *Executions* series (the dominant light-blue colour, which is the color of death in Wróblewski's works).

69 Wojciechowski, A., *Młode malarstwo polskie*, p. 47.

70 Piotrowski, P., *Znaczenia modernizmu. W stronę historii*

case of this corpse, the front and the back swapped their places, whereas in *Execution VI* the upper part of the corpse is reversed upside down and cut off at the waist. The point of the cut off and the empty sleeve, as one of the hands was also removed, are the most terrifying parts of the painting. In turn, in *Execution V* such part is a hole brimmed by a collar of a shirt, where a neck and head should be. In this case the body is also completely dismembered. Its individual parts have been thrown to the ground: the upper part of the body, legs, one hand severed from the body, the head also looks as if it has been torn away. The emptiness expressed by an empty hole in the shirt contrasts with an immaculate, undisturbed attire of the corpse – a shirt with a knotted tie, and a jacket. This emptiness, decomposition, imbalance are a reference to the horror of death – death, which after all one cannot understand or comprehend. The dismemberment of the body in *Executions* may relate, as suggested Piotrowski, to the very disintegration of the “I” at the moment of death. Thus, these paintings are an expression of fear and trauma resulting from war and the death of the artist’s father, but also an attempt to deal with those. Wróblewski shows the humiliation of man by the war in the individual but also the family dimension (many paintings depict figures of father and son or husband and wife; what is more, with the *Shootings* series, two other paintings from 1949 are connected – *A Mother with a Dead Child* and *A Child with a Dead Mother*). This destruction is also particularly explicitly depicted in a piece outside of this cycle, namely *The Painting on the Destructions of War (Fish Without Heads)* from 1948. It is a seemingly ordinary still life, but the dead fish scattered in a strange array in combination with the title, become a metaphor of death, executions, and the times when human life had no value. The composition is also quite significant here – the dead fish, clustered in the left part of the picture, look as if they are trying to protect each other against a knife and possibly escape, hide from their tormentor. In vain. It is interesting that Wróblewski depicted a bunch of fish in this painting – the creatures which are told to “have no voice”. Thus the artist showed the life which does

sztuki polskiej po 1945 roku, Rebis: Poznań, 1999, p. 20.

not deserve to live”, in the words of a modern philosopher, Giorgio Agamben, and so a life destined for liquidation (bare life devoid entirely of value, that one can kill without committing murder; the lives of people in the camps with no rights and prerogatives, thus completely dehumanised⁷¹). The stigma of death, which has dominated the artist’s life, manifests itself in most of his works. The faces lose their individual expression, and are shown schematically as circles with a few strokes, reminiscent of the eyes, mouth, nose (as in the drawings of young children) or are replaced by the image of skulls. A clear outline of the skull appears in the *Heads* series or in the *Lovers* series (*Woman with her Fiancé, Married Couple, Couple, Lovers’ Walk*, 1956/1957), where a man in the shadow seems to be have a completely dead face. This theme can be associated with the ponderings of Walter Benjamin on the skull hidden behind the human face, which image negates a picture of a sovereign individual and confronts it with the image of their own death. ‘All that is premature, full of suffering, misguided, and which from the beginning was included in history, is here imprinted on the face – or rather on the skull. [...] That figure of subordination to nature, consists not only of the brimming with meaning, vague question about the nature of human existence in general, but also about the biographical historicity of the individual.’⁷² The skull is a symbol of death, our finity, a material remnant from of an individual; however it is a remnant which remained unconsumed by death.⁷³ The man depicted is neither alive nor dead, or at the same time alive and dead, is located in the space in-between, is dead while still alive. In Wróblewski’s pieces the death is increasingly stigmatizing the image of man, until the image of the former replaces the representation of the latter. At that time, the artists creates

71 Agamben, G., *Homo Sacer. Suwerenna władza i nagie życie*, trans. Salwa, M., Prószyński: Warsaw 2008, pp. 186–195, p. 234.

72 Walter Benjamin, *The Origin of German Tragic Drama*, trans. Osborn, J., Verso: London–New York 1998, p. 166; quoted after: Majewski, T., *Siegfried Kracauer i teoria filmu po Zagładzie*, in: *Pamięć Shoah. Kulturowe reprezentacje i praktyki upamiętnienia*, ed. Majewski, T., Zeidler-Janiszewska, A. co-editor Wójcik, M., Oficyna: Łódź 2009, , p. 907.

