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MOJA KSIĄŻKA

PAWEŁ WOLSKI

Autobiographical readings (Marta Wyka and German Ritz)

The section is devoted to the presentation of autobiographical readings of the most prominent experts in the field of literature, culture, art etc. The first autobiographical reading experience (*Remarks on Kronos*) is presented by Marta Wyka, a Jagiellonian University historian of literature, chief editor of *Dekada Literacka* (*Literary Decade*), author of many books concerning Polish literature of the modernist, interwar and post-war period, who shares her views on one of the most lively discussed Polish autobiographical books of the last years: *Kronos* by Witold Gombrowicz. Her position in the vastly critical debate (in which most of its participants claim that the book is no more than a marketing stunt, blowing the interest in this supposedly revelatory personal narrative out of proportions) is that the text is an effect of a deep self-awareness of Gombrowicz and his ability to create public interest not only in his current, but also future text (*Kronos* was published almost half a century after his death) and a tough task for his biographers rather than a new source of biographical data. At the other hand, German Ritz of University of Zurich, a Swiss comparatist, author of many books concerning Polish literature (including two books on Jarosław Iwaszkiewicz), in his text *Autobiography as an alternative* presents his views on reading autobiographies as a source of information for a literary critic, historian etc. The author sees autobiography as a subversive force of history, making alternative reception of the past, e.g. reading the history of women, tracing heteronormative patterns etc., possible. He concludes by saying that fictional and autobiographical writing are not two separate and incongruent kinds of writing, but deeply coherent types of literature which as such create a complete source of historical literary knowledge.

