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LOST CITY. IDENTITY, MEMORY, MULTICULTURALISM OF CHERNIVTSI IN BUKOVINA

Europe has given birth to several paradigms of melancholy. Let's call them "immanent melancholies" and combine with geopoetics which, along with postcolonialism, represents the most appropriate investigative method for studying the writings of Bukovina poets. Among these melancholies we can distinguish *Ostalgia's* (nostalgia for The East, for the GDR, the melancholy of ruins, yearning for the system which faded away in the past, along with its sense of stability and its iconic products such as Vita-Cola and the Röstfein coffee),¹ the Portuguese *saudade*, and the Turkish *hüzün*, the latter exposed perfectly in the Orhan Pamuk's "Joycean novel on Istanbul". Chernivtsi takes its credit for another concept of melancholy, that of black milk. The oxymoronic term can be found in the Paul Celan's most acclaimed piece *The Fugue of Death*, in the lyrical poems of Rose Ausländer (*Ins Leben*), or the verses of Alfred Sperber (*Ferner Gast*) – the mentor of Bukovinian poets. Elżbieta Rybicka, Polish researcher popularizing geopoetics, writes about literaturization of geography and wordliness of literature.² Chernivtsi proves a good example of how geographical space creates a unique set of rules and modes of expression. By analogy with immanent poetics (*werkimmanente Poetik*), the term created by Bruno Markwardt,³ I have coined a new term – "immanent geopoetics".

It would be wrong to limit the analysis of Eastern and Central Europe to purely esthetic perspective. Here we are immersed in the world of con-

¹ See: M. Ölke, *Reisen in eine versunkene Provinz. Die DDR in der literarischen Retrospektive*, in: *Wende des Erinnerns? Geschichtskonstruktionen in der deutschen Literatur nach 1989*, ed. B. Besslich, K. Gratz, O. Hildebrand, Berlin 2006.

² E. Rybicka, *Geopoetyka (o mieście, przestrzeni i miejscu we współczesnych teoriach i praktykach kulturowych)*, in: *Kulturowa teoria literatury. Główne pojęcia i problemy*, ed. M. P. Markowski i R. Nycz, Kraków 2006, p. 478.

³ B. Markwardt, *Geschichte der deutschen Poetik*, Berlin 1956.

flict which in itself represents a documented record. Melancholy, nostalgia, dwelling upon the past and inner journey experience constitute qualities in themselves. On the basis of phonetic connotation we can paraphrase the well-known words from Parsifal by Richard Wagner, "time here becomes space" („Zum **Raum** wird hier die Zeit"), into equally relevant „Zum **Traum** wird hier die Zeit". Time here becomes dreaming. Time here becomes day-dreaming. Melancholics are fully aware of their passing nature and constant transformation. Thus melancholy, understood as cultivating the loss, leaves on its subject a kiss of sadness.

The city resembling a coral branch, or reef that opens up and contracts [...] the image of a coral comprises both: cell and molecule growth, fossils, deposits, transformation of society into nature. Exploring a city is like reading fossils backwards

– remarks Karl Schlögel in his volume of essays *Reading time through space*.⁴ A unique modus of contact can be found in Chernivtsi (Czerniowce, Чернівці, Черновцы, Chernovtsy, Czernowitz, Csernovic), situated in the Ukraine-and-Romania-split Bukovina region, at the foot of the Eastern Carpathians. This multicultural and multi-denominational knob of Europe on the River Prut, halfway between Krakow and Odessa, where tones of various cultures have echoed throughout its history, has kept its door open to polyphony.