73 *Ibid*, p. 908.

such pieces as *People* and *A Man in the Wheelchair* (both in 1956) and *Shadow of Hiroshima* (1957), where human figures are replaced only by their outlines, 'reduced to monochromatic spot, like a shadow absorbed into the background'⁷⁴. One could say that the representation of man has been absorbed, sucked in by the death as if by a black hole.

With no promise of redemption

After a period of socialist realism, the problem of war tragedies and the dehumanization related to these returned in the works exhibited at the National Exhibition of Young Artists *Against War, Against Fascism*, opened in Warsaw on July 21st, 1955, and called Arsenal due to the place of its presentation. This exhibition is considered to have been the symbolic end of socialist realism. It expressed a general need for artistic freedom, while stylistically was associated with the expressionist tradition of engaged art⁷⁵. Artists reach for deformities, simplifications, strong contrasts of colour and lively textures. It is worth noting that although only a part of works dealt with the horrors of war, the exhibition was, to a certain degree, dominated by war traumas.

One of the exhibited paintings was *Ghetto* by Izaak Celnikier (1955, now at Yad Vashem in Jerusalem). The artist was criticized, among other things, for exhibiting an unfinished painting, which was taken for a creative impotence⁷⁶; nevertheless, the piece won a prize. In *Ghetto* there are Christian references – to the iconography of the images of the deposition of Christ and the entombment of Christ. However, death is here shown in a humiliating way: a naked dead man with a swollen belly and genitals visible is not carried to a grave, but laid directly on the ground by an older woman and a man, accompanied by a small boy. The image is almost monochromatic, in the shades of drab. The faces of the man, the woman and a boy (possible the family

of the dead man) express despair and impotence. This image is a realisation of the second version of a topic that Celnikier had already dealt with in 1949 (this version is displayed at the Jan Dekert Lubuskie Museum in Gorzów Wielkopolski). The first version still holds some colours, but the development of the subject is equally depressing, the dead man is placed directly under a ghetto wall. In the case of both of these paintings, the reference to the Christian iconography does not give any promise of comfort or redemption.

Celnikier, a prisoner of Auschwitz II, studied at the School of Applied Arts in Prague after the war. In 1952 he returned to Warsaw. Soon he took part in the "Arsenal" exhibition which preparation he was personally involved in, but was he satisfied with his prize, which he then received? It is possible that criticism which he received, made it clear to him that his works in these circles will remain incomprehensible. Jacek Antoni Zieliński points out that the argument about the unfinished painting was of a substitute nature and, in fact, it might have been the case that the critics considered it consisting of too much metaphor, too little realism.⁷⁷ While I can agree with the first suggestion, I decline the latter. I am of the opinion that the real reason of this criticism was a direct reference to the Holocaust, which back then was a hardly discussed topic.

The hunger

Józef Szajna (1922-2008) stands out among the artists talking about the horrors of the war. Szajna was a member of the resistance movement during the war and as such was captured and sent to the concentration camp at Auschwitz. He was an inmate of the camps at Auschwitz, Birkenau, and Buchenwald until the end of the war.

Szajna was able to take on the subject of his traumatic experiences only years later. In the *Number* installation he displayed pieces of his prison striped uniform stored for almost 50 years and now spread out on canvas. His art, both the visual and the theatre pieces, are filled with camp props; crippled human figures also appear – armless, legless, wounded, bandaged, crippled puppets and human half-silhouettes as the shooting boards. The attri-

74 Bojarska, K., *Obecność Zagłady*.

75 Piotrowski, P., *Znaczenia modernizmu*, p. 46.

76 Zieliński, J.A., *Uwagi spisane w przeddzień wystawy Izaaka Celnikiera w Krakowie*, cited in: *Izaak Celnikier. Malarstwo, rysunek, grafika* [exhibition catalogue], National Museum in Cracow, January-March 2005, ed. Leszczyńska-Cyganik, B., Boniecka, J. Cracow 2005, p. 17.

