

# Summaries

Anna Chromik-Krzykawska

## Between Use and Refuse: Reclaiming the Abject into Culture

The paper deals with the notions of filth and waste understood as embodiments of cultural transgressions. The fear of pollution which underpins our culture can be read as a metaphorical anxiety of losing self-integrity: blurring the subject/object distinctions, confusing categories, and reminding us of the conventionality of any borders. Abject entities, such as human and animal excreta, putrefying corpses or corporeal fluids, are thus seen as filthy substances which breach the clear-cut borders of the Symbolic. What is more, their threatening power lies also in the fact that they surpass the modernist discourse of rationality, being the ultimate embodiment of what the utilitarian system does not account for, that is, waste. In order to be reclaimed by culture, the abject must be drawn into the circuit of usefulness, and thus renamed, recycled and domesticated. From the anatomical renaissance which rationalized exploration of the body innards by translating it into the system of language and diagrams to the nineteenth century utopian fantasies turning polluting substances into productive riches, Western modern discourses are to a large extent delineated by their relation to the abject.

Marek Kulisz

## Recykling and Culture – summary

The essay is an attempt to analyze the ways in which it may be possible to talk about recycling in culture. Contrary to recycling, the word culture has a long and complicated history, and it is used nowadays in a number of different meanings. Two of these meanings are taken into consideration here. Expressions such as “recycling of culture” and “culture of recycling” will be comprehensible if the word “culture” is used in its broadest sense, i.e. the one in which anthropologists use it when they speak of the nature-culture opposition. In this context recycling is simply part of culture, because – though recycling is modeled on natural phenomena – it is certainly not a natural process; it is a series of carefully planned activities involving state-of-the-art technology. We cannot, however, talk in a sensible way about recycling in culture if we take the word culture in its narrow sense, as the so-called high culture, because culture understood this way does not produce waste. There are no societies that would be willing to dismiss any of their great artists of the past and consider their works of art as waste.

Sławomir Masłoń

Therapeutic Recycling/Uncanny Repetition

Using a few hints from Lacanian psychoanalysis, the paper attempts to distinguish between two possible attitudes towards repetition in culture. One is the happy recycling of culture propagated by most of postmodernist discourses as the very practice of freedom and whose ultimate incarnation is Joyce's *Finnegans Wake*, which is, however, the therapeutic freedom of the possible. The other would be an attempt at cultural repetition in Kierkegaardian sense, that is, changing the coordinates of the possible by means of bringing out the uncanny surplus in the familiar and thus introducing a breach in the discursive space which would make room for the impossible to appear within it, as exemplified by the work of Kafka.

Aleksander Gomola

Does the Bible Say What It Says? A Feminist Interpretation  
of the Biblical Text by Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza.

The interpretation of the Bible postulated by feminist theology constitutes an interesting social and religious phenomenon, as it locates itself at the intersection of the social and religious discourses, thereby drawing its inspiration from both, and advocating new solutions concerning faith and social life. This essay discusses "the transformative dance of interpretation" of the Bible: a hermeneutic strategy which has been developed by the feminist theologian E. S. Fiorenza. The strategy's aim has been to recover for women their rightful place within the community of the faithful and to revise the male-centered mode of representing the history of Christianity. That is achieved by a critical analysis of the biblical text, with particular attention paid to its patriarchal slant, the rejection of those elements which depreciate women and a creative reinterpretation premised on the assumption of the existence of the original christianity of the "discipleship of the equal", that is a community where men and women enjoyed equal rights. The above mentioned strategy, in contrast with traditional methods of interpretation, bestows upon the reader a superior role in relation to the text, which constitutes a major departure from the tradition of biblical interpretation.

Katarzyna Nowak

Emigration, Circularity, and the Utopian Project of Identity:  
Helena Modrzejewska's Case

The essay takes as its point of departure Helena Modrzejewska's biography, and more specifically, her decision to leave Poland and settle down in the

United States of America. By analysing such issues as fragmentariness of experience, revisions and recreations of artistic identity and the paradox of symbolic death (illustrated by Modrzejewska's rejection of her last name and assumption of a new one) as a survival strategy, the essay focuses on Modrzejewska's career with a view to exploring the consequences of her emigration from Poland. At the same time, America becomes a significant destination, laden with cultural and historical connotations. This context is also highlighted by Susan Sontag's *In America*, a novel which may be read as illuminating the historical circumstances of Modrzejewska's stay in the United States. The famous actress's decision to look for bliss and harmony in California proves to be doomed from the cradle, as it is motivated by a utopian vision of freedom and her own identity.