

SUMMARY

The Phenomenon of Reading in the Works of Roberto Bolaño. The Author's, Protagonists' and Reader's Response Strategies and Practices

The subject of this dissertation is the phenomenon of reading in the works of Roberto Bolaño. This problem is analyzed in three aspects: as a repertoire of reading strategies and practices presented by the protagonists of Bolaño's novels and stories, as a set of authorial strategies which present writing as reading, and as a potential, interactive phenomenon of the reader's response to the text.

The goal of the dissertation is to derive a specific "theory" of reading from Bolaño's prose texts. The study of the reading strategies and practices of the characters, author and potential readers, is undertaken in the broad theoretical and philosophical context of literary communication and the idea of literature as conversation and experience. Such strategy is conditioned by Bolaño's opinions on literature, expressed either explicitly or implicitly in his texts: for him, reading is a multidimensional phenomenon and can be considered as a synecdoche of all cognitive processes.

Hence, the main context of the dissertation consists of Wolfgang Iser's theory of "aesthetic effect" and the hermeneutic philosophy of Hans-Georg Gadamer, as well as the reading practices of Roland Barthes and Jacques Derrida, and the research devoted to literary communication by Aleksandra Okopień-Sławińska and Richard Gerrig, a cognitive psychologist. In order to describe the "reading space", i.e. the place where the author and the reader "meet", I also use the theory of conceptual integration of Gilles Fauconnier and Mark Turner. The notion of a "reading space" originates from Michał Paweł Markowski's book *The Inscription Effect*, in which the author analyzes the reading practices of Derrida. However, I modify the concept, using it to describe not only the reading strategies and practices of the author who presents his writing as reading, but also of the potential, heterogeneous and complex performance of Bolaño's reader.

The dissertation is divided into four main parts. The first one is titled *Prolegomena teoretycznoliterackie* [*Theoretical prolegomena*] and contains an inventory of philosophical and theoretical literary concepts crucial for the analyzes carried out in the dissertation. In the second part, *Strategie i praktyki odbioru bohaterów* [*The Protagonists' Response Strategies and Practices*], the "bolañological" analysis of the "topology" (cf. Markowski) of Bolaño's reading space begins. It is a pseudoempiric case study of readers described in his works, based on which the author's theory of reading – "bebechohermneneutyka" ["viscehermeneutics"] is sketched out. The third part of the thesis, *Strategie i praktyki odbioru autora* [*The Author's Response Strategies and Practices*], consists of two chapters, in each of them the "author" is perceived as a reader, either literally or narratologically. The first chapter contains an analysis, based on Bolaño's non-fictional essays, of his reading performances and his particular views on reading. The behavior of the author-as-reader is compared with the reading strategies of his protagonists and with the viscehermeneutics. The second chapter extends the research to include "topography" (Markowski's term) of the reading space, i.e. a study of narrative strategies that allow writing to take the form of reading, and narration to be seen as reading and conversation. In the fourth part of the work: *Strategie i praktyki odbioru czytelnika* [*A Reader's Reception Strategies and Practices*], I investigate the potential performance of Bolaño's readers, and the blended reading space produced by it, conditioned by the previously analyzed topology and topography. The strategies and reading practices of the characters and the author constitute a type of guide for the readers, who, if they so wish, can accept the potential, interactive and critical reading disposition proposed by Bolaño. The analysis of topology, topography, narrative strategies and the communication situation of Bolaño's works leads to a redefinition of the "author" as a "holistic author", mentally

represented by the reader, but perceived as “real”, and to a description of the reading experience as a meeting with the author in the reading space, where a situation of blended joint attention is created. This phenomenon is studied in the context of a paradoxical union of immersion and interactivity in Bolaño's works.

The dissertation ends with a conclusion containing the final description and graphic illustrations of the blended reading space of Bolaño's works, produced by the reader, and with *Postscriptum bebechohermeneutyczne* [*Viscehermeneutic Postscript*], a particular extension, which links the analyzes carried out in the essay with the field of ethics.

The analysis of Bolaño's works demonstrates that the Chilean author revitalizes literary communication. It is understood as a special type of connection and understanding, which also works at a distance, either physical or temporal. Viscehermeneutics and its key, contradictory concept of “simonel” encourage an examination of the researcher's position towards the text and a revalorization of “naïve” strategies and practices of reading. The concept of a blended reading space allows us to combine contextual and formal approaches to literature.