Several studies have been published about Chernivtsi in Poland, and the city continues to be the focus of further research (see: the 2009 Armenian Foundation project: *Multicultural Memory and the Continuity of Traces. Chernivtsi in Bukovina*). Here, daily encounter phenomenon (*Geheimnis der Begegnung*) has found its way into the works of such poets as Paul Celan (born in 1920 in Chernivtsi, committed suicide in 1970 in Paris), Immanuel Weissglas (born in 1920 in Chernivtsi, died in 1979 in Bucharest), Alfred Liquornik, later known under his pseudonym Alfred Gong (born in 1920 in Chernivtsi, died in 1981 in New York), Alfred Kittner (born in 1906 in Chernivtsi, died in 1991 in Düsseldorf), Moses Rosenkranz (born in 1904 in Berhometh upon the Prut, died in 2003 in Germany), Kamillo Lauer (born in 1887 in Chernivtsi, died in 1966 in London), Isaac Schreyer (born in 1890 in Wiznitz, died in New York), Josef Kalmer (born in 1898 in the Galician village of Nehrybka, before moving to Vienna attended Chernivtsi high school), Alfred Margul Sperber (born in 1898 in Bukovina, died in 1967 in Bucharest), Georg Drozdowski (born in 1899 in Chernivtsi, died in 1987 in Klagenfurt).

It is thanks to those writers that the post-war German exile literature (Deutschsprachige Exilliteratur) thrived. It is Chernivtsi that remained their everlasting Prime Meridian,⁵ in accordance with the local saying that without

⁴ K. Schlögel, *W przestrzeni czas czytamy*, transl. I. Drozdowska, Ł. Musiał, Poznań 2009, p. 300-301.

⁵ M. Fiszbejn, *Powrót do Południka*, transl. O. Hnatiuk i K. Kotyńska, „Krasnogruda" 1998, nr 9, p. 37-38.

the knowledge of one's origins, one does not know the destination (Wer nicht weiss, woher er kommt – weiss auch nicht, wohin er will).

Peter Rychlo in his *Czernowitz als geistige Lebensform* essay quotes the words of Nora Gray, a Viennese journalist: „Chernivtsi is not merely a city, it is the whole world”.⁶ To render the character of this place, Rychlo paraphrases the once-seriously debated scholastic philosophers' question “How many angels may fit upon a needle” into “How many cultures may fit into a heavily-built space of a single city”.⁷

The most renowned son of Chernivtsi, Paul Antschel (later using the anagram spelling of his surname – Celan) makes in his poetry numerous references to the landscape of his childhood. („It is snowing, mother, in Ukraine”, „Es fällt, liebe Mutter, Schnee in der Ukraine”). In his acceptance speech delivered in 1958 in Brema on the occasion of receiving a literary award he combined the atmosphere of his homeland with the once-intimate landscape inhabited by German-speaking communities, stressing the unique sensitivity of the territory where he learned to study books and people:

The territory, from which a very winding road has brought me over, may seem quite unfamiliar to many of you. It is the landscape that was home to a not inconsiderable portion of those Hasidic tales that Martin Buber has etold for us all in German. It was, if I may add to this topographic sketch something that appears before my eyes now from very far away – it was a region in which human beings and books used to live. There, in the former province of the Habsburg monarchy, now fallen into “historylessness” (*Geschichtslosigkeit*), for the first time I came across the name of Rudolf Alexander Schröder, when reading Rudolf Borchardt's *Ode with a pomegranate*.

Similar atmosphere was captured by Rose Ausländer in her book *Memories of a city* (Erinnerung an eine Stadt):

Chernivtsi was a colorful city in which Germanic cultural heritage intertwined with that of Slavic, Latin and Jewish element. German not only was the language of everyday conversation and culture, but it remained mother tongue of the majority of the local population. [...] Chernivtsi is a city of devoted day-dreamers. Karl Kraus enjoyed a considerable circle of devotees in Chernivtsi; one could see them in streets, parks, little forests, and on the Prut banks, holding *Die Fackel*⁸ in their hands. People delighted in Hölderlin, Stefan George, Trakl [...]. submerged city, submerged world.⁹

Ausländer, whose biographical note is quite representative of Bukovina poets, was born on 11 May 1901 in Chernivtsi as Rosalie Beatrice Scherzer. Her father, Sigmund Scherzer (1871-1920), came from an orthodox Hasidic family from a small town in the vicinity of Chernivtsi, and mother Kathi Etie Rifke

⁶ P. Rychlo, *Czernowitz als geistige Lebensform*, in: *Czernowitz: die Geschichte einer untergegangenen Kulturmetropole*, ed. H. Braun, Berlin 2006, p. 7.

