

doi: 10.15584/tik.spec.eng.2020.27

Vilnius's *Comoedia* – Another Link in the History of the Avant-garde

Anna Szawerna-Dyrszka

University of Silesia in Katowice, Poland

ORCID: 0000-0001-5261-3114

Abstract: The aim of the article is to discuss the magazine *Comoedia* dedicated to art and culture. From the start, *Comoedia* attracted contributions from eminent figures in letters and the arts. However, until now the monthly periodical has been described as a magazine devoted only to the theatre. The author of the article proves that *Comoedia* is “a missing link” in the chain of the Polish avant-garde movement in literature.

Keywords: *Comoedia*, journal, avant-garde, Żagary, Vilnius

Let us start from the end, namely from the “last link of the avant-garde” which is the journal *Pióro* founded by Józef Czechowicz.¹ The intention of the journal was to be a quarterly, but after the first issue with the date of April – June 1938 it turned out that there would be more than a year’s break until the second one came out. The publication of the second issue coincided with the tragic events of September 1939 and it gave a special meaning to the word “last,” thus for obvious reasons *Pióro* could not gain popularity. We know about its existence thanks only to a single damaged copy kept in a private collection.² This “rare book” is yet another link in the chain of the avant-garde journals and literary supplements, among which we may enumerate *Zwrotnica* (which is the first link of the avant-garde), *Linia*, *Kwadryga*, *Żagary*, *Piony*, *Kolumna Literacka*, *Kamena*, *Gazeta Artystów*, *Nasz Wyraz* and *Apel*.

I am going to focus on a periodical that has been ignored by studies on the interwar literary journals. We can find it neither in Szymański’s book titled *Z dziejów czasopism literackich w dwudziestoleciu międzywojennym* nor in Kłak’s monograph titled *Czasopisma awangardy*,³ even though there

¹ See: T. Kłak “*Pióro* – ostatnie ogniwo awangardy,” in: idem, *Czasopisma awangardy*, Part II: 1931–1939, Wrocław: Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich – Wydawnictwo PAN, 1979, pp. 177–213.

² See: Ibid., p 188.

³ W.P. Szymański, *Z dziejów czasopism literackich w dwudziestoleciu międzywojennym*, Kraków: Wydawnictwo Literackie, 1970; T. Kłak, *Czasopisma awangardy... Comoedia*

is a place that *Comoedia* – “the missing link” in the chain of the avant-garde journals – should take in the latter work.

The second volume of *Czasopisma awangardy* is devoted to the literary journals published between 1931–1939 and its first chapter titled *Idące Wilno (Żagary – Piony – Kolumna Literacka)* discusses three journals⁴ of the Żagary group which are included in the avant-garde sequence on the basis of a certain rule: the last issue of *Zwrotnica* was published in June 1927, that is a month after the first issue of *Kwadryga* came out; in turn, the first issue of *Żagary* was published two months before the closure of *Kwadryga*⁵ (June 1931). Similarly, the closure of *Kolumna Literacka* (July 1938) overlapped with the publication of *Pióro* (April – June 1938). The “element of geometry”⁶ in the interwar history of the literary journals will be, however, questioned if Kłak’s thesis that “*Kolumna* [...] is the last act of Żagary’s history as a group and a literary group”⁷ is undermined, too. It would turn out that, apart from the Warsaw *Pióro*, there was another avant-garde periodical in Vilnius which was published almost until the outbreak of the war.

