

ER(R)GO

summaries in english¹

Zygmunt Bauman

People in/of the Movement in the World of *Ad Hoc* Leadership

The essay describes the phenomenon of a progressing interregnum in the domain of leadership which dooms us to accepting the world of ad hoc leadership. The author emphasizes involvement in movement both as a striving and as an escape, especially significant in times of crisis, transitional period, or “interregnum.” The state of interregnum appears during an intense and dynamic period of change when the authority does not rule, making decisions in changing conditions, often invalidating the premises of its pronouncements. Movement “from,” or “against” the familiar hopelessness is much easier than movement “to,” or “towards” (in terms of its direction and outcome) the unknown hope. An important thesis is the acceptance of the growing divide between the knowledge of what should be rejected, and that which should be established in place of the rejected. Bauman refers to the recent events in Egypt, but our own experiences of transformation related to the “Solidarity” movement can also illustrate the fragility of a movement’s commonality. Solidarity in removing the undesired state does not develop into a commonality of an alternative vision. The only need is the ad hoc leadership. The lack of demand for a solid authority, and the lack favoring such characters grows. The decline in the need for authorities spreads susceptibility for superficial criteria of affirmation in terms of aestheticization of experience developed *ad hoc*. Making good impression, rather than caring for honest arguments and intellectual value. What does the progressing interregnum in the domain of leadership lead to, then? Bauman reflects on the situation of the “movement” immediately after V. Havel’s death.

Karol Sauerland

Was it the Year of the Carnival?

A Testimony to the Variety of Strategies of Influence Within “Solidarity”

Sauerland’s text is concerned with the difference in the aspirations and dreams of influence in “Solidarity” on the subjective transformations of the country. The text is a testimony and a clear demonstration of a dramatic collision of the network and the self-government strategy which was taken into consideration at some point and the range of the social mobilization of „Solidarity” in Poland, as well as the need to create a new model of the state, as related to the drama of the model which eventually dominated the Polish transformation, with particular attention paid to the role and influence of Lech Wałęsa. The author considers the phenomenon of “Solidarity” as a process and a real change-oriented action heading towards self-government. He uses his own observations, experiences and notes from participation in these processes, for example in the context of planning reforms of higher education. He asks a crucial question concerning “Solidarity”: was it a carnival or a revolution? If it was a revolution, was it more like the French, the Russian, or the American one? He emphasizes that only Hanna Arendt understood not only the historical, but also the “futuristic” sense of the American revolution. Leadership is different in carnival and in revolution, with completely different contexts of action, and the American version is even more significant. The author analyzes the tragic position of Lech Wałęsa, suggesting the existence of a lost alternative for the scenario of influence which was eventually accepted under the influence of Wałęsa and his supporters, even though their domination weakened the final effects of the initialized actions and processes.

Lech Witkowski

Authority and Values at One's Feet

The author attempts to summarize his own discussions from previous books devoted to the category of authority in social practice, symbolic culture, and in the history of humanities and social sciences. He emphasizes the idea of treating every place that can implement the reference to authorities as being at every man's feet, at hand. Such perspective invalidates the view of authority in terms of a highly dominating point of reference, or a guarantee of certainty which relieves us from the effort of our own investigations, and points out the illusion of treating authority only in terms of a distanced repetition of erudite associations. What matters is the value of a real encounter with the life-giving symbolic contents which is easily neglected instead of being carefully considered. It is absolutely crucial to liberate education and spiritual development from the ritualization of pretence, and the lack of care for being rooted in culture in terms of symbolic memory. The author cites examples of Paul Ricoeur's experiences as a dean during the student revolt, Joseph Chałasiński's analysis of the "intelligentsia ghetto" and its relation to the authority, as well as specific approaches to Andrew Kiev's masterpieces. Czesław Miłosz, and Martin Heidegger turn out to have been crucial for the understanding of authority for the author of the article.

Monika Jaworowska-Witkowska

Authority (In)Quest in Collective Imagination and its Phantasmatic Extensions in Existence (Hypomneumata)

The article examines the notion of authority in the humanities from the perspective of the voices of cultural margins and thresholds. Written in form of what Michel Foucault calls hypomneumata—notes, observations, mental sketches without a centralizing structure—the text examines the significance of cultural phenomena that locate themselves on the outside of the mainstream of forces that shape the intellectual and ideological currents of contemporary philosophical perspective. Inspired by Jungian depth psychology, the article discusses such collective archetypes as the Mother, the Wise Old Man, the Trickster, the Vampire, the Doppelgänger, and others, tracing their potential yet essentially muted influence on the consciousness of culture. Without an "authoritarian" prescriptive conclusion, the text is an invitation towards the opening of one's awareness at the voices of those non-authorities, in hope of acquiring wisdom inaccessible through the teachings of conventional cultural masters.

