

SUMMARY

Literackie homunkulusy

w twórczości Brunona Schulza, Stanisława Lema i Philipa K. Dicka

Literary Homunculus in work of Bruno Schulz, Stanislaw Lem and Philip K. Dick

Phenomenon of artificial human beings is known in our culture for ages. They show up in various forms: mythic Galatea and Pandora, Jewish golem, dummies, mannequins, marionettes, wax figures, idols, dolls, androids, robots, cyborgs and also dehumanized humans. I have decided to call them: homunculi (“homunkulusy”) – an artificial human beings that were one of the goals of alchemists experiments. In my theory homunculus became a symbol of artificial life – not only this created in the laboratory or made in factory, but also human life that became empty, sterile and unable to create.

The obsession of human look-alikes is omnipresent in works of Bruno Schulz, Stanisław Lem and Philip K. Dick. These three writers created dehumanized characters who are ruthless and washed out of feelings or already dead while still being alive who accepted their fate of sawdust, stuffed puppets – homunculus. Their novels are full of motifs taken from alchemy and the Book of Genesis. Real humans are replaced by mannequins or electric imitations. Maybe, as Jean Baudrillard said, the whole reality is in fact a simulation. Then how should we see the difference between truth and illusion? Novels of Philip K. Dick, Stanislaw Lem and Bruno Schulz are bringing up these problems. Homunculus could be a polyphonic symbol and metaphor of dehumanization, minorities, cruelty of corporation and politics, new technologies, prospects and risks of the future.

In first chapter of my PhD I have created historical and cultural background of homunculus and artificial life – including: meaning, etymology, first mentions, works of Goethe, Stern, Shelley and other writers, science fiction themes, dangerous science, genetic engineering, cyborgs, mutants, robots, androids, AI, automatons and vision of the whole universe changed to homunculus. In second chapter I have made an ontology of this literary characters – most important for me were: theme of the Book (alchemic tractates), images of faces, problem of body and sex, as well as special features of homunculus.

In third chapter I am writing about metaphor of world that turn into alchemic laboratory, “sinful manipulations” – that are connected with problem of creation and cabbalistic form of homunculus – golem.