Kolumna Literacka was published in the papers of *Kurier Wileński* from 29th July 1934. Initially, it was edited by Anatol Mikułko (a poet and columnist of the Smuga group; he became a member of Żagary after the fusion of these groups), but since the publication of the third issue he was replaced by Józef Maśliński, a declared avant-gardist (in the spirit of the Cracow avant-garde) connected with Żagary since the group was founded. Remaining the editor until the publication of the last supplement (31st July 1938), Maśliński consciously shaped it as a continuation of *Żagary – Piony*. Having been published for exactly four years, *Kolumna* was the longest regularly appearing journal of the avant-garde.⁸ Its publication was stopped

was characterised in comparison with other Vilnius journals by L.J. Malinowski, “Polska prasa w Wilnie przed laty,” in: idem, *Szkice o kulturze wileńskiej*, Bydgoszcz: Towarzystwo Miłośników Wilna i Ziemi Wileńskiej. Oddział w Bydgoszczy, 2011, pp. 77–98. *Comoedia*, as a journal about the theatre, was described by J. Ciechowicz, “Na przykład *Comoedia* Józefa Maślińskiego,” in: *Wilno teatralne*, edited by M. Kozłowska, Warszawa: Ogólnopolski Klub Miłośników Litwy, 1998, pp. 388–402; D. Fox, “W przestrzeni miasta,” in: eadem, *Czasopiśmiennictwo teatralne w Polsce w latach 1918–1939*, Katowice: Uniwersytet Śląski, Oficyna Wydawnicza Waław Walasek, 2013, pp. 203–205.

⁴ There were three titles, but four versions of the journal: *Żagary* – a supplement to the journal *Słowo*, published from April 1931 to March 1932. *Piony* – a supplement to the journal *Kurier Wileński*, published from May to December 1932. *Żagary*, as a separate journal (*Piony* was merged with left-winged *Smuga*), was published from November 1933 to March 1934. *Kolumna Literacka* was published in the papers of *Kurier Wileński* between 1934–1938.

⁵ See: W. P. Szymański, *Z dziejów czasopism...*, p. 29.

⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷ See: T. Kłak, “*Idące Wilno (Żagary – Piony – Kolumna Literacka)*,” in: idem, *Czasopisma awangardy...*, p. 51. Kłak’s statement is undermined by Ciechowicz. See: J. Ciechowicz, “Na przykład *Comoedia*...,” p. 395. All the quotations from the Polish sources have been translated by Agnieszka Grząsko.

⁸ See: T. Kłak, “*Idące Wilno...*,” p. 51.

suddenly without any forewarning. We may hazard a guess that the supplement was withdrawn from publication, because the artistic and life paths of the members of the Żagary group parted (Miłosz and Zagórski left Vilnius and found jobs in Warsaw; while Bujnicki started to cooperate with the Vilnius daily *Ślowo*).

In spite of the fact that the avant-gardists were dispersed, Maśliński, who was the editor of *Comoedia*, made a final attempt to unite the group. A new periodical was founded to provide a forum for all matters connected with both Vilnius and regional culture, as there was no room for such topics in the Polish magazines. By filling this gap, the editors of *Comoedia* created a journal whose aim was to deny that there was a “tradition” according to which in Vilnius “all journals devoted to art and culture had failed.”⁹ The negative effects of this unfortunate tendency were discussed by Józef Czerni in the papers of the literary monthly *Skawa* published in Warsaw:

The history of various literary and social journals published in Vilnius was rather sad. None of them was able to stay in the market. The burden was automatically put on the dailies, where the same people were writing with only one difference, that they lowered their standards. As far as the existing journals are concerned, only the Sunday supplements to *Ślowo* and sometimes to *Kurier Wileński* stand out. Their range is generally limited to extensive lucrative reviews and provincial skirmishes. [...] Objectively, *Ślowo* is still the most serious journal and many poets and writers from abroad often appear there, even though it rarely crosses the borders [...] apart from worthless battles in columns it meets no great literary response.¹⁰

In his piece of literary reportage “Wilno leży nad Wisłą”, Czerni assesses a new undertaking of the “old” avant-gardists:

We should objectively approve of the initiative undertaken by the current theatre director, L. Pobóg-Kielanowski Ph.D., who established a monthly *Comoedia* devoted to matters connected with art and contemporary culture. It is the journal that Józef Maśliński transferred to with the whole output of his *Kolumna Literacka*. *Comoedia* is to develop, but its former eclectic nature has not indicated yet the creation of a new militant institution. To put it simply, old people – old battles.¹¹

It is worth noting that, from the “outside-Vilnius” perspective, the author of the quoted excerpt perceived *Comoedia* as a continuation of *Kolumna Literacka*, therefore it was placed among other literary avant-garde journals.