⁷ Ibidem.

⁸ *Die Fackel* was a satirical magazine edited by Karl Kraus between 1899-1936.

⁹ R. Ausländer, *Erinnerung an eine Stadt*, in: *Aschensommer. Ausgewählte Gedichte*, München 1978, p. 207-210.

Binder (1873-1947) descended from a German family. In 1919 she took up studies in literature and philosophy. Two years later, together with her friend and future husband Ignaz Ausländer, she emigrated to the USA. Their marriage bound in 1923 in New York survived three years. The poet was granted US citizenship. In 1927 and 1931 she returned to Bukovina to look after her ailing mother. As a result of a 3-year-long absence her US citizenship was canceled. Substantial part of her debut volume *Der Regenbogen (The Rainbow)* edition was destroyed in 1941 by the Nazis. Placed in the Chernivtsi ghetto, she met Paul Celan. Having witnessed the abandonment of the city by SS forces and the entrance of the Soviet army, she again decided to emigrate to the US. In 1948 she was re-granted the US citizenship. In 1967 she moved to the West Germany and settled down in Düsseldorf, where she died on 3 January 1988. She translated Itzik Manger from Yiddish into German, and the poetry of Else Lasker-Schüler and Adam Mickiewicz into English. Landscapes of Bukovina are reflected in many of her poems (Dorf in der Bukowina, Heimatstadt Czernowitz, Czernowitz vor dem Zweiten Weltkrieg). In *Bukowina III* lyric Ausländer depicts the space occupied by four nations: "Green mother // Bukovina / Butterflies in the hair // Drink / Says the sun / Red milk of melons / White milk of maize / I turn it sweet // Violet pine cones / Flying air wings, birds and leaves // Back of the Carpathians / Fatherly / Invitation / To carry you away // Four tongues / Songs in four languages // People / Who understand one another."¹⁰ In her short essay *Alles kann Motiv sein*, Ausländer tries to find an answer to the question: "Why do I write?": Perhaps because I was born in Chernivtsi. Unique landscape. Unique people. Tales and myths were in the air. One could just breathe them in".¹¹ In her poem *Motherland (Mutterland)* she used the word which comprises both the meaning of geographical uprooting and the attachment to the mother language:

My motherland is dead
Buried
in the fire

I live in the motherland
Of the word.¹²

¹⁰ R. Ausländer, *Bukowina III*, in: *Gedichte*, Frankfurt 2007, p. 21. "Grüne Mutter // Bukowina / Schmetterlinge im Haar // Trink / sagt die Sonne / rote Melonenmilch / weiße Kukuruzmilch / ich machte sie süß // Violette Föhrenzapfen / Luftflügel Vögel und Laub // Der Karpatenrücken / Väterlich / lädt dich ein / dich zu tragen // Vier Sprachen // Viersprachenlieder // Menschen // die sich verstehen".

¹¹ "Warum schreibe ich? Vielleicht weil ich in Czernowitz zur Welt kam. Jene besondere Landschaft. Die besonderen Menschen. Märchen und Mythen lagen in die Luft, man atmete sie ein".

¹² R. Ausländer, *Mutterland*, in: *Gedichte*, op. cit., p. 269. "Mein Vaterland ist tot / sie haben es begraben / im Feuer // Ich lebe / in meinem Mutterland / Wort".