77 Zieliński, J.A., *Uwagi spisane w przeddzień*, p. 21.

butes related to disability are in majority: artificial limbs, crutches, wheelchairs, dark glasses and the items damaged by their everyday use: clogs, bags, torn rags. Szajna illustrated the apocalypse by turning toward the aesthetics of a trash bin. Thus he passed on a testimony of a stigma of an unimaginable tragedy he had experienced, but at the same time, as indicated by interpreters, a universal truth about human degradation in the context of the war and the Holocaust. This degradation and suffering were primarily of physical dimension, however this was omitted in the interpretations of his works. Szajna himself, in his memoirs with the significant title *Dno* ("the bottom"), emphasized the physical dimension of the suffering associated primarily with hunger: 'Hunger is growing bigger and bigger, the sight becomes cloudy, movements – slow, the body goes limp.'⁷⁸ This observation relates to the period of imprisonment after an arrest for underground activity in 1941, before being deported to a concentration camp. After arriving at the camp in Auschwitz, Szajna he saw people 'like living skeletons with hands as if bonded to the thighs', limping and stomping with their heavy clogs. "So skinny sticks sticking out of their skinny skulls are sticking out as if on sticks.'⁷⁹ Soon, he also began to suffer from the hunger disease: 'I feel weak, I have delayed reflexes, frequent diarrhea, I lose my instincts, I become indifferent to everything.'⁸⁰ In these one may notice a moment when the artist approaches the border of becoming a *Muselmann*, a word used for the most exhausted prisoners of the death camps, on the verge of death – and loosing the control of himself totally. About the experience of illness, he wrote: 'We have no appetite, drugs or liquids. There are only flies. They insistently stroll on our bodies and dirty blankets. We do not have enough strength to ward them off.'⁸¹ It is a description of life that Szajna defines as a life of a *Muselmann*. I will return in a moment, to the key, in my opinion, figure of a *Muselmann*; here I would

78 Szajna, J. ,*Dno (fragment monografii)*, in: *Świat Józefa Szajny*, ed. Oleksy, K.. Państwowe Muzeum Oświęcim-Brzezinka: Oświęcim, 1995, p. 10.

79 Ibid, p. 12.

80 Ibid, p. 13.

81Ibid, p. 15.

like only to emphasize that these puppets, crippled figures which seem to be characteristic of Szajna's art, are to be interpreted primarily in the context of the physical destruction of man and not just as a universal statement about suffering, anguish, and loneliness.

The shadow of a Muselmann

In the oeuvres of almost all the artists mentioned here, a phenomenon appears which seems to me as the crucial for the Polish post-war art, emerging in the shadow of historical trauma. It is the disappearance of a human figure, while leaving its trace, shadow, contour or replacing it with a horrible, ghastly silhouette.⁸² Non-human shapes, the outlines of human figures, puppets, marionettes, mutilated bodies, faces-skull, headless figures are motifs that come from the same reality of a nightmare. I wonder to what extent in these figures may one find some reminiscences of the *Muselmann*, who became an iconic figure of the Holocaust, described by Primo Levi. 'They live in my memory, wrote Levi in *If This Is a Man*, the figures without faces, and if I could put all the evils of our time in an image, I would choose this picture, which I'm so familiar with: a skinny man with his head bowed and bent neck, from whose face or eyes one cannot read a shadow of a thought.'⁸³

The figure of an Auschwitz *Muselmann*, constituting the nucleus of the camp, was discussed by Giorgio Agamben, by referring to various explanations of the etymology of the term – from pointing out the similarity of the *Muselmann* to the praying Arabs, nodding constantly in a prayerful gesture to quite an unlikely to association with the word

82 I have been wondering about this issue for a longer time now. While writing about the contexts of critical art in relation to the art of PRL I used the term „bezcieleśne ciała” („bodiless bodies”), but it seems to me now not accurate enough, as this seems to be about not just the disappearance of a body, but a human being in general and its degradation. See also: Kowalczyk, Izabela. *Sztuka polska po 1945 roku a problematyka ciała* in: *Ciało i władza. Polska sztuka krytyczna lat 90.*, Sic! Warszawa, 2002, pp. 31–70.

83 Primo, L., *Czy to jest człowiek*, trans. Wiśniowska H., Państwowe Muzeum w Oświęcimiu, Książka i Wiedza: Warsaw, 1996, p. 100.