The first issue was published in October 1938 and it was commented on in the Vilnius press. In a review titled “Nowe pismo w Wilnie *Comoedia*” published in *Kurier Wileński* Anatol Mikułko says:

We remember the tragic history of a few literary journals brought out in Vilnius very well: how they were created “from scratch”, their wonderful development, the “buzz” they generated in the whole country, and then a very tragic downfall for reasons beyond the editorial team’s control. So interesting were the times of storm and stress. The young would walk the winding streets of Vilnius, they were in a frenzy of joy, immersed in va-

⁹ “Ślowo od redakcji,” *Comoedia* 1938, Issue 1, p. 1.

¹⁰ J. Czerni, “Wilno leży nad Wisłą,” *Skawa* 1939, Issue 3, p. 3.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 3–4.

rious conceptions, seized with passion. Today, many of the matters have passed and the threads connecting the group have been torn for ever. A part of the battalion emigrated, others stayed here where they are undergoing "further evolution" on the cemetery of the youthful passions and ideas.

Due to journals being on a losing streak, there was a several-year break. Now it was *Comoedia* – a new artistic journal in Vilnius – that appeared on the stage. There would not be any "hype in the whole country", as the journal's aim was not to go that far. There is no passion in it. *Comoedia* is dominated by calm and prudent comfortable restraint in the choice of subjects. And if it fails – it will definitely not be "for reasons beyond the editorial team's control."¹²

In this opinion coming from the Żagary milieu it is worth stressing that the new periodical is perceived as another one in the series of "Idące Wilno" publishing initiatives. Interestingly, *Kolumna Literacka* was ignored here (indeed, it is easy to understand the remark on the "several-year break" that divides "the hype in the whole country," namely the turmoil caused by two series of *Żagary* and *Pionier* since the foundation of *Comoedia*). The belief in the continuity guaranteed by Maśliński is accompanied by scepticism in the evaluation of the success of the new undertaking. On the one hand, it is dictated by awareness of the group community which disintegrates; on the other hand, it is about the knowledge of the limited impact of the editor on the final shape of the journal:

The journal is edited by Józef Maśliński "in collaboration with the Theatre at Pohulanka" – added Mikułko. – It means that the theatre (together with Turski, the owner of the print shop "Grafika") provides money for *Comoedia*. But Pohulanka's "collaboration" is not limited to finances. The first issue was almost completely devoted to the theatre.¹³

Putting the word "collaboration" in quotation marks is obviously an irony. The nature of the collaboration in question was in the hands of the editing team, namely Maśliński, Leopold Pobóg-Kielanowski, who was the director of the theatre at Pohulanka, and Stanisław Turski, who was the publisher of the journal. As a result, literature in *Comoedia* was relegated into the background which was justified by the scope of the journal devoted to – as mentioned on its cover – "matters connected with art and contemporary culture."¹⁴ Nevertheless, in "Słowo od redakcji" (in all likelihood, authored by Maśliński), which was the opening of the first issue, literary matters were mentioned right after theatrical ones:

Comoedia does not want to be a journal for a tiny handful of experts – they wrote. – Taking into account a comprehensive list of matters connected with theatre and literature it does not intend to stop there. Reviews of the latest achievements in science presented in an accessible way; fine arts [...], photography, film, tourism – these subjects cannot be ignored by any well-bred person. The editors' ambition is to serve the reader in all these fields, but not to bore him at the same time.¹⁵

¹² A. Mikułko, "Nowe pismo w Wilnie *Comoedia*," *Kurier Wileński* 1938, Issue 279, p. 3.

¹³ *Ibid.*

¹⁴ There is a broader subheading in the imprint: "A magazine devoted to matters connected with art and culture published once a month in collaboration with the Theatre at Pohulanka".

¹⁵ "Słowo od redakcji..."