Krzysztof Maliszewski

Grand Boulevards of Culture. Pedagogical Tropes of the Hierarchy and the Classics

In our world, information is the problem, not a solution. It is increasingly difficult to separate the important from the petty affairs, the creative, authentic contents and activities from the appearance of the advertised. The eminent American scholar George Steiner point out the necessity of the hierarchy, the canon, the cultural impact of the masters. Confrontation with the sophisticated creations of the human spirit is a kind of *hygiene of attention*

and reaction. Maturation of personality requires *justified overwhelming effect* which can be possible in serious treatment of the classics. Without their stories, man is *walled up in a vacuum*. How could we pick the significant voices from the informational downpour? What may prove to be helpful—in addition to the clues in the work of Steiner—are such categories as Leszek Kolakowski's *the great philosopher*, Leo Strauss and Allan Bloom's *Great Books*, Hans-Georg Gadamer or Thomas Stearns Eliot's *classicisms*, Tadeusz Sławek's *the master of the difficult speech*, or Lech Witkowski's *symbolic authority*. From a pedagogical point of view this is a sensitive issue. What is at stake is the choice between *the opening* and *burying* the human sensitivity and reflection.

Łukasz Michalski

Sex and Terror:

Authority and the Esthetics of Terror and Affirmation

What is substantively important for this text is its “proximity” to a book by Pascal Quignard *Sex and Terror*, as well as the cultural vision of the symbolic authority postulated by Lech Witkowski (among other works in the book *Challenges of the Authority*). Both contexts have become a decisive impulse to start the argument, which essentially boils down to showing two aesthetics of perceptions of authority: horror and affirmation. The first part of discussion is, therefore, devoted to the description of the “dark colors”, which usually take the form of narratives treating sacrifice, pain and (self-)destruction as the dominant nature of authority and of being “towards” it. In the second part of the text, in the form of a counter-attack to the “dark” theses, there appears a description of the “bright colors”, which are founded on, among other things, the derridean image of deconstructive affirmation, Michał Paweł Markowski's vision of the phenomenon of understanding, or Steiner's *libido sciendi*. In order to show the “practice” of the aesthetics of affirmation, in the end the text recalls the five manifestations of symbolic authority.

Kazimierz Braun

Director's Authority in Theatre

The article presents the evolution of the position of the theatre's director, which, as it is known, ended with the claim that the twentieth century was the age of the director. Meanwhile, a theatre without a director is not an unknown phenomenon. The author tracks the birth and the development of direction from practice to art, and the subsequent popularisation of directing in the organization of theatrical performances. The author gives a separate account the historical context of the domination of director in the Western culture. It also discusses the various sources of authority of the director, and presents a variety of director's states, from a “total” director to the crisis of his authority. Other types of the director's impact and engagement models constitute separate considerations, including the characteristics represented by such figures as: charismatic, educator, writer, playwright, administrator, and activist. The article refers to various types of influence typical of different historical periods and different patterns of involving culture in social life.

Michał Kruszelnicki, Wojciech Kruszelnicki

The Issue of Culture in Modernity:

On What May, and What May Not Be Seen from the Olympus

(A Dispute with Lech Witkowski)

Our essay is a polemic with Lech Witkowski's philosophy of culture; with his thinking about the essence of the era known as "modernity," and with the role he assigns to the education and the individually designed spiritual development, conceived of as a search for encounters with cultural authority. By analyzing a number of key themes touched upon in the work of the author of the "Saga of Authorities" and by watching how his central concepts and assumptions operate, we make a series of critical statements of which the common denominator is our suspicion that Lech Witkowski's theory of culture is too elitist in nature. Moreover, we criticize his paradoxically conservative reaction to the progress of modernity which not only removes the traditional divisions between higher and lower culture, but which above all imposes a necessity to "get one's hands dirty" through the confrontation with the system of education (including teachers at all levels of education), which imposes the necessity to face the ambivalence (in the sense of understanding the irreversibility of the simultaneous ending of the old and opening of the new ways of being in culture) of the new world and a new type of man characterized by mass syndrome.

Lech Witkowski

Between Tragicality, the Garbage Dump and Hubris.

An Attempt at a Response to my Eminent Polemicists

Appreciating the efforts taken by the eminent critics from the younger generation in relation to his own approach to the category of the authority, the author is trying to dispel some doubts and highlight the differences in regard to the approaches at times attributed to him. He points to the need for a new universalism of the "greatness of spirit", while admitting to a different understanding of conservatism from the one associated with the declaration of concern for the life-giving nature of the symbolic heritage for the present. The author, following in the footsteps of Bakhtin's semiotics of culture, advocates the praise of the other's speech: beyond elitism and barbarism. He warns that when one points to a diagnosis of an approaching abyss, the relation between tradition and modernity looks more worrying than in the eyes of those who notice only progress in the new dominant forms of attitudes towards culture. He does not want to be seen as a "colorful bird," filled with nostalgia for the past grandeur, governance and clarity of the hierarchy of meanings, both beautiful and pathetic. He also tries to point out that he is familiar with the symptoms of real human tragedy in the life of society and the barbaric attitudes of "amoeba" in the culture, which is reflected in a reference to the quality of living in Hölderlin's "destitute time." Seeing the position of authority at the foot of the often arrogant consumers of culture, the author points to the beneficial stooping in the culture for the significant bits which open our eyes and give the possibility of self-expression. The author proposes a vision of education as a battle for the common man for the sake of his/her rooting in culture and the care of one's own humanity beyond the mass consumer attitudes, despite unilateral gestures of rage and hostility or carnivalisation of irresponsibility related to individual claims without any contact with those meanings that are able to make one think.