Muselmann from *Muschelmann* – meaning human of a shell, crouched and mired in itself, which may relate to the term used by Levi: the shell people.⁸⁴ People who suffered a special type of the hunger disease, endemic to the camps, manifested among other things by the loss of interest in anything and a total lack of contact with the environment were labeled as such. *Muselmanner* were compared to phantoms, they were named the ‘walking corpses’, ‘half-dead creatures,’ and ‘people-mummies’⁸⁵. They were deplored entirely of human dignity, by being treated as non-human beings, while their death was deprived of dignity and name. Agamben wrote about the humiliation related to the dehumanization and the humiliation of death, about the corpses labelled by the Nazis as *Figuren* - figures, mock-ups, puppets.⁸⁶ As a result, ‘both death and dying, both dying, as its kinds, both death and the mass production of corpses became indistinguishable from each other.’ *Muselmann* is the ‘true mystery of Auschwitz’, ‘core of the camp’ which ‘nobody wants to see with their own eyes’, and, as a being deprived of its own and proper place puts a gap in each testimony: ‘In one case it appears as non-living creature, a being whose life is not really a life; [in the second] as a one, whose death is impossible to be called death, but a mere mass production of corpses; in other words, by assigning a certain dead zone into the living and a living zone to the dead. [...] *Muselmann* is a denial of a human being, a non-human being, which stubbornly appears in human form, and at the same time as a form of humanity that cannot be distinguished or separated from what is human.’⁸⁷ I quote Agamben’s discussion quite extensively here, as the figures of non-human beings, the living dead (eg. the last paintings by Wróblewski), marionettes and puppets appearing in the pieces of art I have mentioned are utterly moving, make one’s feelings restless, demand an explanation. This begs a question – can one interpret those figures which appear

in Polish painting as – if not as a representation then as a reminiscence of the key figure of the Holocaust, a *Muselmann*? In the very pieces created in the camps we can find drawings showing *Muselmanner*, mainly by Mieczysław Kościelniak⁸⁸ and Waldemar Nowakowski.⁸⁹ As I have already highlighted, the art of Józef Szajna, in the context of his memoirs, in which he described his existence of a *Muselmann*, clearly depicts the figures that were deprived of humanity and also, as in Levi’s case, populated the artist’s imagination. The phantoms of *Muselmanner* can be also noticed in later pieces of the aforementioned Izaak Celnikier, whose paintings depicts people who are as if still alive, but at the same time already dead, ‘the people who actually destined for the fate of an animal.’⁹⁰ Elisabeth de Fontenay pointed out that the painter was able to include in his art the truth which can only be found in the writings of Primo Levi, the truth, in principle, inaccessible to historians.⁹¹ It is about an acknowledgment of the degradation and humiliation of both life and death, denial of humanity. ‘To deny the humanity to the victim is condemning a human being into impossibility: the *Muselmanner* deprived of a body, a pile of dismembered corpses, a “basalt column” of those gassed to death, a carpet of hair, a pile of human ashes used as an embankment material. [...]’⁹²

At the same time, some of the mentioned artists did not see *Muselmann* at all (not all of them had been in the camps), but in what also appears in their art is a figure representing a shadow of death (for example, in Wróblewski’s works). If it is then possible to include the discussion of the *Muselmann* figures to the interpretation of this art, it would be in a mostly metaphorical sense – in the

84 Agamben, G., *Co zostaje z Auschwitz. Archiwum i świadek (Homo sacer III)*, trans. Królak S., Sic!, Warszawa 2008, s. 45.

85 Ibid, p. 54.

86 Ibid, p. 51.

87 Ibid, pp. 82, 83.

88 See the drawings *Muzułmanie*, 1944, *Koledzy*, 1944, *Załatwiony*, 1942, *Koleżeńska przystęga*, 1943. See *Cierpienie i nadzieja. Twórczość plastyczna więźniów obozu oświęcimskiego*, ed. Dałek, J., Świebocka, T. Krajowa Agencja Wydawnicza: Katowice. 1989, il. 40, 53, 61, 62.

89 Drawing *Chorzy*, 1943–1944. Ibid, il. 41.

90 de Fontenay, E., *O sztuce Izaaka Celnikiera*, trans. Brzozowski, W. in: *Izaak Celnikier*, p. 29.

91 Ibid.

92 Didi-Huberman, G., *Obrazy mimo wszystko*, trans.. Kuśniak, M., Ho Chi: Cracow, 2008, p. 54.

context of the experience of the proximity of death and the contact with un-humane, possibly also in the context of sensing the climate of the un-human world, a state of emergency, who came together with Auschwitz, as stated by Agamben; or, as Zygmunt Bauman pinpointed – ‘the world haunted by fear.’⁹³ Recalling the figure of a *Muselmann* cannot indeed explain this art, it is just a suggestion for interpretation, which would require separate research and analysis for its confirmation. At the same time I do not know whether it is at all possible, as the *Muselmann* might only be a phantom which emerges from the unconscious and whose shadow appears in art.

Translated from the Polish by Weronika Nowacka

93 Bauman, Z., *Świat nawiedzony*, in: *Zagłada. Współczesne problemy rozumienia i przedstawiania*, ed. Czapliński P., Domańska E., Poznańskie Studia Polonistyczne: Poznań 2009, p. 15.