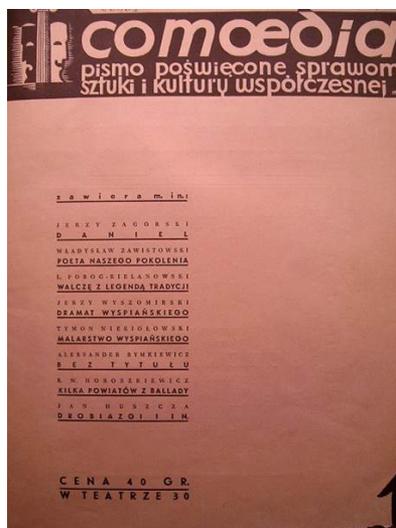


Illustration no. 1: The cover of the first *Comoedia* issue

The first issue of the journal was dominated by articles on theatre and drama (connected with the Vilnius stage adaptation of Wyspiański's *Wyzwolenie* [*Liberation*]). Nevertheless, it was the names of Żagarysts that were supposed to attract the readers, therefore not without reason the poems written by Jerzy Zagórski and Aleksander Rymkiewicz as well as the humorous sketch of Jan Huszcza (see illustration 1) were listed on its cover, giving an insight into what could be found in the journal. While promoting the avant-gardists, Maśliński made use of the leading theme of the issue and he reprinted an excerpt from the farce titled *Igry ku czci Wyspiańskiego* written by the members of the Żagary group in 1933.

When in November 1938 the second issue of *Comoedia* came out, Anatol Mikułko expressed his opinion in *Kurier Wileński* of the “almost heroic” effort that Maśliński had put into the edition of the journal. Mikułko enthusiastically referred to the results of Maśliński’s work:

We have different opinions on many things, but I have to admit I am delighted with the second issue of *Comoedia* [...]. Maśliński passed the examination in editing with flying colours. [...]

Currently, the publication of every issue of *Comoedia* is a cultural event on the barren Vilnius publishing market.¹⁶

Mikułko was pleased to note that “in comparison to the first issue, Pohulanka’s matters take up little space” and added, with his characteristic irony, that one could find works of Vilnius’s avant-gardists there:

Poetry is represented by two poems, namely *Romantyczność* by Teodor Bujnicki and *Wiersz o korniku* by Leon Szreder. Rarely do we hear from the latter poet, as he publishes

¹⁶ A. Mikułko, “Pod włos,” *Kurier Wileński* 1938, Issue 307, pp. 3–4.

circa one poem every two years. *Comoedia* is likely to revive a fading artist and thus it deserves a place in history. [...]

Jan Huszcza's sense of humour is worse than in the previous issue.¹⁷

Bujnicki and Szreder did not appear in *Comoedia* ever again, whereas Huszcza, belonging to the so-called second generation of the Żagary group, published there both humorous sketches¹⁸ and poems.¹⁹ Jerzy Zagórski had a dual role in *Comoedia*; he was both a poet and an essayist. His essay titled "Zwodzone mosty," published in the December issue of 1938, was not about literature, but contemporary society; he focused on the complex relations between the generations in post-war Poland. Avant-garde discourse was present in the articles titled "Dorzynki literackie" and "Dwa oblicza awangardy"²⁰ written by Maśliński. Contrary to what might be expected, there is no spelling mistake in the first title. In his review of the second issue Mikułko writes: "The longer article titled 'Dożynki literackie' written by Maśliński deals with the latest disputes in the avant-garde."²¹ Taking into consideration how heated the disputes were, there is no doubt that Maśliński used the word *dorzynąć* ('to kill') deliberately, given that *dożynki* ('harvest festival') refers to a celebration held in the autumn to give thanks for crops. Nevertheless, the ambiguous metaphor²² might have been the poet's intentional move. As a result, the final effect of the literary disputes discussed in the article would be called "bloody harvest." Miłosz, whose articles in *Pióro* and *Orka na Ugorze*²³ began or – let us employ the critic's words – "launched" a "crusade" against formalism and pure poetry, undermining the theoretical fundamentals of Cracow avant-garde poetry, was the main culprit in this conflict. "In the anti-formalistic inclinations – as Maśliński wrote – our Iconoclast condemned every last one of the metaphors, ellipses and other magical practices used by avant-gardists."