Bukovina was a German-language territory. The language, which Rose Ausländer described in her essay *Chernivtsi, Heine and the consequences* as “seriously broken and wounded”, along with Romanian and Yiddish was the dominant language of the culture. It was used in schools, theatres, in the streets and at homes. The majority of Jewish descent poets of Chernivtsi inhabited the language, which over time evolved from intimate to aggressive. Despite this, writing in German was the only form of escape available to them. Even though some of the poets, including Celan, continued writing in the language of Goethe, Heine, and Rilke, they were heading towards silence, which began to intersperse their German,¹³ now thoroughly examined by the probe of their memory, where the city spirit created many new settlements – the settlements of their memory.¹⁴

These poets were deprived of their homes, but also of their language, which at the same time remained the medium of their poetry.¹⁵ Thus, it can be analyzed within the following triangle: *Muttersprache – Mördersprache – Dichtersprache*. Some poets however, distanced themselves from the language, among them Ausländer, who did not use German in her poetry from 1947-1957.¹⁶ Jean Bollack makes an apt remark: “Was Paul Celan an assimilated Jew? In the first place he was a German poet”.¹⁷ He regarded himself as a protector and shepherd of the German language” – remarks the author of the

¹³ See: A. Colin, P. Rychlo, *Czernowitz/ Cernauti/ Chernovtsy/ Chernivtsi/ Czerniowce. A Testing Ground for Pluralism*, in: *History of the Literary Cultures of East-Central Europe: Junctures and Disjunctures in the 19th And 20th Centuries*, vol. 2, ed. M. Cornis-Pope, J. Neubauer, Amsterdam-Philadelphia 2004, p. 57-76.

¹⁴ *Paul Antschel in Czernowitz / Paul Celan/Paul Ančel v Černivcach*, “Sonderhaft” 90/2000, p. 35. „Im Falle der bukowinischen Metropole Identität hinüberzuretten in die Sprache: die Sprache der autobiographischen Erinnerungen, die Sprache erzählender Literatur, die Sprache von Gedichten [...]. Das alte Czernowitz ist zum historischen Phänomen geworden: eine Geisterstadt in umgekehrten Sinne. Es ist der Geist der Stadt, der an zahlreichen Orten der heute existierenden Welt seine Kolonien gebildet hat, Erinnerungskolonien”. See: N. Shchyhlevska, *Deutschsprachige Autoren aus der Bukowina*, Frankfurt am Main 2004: “Die kulturelle Herkunft als bleibendes Motiv in der Identitätssuche deutschsprachiger Autoren aus der Bukowina. Untersucht anhand der Lyrik von Paul Celan, Rose Ausländer, Alfred Kittner, Alfred Gong, Moses Rosenkranz, Immanuel Weissglas, Alfred Margul-Sperber, Selma Meerbaum-Eisinger, Klara Blum, Else Keren”.

¹⁵ *Ibidem*, p. 13 “Diese Dichter wurden heimatlos, aber auch sprachlos, den ihre deutsche Muttersprache war die Sprache ihrer Mörder. Aber sie wird die Sprache ihrer Dichtung bleiben”.

¹⁶ „Not an Essence but a Positioning”. *German-Jewish Women Writers (1900-1938)*, ed. A. Hammel, G. Weiss-Sussex, München 2009, p. 158. R. Ausländer, *Czernowitz*, in: *Werke*, ed. H. Brun, Band XV, *Die Nacht hat zahllose Augen. Prosa (1929-84)*, Frankfurt am Main 1995, p. 96-99.

