with, as well as his opinions about, Raymond Aron, Albert Camus, Simone Weil, and Jeanne Hersch. Marek Kornat follows the exchange of letters about Aron and his *Opium des intellectuels* between Miłosz, who was translating the book into Polish, and Jerzy Giedroyc, the editor of the monthly *Kultura*, who commissioned the translation. Miłosz strongly disliked the book, which was written, according to him, in the manner of those intelligent "analyses of Catholicism written by an atheist" (94). In his own *The Captive Mind*, he strived to be as concrete and direct as possible in addressing the same problems, and he succeeded, judging by the opinion of Karl Jaspers, who declared in a letter to Hannah Arendt that "Milosz writes so concretely and with a psychology that only someone who was there and who both had to and was able to work his way out of that experience could develop" (in Hannah Arendt/Karl Jaspers, *Correspondence, 1926–1969* [1992], 219). Miłosz did reluctantly complete his translation, which appeared in 1956, but Giedroyc had to do a lot of editing to make it possible. The poet was proposing a different book—a collection of essays by Simone Weil. Her "Selected Texts," edited and translated by Miłosz, was published by *Kultura* two years after Aron's book. Marek Tomaszewski writes in this volume about the attraction Miłosz felt toward Weil's Manichean dualism, her intense religiosity and social sensitivity. They never met, as she died in 1943 in London, but Miłosz visited her mother in Paris and shared his admiration for Weil with one of the few allies he had in France, Albert Camus. The chapter devoted to that affinity, by Marta Wyka, points to the common ethical and religious interests of both men, who felt differently than the French intellectual establishment.

Roberta De Monticelli, the author of a chapter on Jeanne Hersch, brings in new information about that extraordinary woman, a professor of philosophy at the University of Genève. For some time, while Miłosz was waiting for his wife and small sons, who remained in the United States, Hersch was his partner and translator. She helped him enormously in his literary career. A former student of Karl Jaspers and Martin Heidegger, she was a classmate of Hannah Arendt, who thought very highly of her. De Monticelli writes about her intellectual influence on Miłosz, especially her antimodernist attitude. That influence was very strong, yet her antimodernism was characteristic of the catastrophist poets of 1930s in Poland, as Delaperrière mentions in this volume, and Miłosz, in spite of his leftist leanings, was more antimodernist in his youth than in his postwar period in France.

Other articles in the volume are also interesting and rich. They trace the influence of Oscar Miłosz on Miłosz's worldview and poetry, and they tackle the poet's relation to Marxism, the role the city of Paris plays in his texts, and his relations with the "Kultura" émigré center. The work has several interesting photographs and reproduces a couple of texts by Miłosz. It is not only a highly satisfying collection but a handsome one as well, marred only by numerous typos. But these are more than compensated for by the care and dedication with which the authors speak about Miłosz, showing his enormous talents and continued relevance.

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Gombrowicza milczenie o Bogu. By Łukasz Tischner. Kraków: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego, 2013. 288 pp. Bibliography. Index. ZL 39.90, paper.

Witold Gombrowicz, one of the most important Polish writers of the twentieth century, considered himself an atheist. And he lived, appropriately, in the "secular age," as Łukasz Tischner, the author of the book under review, emphasizes, referring to

the notion of Charles Taylor, the contemporary philosopher who employed it in his description of faith and secularization in the modern west. But it is not only this philosopher's observations that are helpful—throughout his well-documented study of Gombrowicz's attitude toward religion, Tischner also makes effective use of the ideas of other thinkers. Charles Darwin, Ludwig Feuerbach, Karl Marx, Auguste Comte, Friedrich Nietzsche, and Sigmund Freud serve as a good basis for the presentation of the nineteenth-century roots of unbelief and an introduction to modern secularism. Tischner briefly reconstructs their critiques of religion and indicates that their atheistic views, among them the conviction that religion is marked by fear and infantilism, influenced the later modernist atmosphere in which Gombrowicz (1904–69) grew up. However, among all the philosophers Tischner refers to in his book, it is Søren Kierkegaard and Arthur Schopenhauer who take the most prominent position. Their pessimistic ideas simply fascinated Gombrowicz, and Tischner proves this by showing the direct connections between the writer's imagination and Schopenhauer's philosophy of will and Kierkegaard's views on faith.

While reconstructing Gombrowicz's childhood and adolescence, Tischner argues that the future writer, whether at home or in school, appeared as someone unfit, ill-adjusted, and even inferior to others. But from very early on, the critic observes, Gombrowicz searched for intellectual independence and desired to be free from any, including religious, authority. Among the intellectual trends and historical events of the era that shaped the writer's attitude, Tischner draws attention to the Polish-Soviet war of 1920. Gombrowicz did not participate in it, but the wartime pressure from the sacralized national community on individuals was an especially traumatic experience for him, as it heightened his sense of exclusion, humiliation, and shame even more. He turned against any idea of national collectiveness and suffered, as evidenced in his memoir, quoted by Tischner, from absolute loneliness. Tischner maintains that what led Gombrowicz to this state of crisis—and to parting with God—was precisely this concrete historical experience in which religion was linked closely with an imposed collective pressure. Nevertheless, Gombrowicz called his turn away from God a matter of great importance, as it opened his mind to the entire world. He also admitted that the event had in fact occurred smoothly and inconspicuously when he was fourteen or fifteen. Afterward, he did not "deal with" God.