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ J. Huszcza, "Drobiazgi," *Comoedia* 1938, Issue 1, p. 15; J. Huszcza, "Ewarst Ciurlik – materiały do monografii," *Comoedia* 1938, Issue 2, p. 26; J. Huszcza, "Spowiedź dziecięcego wieku (fragmenty znalezionej pamiętnika)," *Comoedia* 1939, Issue 5, pp. 19–20.

¹⁹ J. Huszcza, "Biała pora," "Zadworze," *Comoedia* 1939, Issue 3, p. 9; J. Huszcza, "Ćwieceino," *** [incipit] "Zbiegów czaruje wywoływacz kul," *Comoedia* 1939, Issue 6, p. 11.

²⁰ See: J. Maśliński, "Dorzynki literackie," *Comoedia* 1938, Issue 2, pp. 6–7; J. Maśliński, "Dwa oblicza awangardy," *Comoedia* 1939, Issue 2, pp. 16–19.

²¹ J. Maśliński, "Dorzynki literackie," *Comoedia* 1938, Issue 2. All subsequent quotations without a footnote come from this source.

²² At that time there was one more meaning of the metaphor *dorzynanie* ('killing'), namely the allusion to Bujnicki's poem "W imieniu Żagarów" published in *Kurier Wileński* 1934, Issue 351. The poem was a bitter satire on the absurd accusations hurled by the political propaganda at the members of the Żagary group who were becoming radical. The poem begins with the following words: "We are going to kill with a cheerful squeal/dukes, prelates, generals;" it was preceded by the motto in which Bujnicki referred to the context: "In the 1st issue of *Problemy* we may read in the press review that: 'If – God forbid – the collectivist revolution breaks out in Poland, then the editing team of *Żagary* will kill people with a cheerful squeal!'"

²³ C. Miłosz, "Zejście na ziemię," *Pióro* 1938, Issue 1, pp. 16–24; C. Miłosz, "Kłamstwo dzisiejszej poezji," *Orka na Ugorze* 1938, Issue 5, p. 6.

Miłosz's attack was very severe and the poet did not mince his words. Suffice it to recall that the supporters of the "new device" and "new metaphor" were called "a bunch of ignoramuses" who "littered the bookshop windows with slim volumes."²⁴ While presenting the views of Miłosz and then his adversaries, namely Ignacy Fik and Michał Chmielowiec,²⁵ Maśliński uses very harsh language: "artistic depression," "grist in verse," "thoughtlessness of poetasters and toothlessness of critics," "nomenclature of professorial formalism," "grist of the avant-garde epigones." These are only some examples of the insulting style which discloses the viewpoint shared by Miłosz and Maśliński. "Both M. and I repudiate the autonomy of art" – declared Maśliński. He explains that:

between recognizing and not recognizing the autonomy of art (similarly – "pure poetry") [...], there may be various relations and combinations. Not taking into account one of the combinations [...] may result in the failure of the whole crusade. Referring to "a bunch of ignoramuses" Miłosz could receive a response only from them. His inner passion, and the great game he wanted to play, could remain unrivalled. Yet he had good intentions and spoke, although his distinguishing features were distorted in the challenge.²⁶

Miłosz's risky provocation ended up with success, maybe even greater than he had expected, because the reluctance of the pure poetry followers turned into a national press discussion on contemporary poetry in general.²⁷ Maśliński's article in *Comoedia* was a significant voice in this matter.