¹⁷ J. Bollack, *Paul Celan unter judaisierten Deutschen*, München 2003. “War Celan ein assimilierter Jude? Er war als erstes ein deutscher Dichter. Er war kein religiöser Jude. [...] Er ist nicht durch das Ereignis zum Juden geworden oder zu einem Glauben zurückgekehrt. Wenn man irgendwie theologisch gefärbte und vorbestimmte Erklärungsmuster beiseite lässt, muss der Sinn der Vernichtung die Existenzform selbst und mit ihr die Beziehung zu einer Vorstellungswelt betreffen, von der dann auch das Zustandekommen der physischen Zerstörung nicht zu trennen wäre”, p. 13.

book *Paul Celan unter judaisierten Deutschen*.¹⁸ He provides a vivid explanation of Paul Celan's reference to the language as the sole survivor, in which the poet who "could not find the words to describe what had happened" and who witnessed "thousand dark moments bringing an end to the language"¹⁹ did not mean the German grammar, nor the Sprachbrockhaus nor Duden. In fact, he did not mean the *langue* but *parole*.²⁰

Thick black milk spilt over Bukovina. For many, including Celan, it is only the language, as intimate as one's mother, that has survived in this ruined world. Some transfusions proved impossible, because language, as Franz Rosenzweig rightly remarks, is thicker than blood. Edith Silbermann quotes Celan's letter to Alfred Margul-Sperber: "I often asked myself whether it'd be better if I acquainted myself with the books of my country [...] In a way my own journey started among my native mountains and beech trees".²¹

Natalia Shchylevska stresses the fact that Bukovina poets were skilled polyglots. Klara Blum (born on 27 November 1907 in Chernivtsi; as an eleven-year-old moved with her mother to Vienna where she got her high school diploma and started studying psychology. Later she moved to China where she lived in a language isolation, and died in Guangzhou on 4 May 1971. She translated poetry from Yiddish, Russian, Ukrainian, Chinese, Lithuanian, Hungarian, English and French). Paul Celan translated from Russian, French, English, Hebrew, and Portuguese. Alfred Gong (born 14 August 1920 in Chernivtsi) died on 18 October 1981 in New York, where he had worked as a translator. Moses Rosenkranz, who mastered seven languages, in the afterword to his *Visionen. Gedichte* volume, describes his own poems as "saved" verses" (*Gerettete Verse*).²² Celan titled one of his volumes *Sprachgitter*.

Most of the German-speaking population of Chernivtsi could have quoted the words of Max Brod, Franz Kafka's friend: "Elimination of German language would be like getting rid of a vital body organ – a deadly amputation".²³

¹⁸ "[...] so geht es um den Gegensatz von etwas Nichtjüdischem im deutschen, um die Belastung der Sprache, um das Mythische in ihr, um die Hörigkeit und den Mangel an Kritikfähigkeit. Er stellt so dem Deutsch-Jüdischen al Gegensatz ein jüdisches Deutsch entgegen; ein Nichtdeutsches wäre so in seinen Augen das wirklich Deutsche, ein geschichtlicher Gang als Befreiung von seiner eigenen Befangenheit. Er versteht sich als Jude in diesem Sinn, als ein Hüter, nicht des Seins, sondern in seinen Worten: einer Geistigkeit; man könnte auch sagen: einer Intellektualität", *ibidem*, p. 19-20.

¹⁹ Celan's Speech on the Occasion of Receiving the Literature Prize of the Free Hanseatic City of Bremen.

²⁰ J. Bollack, *op.cit.*, p. 35.

²¹ See: E. Silbermann, *Paul Celan im Kontext der Bukowiner Dichtung*, in: *Begegnung mit Paul Celan*, Aachen 1993, p. 7. "Ich habe mich oft gefragt, ob ich nicht besser bei den Buchen meiner Heimat geblieben wäre [...] [...] beginnt er am Fuße unserer heimatlichen Berge und Buchen".

²² M. Rosenkranz, *Visionen. Gedichte*, ed. D. Rosenkranz, Aachen 2007, p. 148.

²³ *Sprache und Identität im Judentum*, ed. K. E. Grözinger, Wiesbaden 1998, p. 153. "Auf die deutsche Sprache verzichten, hieße für mich, meine Persönlichkeit um ein lebenswichtiges Organ reduzieren – tödliche Amputation".