It is, therefore, a challenge for every literary critic to attempt to examine Gombrowicz's oeuvre from the viewpoint of religious matters. The writer did remain silent on the question of God (hence this book's title: *Gombrowicz's Silence on God*) throughout his career. One can thus admire Tischner for his attempt, as he traces references to religion, faith, and spirituality in Gombrowicz, obtaining interesting results. He first examines the writer's short stories from the significant debut collection *A Memoir from the Age of Adolescence*. By looking into their common motifs—supposed innocence, failed initiation, false loftiness, degraded rituals, and mystery-turned-emptiness—and aiding himself with the tools of psychoanalysis, he discovers not only their metaphysical and erotic character but also some religious anxiety within them. According to one conclusion, the expressed metaphysical pessimism not only identified the source of evil and cruelty in the world but also pointed to some transcendent Absolute that doomed the world to the "immensity of pitilessness." To search these ideas further, Tischner carries out a detailed analysis of selected passages from Gombrowicz's *Diary*, the writer's most illuminating work on his spiritual experiences. In two long chapters, one finds invaluable discussions of Gombrowicz's obsessive themes: the sense of the world's horrors, its mysterious demonic forces, the diabolical nature of pain, and the omnipotent "infernal principle." Underlying the writer's views, these pessimistic notions suggest that transcendence in Gombrowicz is not of a religious type. At the same time, there is something sacred about it.

This part of the book, along with the final chapters, shows how strenuous Tischner's efforts are. Some of his discussions may even seem inessential here, but they attempt to ensure that the problems are examined from all angles. Still, the book's real weakness may lie elsewhere: when reading Gombrowicz, Tischner identifies the author with his work too easily, and, unjustifiably, he pays very little attention to his novels. Nevertheless, Tischner's book is an impressive study. It addresses the most difficult subject in Gombrowicz's writings and uncovers, as much as possible, the real nature of his transcendence and atheism.

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Polish Cinema in a Transnational Context. Ed. Ewa Mazierska and Michael Goddard. Rochester Studies in East and Central Europe. Rochester: University of Rochester Press, 2014. vi, 334 pp. Notes. Bibliography. Index. Figures. Tables. $90.00, hard bound.

Over the past two decades, "transnationalism" has become a key concept in the humanities, not the least in film studies. In a combined effort to counter transnationality's marginal role in Polish film criticism and to tackle the exclusion of Polish cinema from transnational film studies, this carefully edited collection offers a range of case studies revolving around the fortunes of "Polish" films and film professionals beyond the country's borders. Bringing together scholars, archivists, and art practitioners from various generations, countries, and academic backgrounds, the volume consists of an introductory essay and fifteen chapters, grouped in three thematic sections (on distribution and reception, production and performance, and directors). In their introduction, Ewa Mazierska and Michael Goddard offer proper contextualization of the book's subject and prove to be fully conversant with the most recent theoretical and conceptual developments in the field of transnational and Polish cinema. In the first chapter of the section on reception, Peter Hames points to Polish cinema's—partly politically inspired—visibility in British film distribution and criticism during the communist era (especially in the 1960s and 1970s), which strongly contrasts with the veil of obscurity currently surrounding films and filmmakers from the former eastern bloc. Darragh O'Donoghue further elaborates on this topic by focusing on the shifting fortunes in the United Kingdom of Andrzej Wajda (who gradually dropped off the British radar in the late 1980s). As Helena Goscilo argues in her article on the (marginal) presence of Polish cinema in the United States, Krzysztof Kieślowski remains exceptional as the only Polish auteur who managed to gain considerable attention across the ocean. Dorota Ostrowska's chapter in turn sheds interesting light on early Polish submissions to west European film festivals and discerns an intricate connection between the festival circuit's impact on the international reception of the "Polish school," on the one hand, and the rise of anti-Hollywood European art-house film, on the other. Charlotte Govaert's contribution problematizes the (trans)national identity of *Silver City*, a documentary she made about Polish immigrants in Scotland, by analyzing and comparing viewers' opinions about the film's referential authenticity.

Eva Näripea's chapter, which opens the section on transnational productions and performances, combines thorough textual analysis and admirable theoretical depth in its treatment of Marek Piestrak's critically neglected Polish-Estonian coproductions. Cinematic exchanges and collaborations between Poland and Russia during and after the Cold War are the focal point of Izabela Kalinowska's instructive comparative analysis of Sergei Kolosov's *Remember Your Name* (1974) and Krzysztof Zanussi's