Another essay by Maśliński published in the second issue of the journal from 1939 was involved in the avant-garde discussion. It is the title "Dwa oblicza awangardy" that refers to two books, the one by "the mature artist" Julian Przyboś (*Równanie serca*) and the other one by "a young man," namely Jerzy Pietrkiewicz (*Wiersze i poematy*). What makes them different is their age and poetic experience, what makes them similar is that they both published collections of poor poems. According to Maśliński, Przyboś's volume of poetry bears no comparison with his "excellent book" titled *W głąb las*. Compared to *Równanie serca* – a sentimental and superficial "lyrical diary of his excursions abroad" – it is "a melancholic idea, poor enterprise." Przyboś resigning from "the previous purity of tone and uniformity of structure" makes readers disappointed. It is similar with Pietrkiewicz, from whom a reader receives

²⁴ See: C. Miłosz, "Kłamstwo dzisiejszej poezji," *Orka na Ugorze* 1938, Issue 5.

²⁵ I. Fik, "Grzech anielstwa. Na przykładzie Czesława Miłosza," *Pion* 1938, Issue 36, pp. 2–3; M. Chmielowiec, "Przegląd prasy. Dyskusje o dzisiejszej poezji," *Nasz Wyraz* 1938, Issue 9.

²⁶ J. Maśliński, "Dorzynki literackie," *Comoedia* 1938, Issue 2, p. 7.

²⁷ See, among others, I. Fik, "Grzech anielstwa. Na przykładzie Czesława Miłosza," *Pion* 1938, Issue 36; M. Chmielowiec, "Przegląd prasy. Dyskusje o dzisiejszej poezji," *Nasz Wyraz* 1938, Issue 9; S. Czernik, "Sprawa Miłosza," *Okolica Poetów* 1938, Issue 6, pp. 36–37; G. Herling-Grudziński, "Obrońca metafory (Poprawki do artykułu Czesława Miłosza)," *Orka na Ugorze* 1938, Issue 6, p. 4; J. Maśliński, "Środki, nie tylko cele!," *Kurier Wileński* 1938, Issue 14; J. Zagórski, "Pryska obręcz milczenia," *Pióro* 1939, Issue 2, p. 135; J.A. Król, "Przeciw wyrażaniu siebie," *Orka na Ugorze* 1938, Issue 7, p. 3.

a collection of rather soft and drawn-out poems employing "futuristic" texture indeed (of rather a Russian style) filled with Przyboś and Czechowicz, but written according to the former styles – yet not of the Young Poland movement ones, but still not the futuristic ones, just the "Decadent" ones.²⁸

These poems devoid of originality "add no artistic anxieties." Only sometimes – the critic continues –

there appear excerpts, even whole poems [...] which are proof of the fight for awareness, giving a very artistic and sincere expression of chaos – in order to overcome it.²⁹

One such poem – *Wiosna (1938)* with the subtitle *Wyrwane z improwizacji* – was published next to Maśliński's review. The author did not forget about Przyboś while choosing the poem from the volume *Równanie serca*.

Other poets of the avant-garde whose poems were published in *Comoedia* are, by and large, members of the Żagary group: Bujnicki, Zagórski, Rymkiewicz, Maśliński, Huszcza.³⁰ Leon Szreder and Konstanty Ildefons Gałczyński, who were connected with them, published their poems there too.³¹ Ariel Pirmas, whose works published in the journal alluded to the previous journals of the Żagary group, also belonged to the group. He debuted as a poet in the first version of "Żagary" and he continued to appear in others – as the author of epigrams, anecdotes, fables, satires, parodies, translations, features and even reviews and journalistic articles. Ariel (more often Aron) Pirmas – part Jewish, part Lithuanian (Pirmas in Lithuanian means 'the first') – was a fictional character invented by Bujnicki and Miłosz to resemble the Russian Kuźma Prutków. As time went by, other poets of the group individually and collectively started to publish under the pseudonym Pirmas. In *Comoedia* Ariel Pirmas was the author of the humorous *Historyjki z prawdziwego zdarzenia* and the satirical poem *Piosenka epigona*.³² Who actually wrote these poems remains forever a mystery. If they were a collective work, Czesław Miłosz could have been one of their authors – this would be the only trace of Miłosz's presence as a poet in this work.

