

Title: From Desiring to Being. Heterogeneous Subjectivities in Tytus Czyzewski's Writing
Author: Agnieszka Jezyk, University of Illinois at Chicago

Abstract:

From Marinetti's "deep-chested locomotives" to Mayakovsky's skyscrapers and bridges: European avant-garde has always been fascinated with the technological advancements of the Western civilization. Yet, in Polish culture the fear of technology is one of the very common tropes. Even most notorious authors of the avant-garde movement, such as Jasienski, Wat or Peiper viewed technology as a major threat for the subject. In this regard Czyzewski (1880-1945) - a painter, theoretician, poet and playwright - proves to be very distinctive. Being critical of the role of the machine in the interwar period societies, he also jocularly proposes an utopian vision of a pacifist union between a human, an animal and a machine. "We will be the brothers of animals and we will learn the instinctive art from them, we will love the machines, since they are our sisters, and animals for they are our teachers and brothers." – he states in the "From the Machine to Animals" manifesto. Additionally, Czyzewski introduces the theory of the "electric instinct", which goes beyond all species and connects various agents into a web of desire. Using, above all, Deleuze and Guattari's concept of the "desiring machines", as well as Lyotard's insights on the inhuman and Katherine Hayles's ideas on the post-human and writing machines I would like to focus on how Czyzewski's heterogeneous subjectivities relate to the bodily-centered and class-determined subjects produced by the 1920s avant-garde in Poland. I am specifically interested in the dynamics between the individual subject vs. collective subjectivities, and the human vs. beyond human agents. One of the significant questions I want to pose is to what extent Czyzewski's views exceed avant-garde's insights on subjectivity and how they fit into futurist and formist vision of the text and its critical tasks. Moreover, I will look into the relationship between these heterogeneous subjectivities and the creative act as depicted in Czyzewski's poetry and criticism.