Paradoxically, this most acclaimed poet of Żagary published a short story titled *Tryton* (see illustration 2) in the final issue of *Comoedia*. It was the second work by Miłosz written in prose – one year earlier in June 1938 in

²⁸ J. Maśliński, "Dwa oblicza awangardy...", pp. 17–18.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 19.

³⁰ T. Bujnicki, "Romantyczność," *Comoedia* 1938, Issue 2, p. 18; J. Zagórski, "Daniel," *Comoedia* 1938, Issue 1, p. 3; A. Rymkiewicz, *** [incipit] "Gdy szedłem wieczorem pod klony," *Comoedia* 1938, Issue 1, p. 13; J. Maśliński, "Mob," *Comoedia* 1939, Issue 4, p. 9; J. Huszcza, "Biała pora," "Zadworze," *Comoedia* 1939, Issue 3, p. 9; J. Huszcza, "Ćwiecino," *** [incipit] "Zbiegów czaruje wywoływacz kul," *Comoedia* 1939, Issue 6, p. 11.

³¹ L. Szreder, "Wiersz o orniku," *Comoedia* 1938, Issue 2, p. 3; K. I. Gałczyński, "Redaktor ulic," *Comoedia* 1939, Issue 2, pp. 20–21 (the last work is a humorous short story).

³² A. Pirmas, "Piosenka epigona," *Comoedia* 1939, Issue 2, p. 19; A. Pirmas, "Historyjki z prawdziwego zdarzenia," *Comoedia* 1939, Issue 5, p. 18.

Pion he published the short story *Obrachunki*³³ which was given a prize in a contest organized by the journal. *Tryton*, for many reasons important in Miłosz's output, was published once again in 2003 in one of the volumes of *Dzieła zebrane*.³⁴

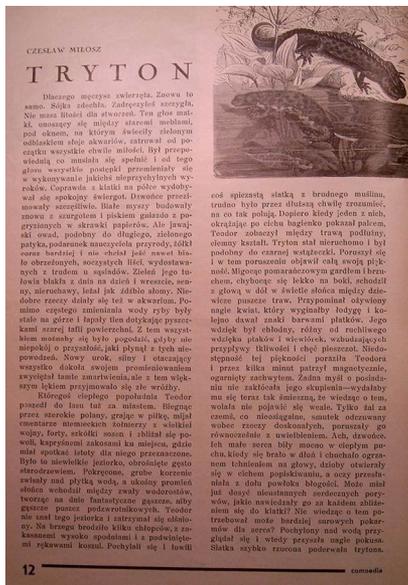


Illustration no. 2. The beginning of Miłosz's short story titled *Tryton*, *Comœdia* 1939, Issue 6

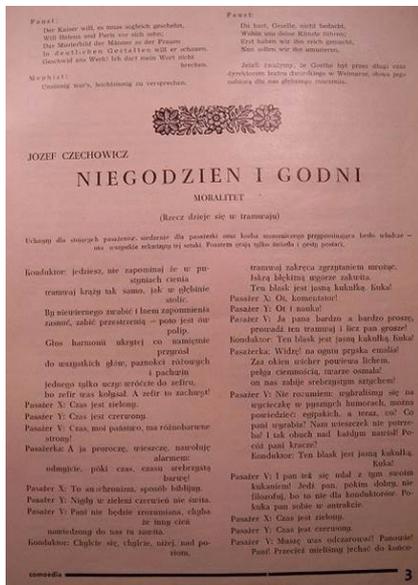


Illustration no. 3. The first page of the first edition of Józef Czechowicz's morality play *Niegodzien i godni*, *Comœdia* 1939, Issue 6

Comœdia deserves to be remembered as the first place where *Tryton* was published. Moreover, a very important work by Czechowicz, namely *Niegodzien i godni* (see illustration 3) was also published there. However, history turned out to be unfair in the case of Czechowicz's work, because Seweryn Polak published the text of this morality play in the journal *Dialog* in 1969 announcing that it was the first edition, forgetting completely about the pre-war Vilnius journal *Comœdia*.³⁵

³³ On the contest and prose debut of Miłosz see: A. Szawerna-Dyrzka, "Obrachunki" w *Pionie*, czyli o pewnym konkursie i debiucie prozatorskim Czesława Miłosza," in: *Balaghan. Mikroświaty i nanohistorie*, edited by M. Jochemczyk, M. Kokoszka, B. Mytych-Forajter, Katowice: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Śląskiego, 2015, pp. 277–284.

³⁴ C. Miłosz, "Tryton," in: idem, *Przygody młodego umysłu. Publicystyka i proza 1931–1939*, collected and edited by A. Stawiarska, Kraków: Znak, 2003, pp. 324–334. On this short story see: A. Szawerna-Dyrzka, "Krótka historia pewnej hodowli," in: A. Szawerna-Dyrzka, *Blizsze i dalsze okolice Miłosza. Szkice*. Katowice: Uniwersytet Śląski: Wydawnictwo Agencja Artystyczna Para, 2011, pp. 29–34.

³⁵ See: K. Pleśniarowicz, "Czechowicz w teatrze Kantora," *Dialog* 1978, Issue 7, pp. 117–123.

The final – sixth (which was, in fact, the eighth³⁶) issue of the journal from June 1939 – given the two interesting first editions that were uncharacteristic of their authors – is the final argument in favour of recognizing *Comoedia* as another link of the avant-garde.

Translated by Agnieszka Grząsko

Bibliography

Comoedia 1938–1939, issues 1–9.

- Ciechowicz J., "Na przykład 'Comoedia' Józefa Maślińskiego," in: *Wilno teatralne*, edited by M. Kozłowska, Warszawa: Ogólnopolski Klub Miłośników Litwy, 1998.
- Fox D., "W przestrzeni miasta," in: eadem, *Czasopiśmiennictwo teatralne w Polsce w latach 1918–1939*, Katowice: Uniwersytet Śląski, Oficyna Wydawnicza Waclaw Walasek, 2013.
- Kłak T., *Czasopisma awangardy*, Part II: 1931–1939, Wrocław: Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich – Wydawnictwo PAN, 1979.
- Malinowski L.J., "Polska prasa w Wilnie przed laty," in: idem, *Szkice o kulturze wileńskiej*, Bydgoszcz: Towarzystwo Miłośników Wilna i Ziemi Wileńskiej. Oddział w Bydgoszczy, 2011.
- Miłosz C., *Przygody młodego umysłu. Publicystyka i proza 1931–1939*, collected and edited by A. Stawiarska, Kraków: Znak, 2003.
- Pleśniarowicz K., "Czechowicz w teatrze Kantora," *Dialog* 1978, Issue 7.
- Szawerna-Dyrszka A., "Krótka historia pewnej hodowli," in: A. Szawerna-Dyrszka, *Bliższe i dalsze okolice Miłosa. Szkice*. Katowice: Uniwersytet Śląski: Wydawnictwo Agencja Artystyczna Para, 2011.
- Szawerna-Dyrszka A., "'Obrachunki' w Pionie, czyli o pewnym konkursie i debiucie prozatorskim Czesława Miłosa," in: *Balaghan. Mikroświaty i nanohistorie*, edited by M. Jochemczyk, M. Kokoszka, B. Mytych-Forajter, Katowice: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Śląskiego, 2015.
- Szymański W.P., *Z dziejów czasopism literackich w dwudziestoleciu międzywojennym*, Kraków: Wydawnictwo Literackie, 1970.

³⁶ According to the numbering, there were nine issues of the journal; in fact, however, there were only eight issues. The situation is explained in the NUKAT catalogue: "In a significant part of the circulation R.1/2, Issue 3/1 (Dec. 1938/Jan. 1939) 'Dec. 1938' was wrongly printed instead of 'Dec./Jan.' In 1939 a separate January issue did not come out. According to R. 2, Issue 2 (Feb. 1939)," <http://katalog.nukat.edu.pl> (accessed on 21.08.2017).