Maria Kłańska in one of her essays devotes a considerable space to the difficult problem of German language being a shelter for poets: "After World War II, after the Holocaust, a new Bukovina has been born. It cannot be found on any map. It is living in the books of Bukovina writers, inhabiting all parts of the world. They do not live – they write. It is in German language that they did find their motherland, their home for the homeless".²⁴

The press was delivered to Chernivtsi from Berlin, Vienna, Munich. It was read in six languages and three alphabets (Latin, Hebrew, and Cyrillic). In this mythologized world, where a day-off-work "would start from Schubert and finish with a duel" in which "the most beautiful coloratura sopranos would sing, coachmen would argue over Karl Kraus, sidewalks would be swept with bunches of roses, and bookshops would outnumber cafés" (according to the picture depicted by Georg Heintzen) from the late 1930's a growing isolation of various ethnic groups could be observed. Imre Kertész in his book *A language in Exile* reading the fossils of the city-upon-Prut, portrayed Chernivtsi as an icon and a cornerstone of certain historic paradigm. "Renowned cultural and university centers, where people spoke three or four languages, suddenly became provincial cities of the great empire, and disappeared from the cultural map of Europe. Our first thoughts probably go to Chernivtsi".²⁵ From the mid-14th century the city came under the Moldavian rule, then subsequently became a subject to Turkey (16th c.) and Austria (since 1775). In 1786 it became a free city, until 1849 remained the capital of Bukovina, a crown territory of the Habsburgs. During World War I, in April 1916 it was occupied by the Russian army. Between 1918-1940 it belonged to Romania, only to be incorporated into The Soviet Union. After the German occupation (1941-1944) it was renamed to Chernivtsi. In 1991 it became part of Ukraine. Zvi Yavetz, Israeli historian born in 1925 in Chernivtsi, who fled to Palestine during the war, quotes the following anecdote: "No wonder that an inhabitant of Chernivtsi when asked about his origin, would answer somehow/ somewhat illogically *Haven't read today's papers yet*"²⁶ (E, 16).

Zbigniew Herbert never set his foot in the cosmopolitan city but he succumbed to its radiant charm.²⁷ In Chernivtsi many cultures met: Romanian,

²⁴ M. Kłańska, *Galizien und Bukowina*, in: *Kulturlandschaft Bukowina*, ed. A. Corbea, M. Astner, Jasi 1990, S. 51. "Die Ende war tragisch. Und das Ende fand Fortsetzung. Nach dem Zweiten Weltkrieg, nach dem Holocaust entstand eine neue Bukowina. Aber sie ist nicht aus der Landkarte zu suchen. Sie lebt in den Werken der Bukowiner Autoren, die in allen Teilen dieser Erde leben. Nicht leben – schreiben. Denn in der deutschen Sprache haben sie ihre Heimat gefunden, die Heimat der Heimatlosen".

²⁵ I. Kertész, *Język na wygnaniu*, przeł. E. Sobolewska, esej *Niepotrzebny inteligent* przeł. E. Cygielska, Warszawa 2004, p. 189.

²⁶ Z. Yavetz, *Erinnerung an Czernowitz. Wo Menschen und Bücher lebten*. München, 2007. Further on I use the E symbol with page reference. Here: E, 28.

²⁷ See also: S. Marten-Finnis, *Presse und Literatur in Czernowitz 1918-1940. Vom kolonialen Diskurs zum eigenständigen Feld der kulturellen Produktion, zur Zeit*, in: *Internationales Archiv für So-*

Jewish, German, Polish, Hucul. "There was no place for xenophobia there"²⁸ – said Herbert. About the inhabitants of that language melting pot, he added that they understood one another without words, as they comprehended their sense intuitively, succumbing to the sounds of speeches. Helmut Böttiger described this symbiosis:

Orthodox Bishop Repta, Catholic Prelate Schmidt, and Chief Rabbi dr Rosenfeld were friends. They formed the city's renowned "three-leaf clover". During World War I the archbishop Repta rescued from the Synagogue the Torah Scrolls from the hands of Cossacks.²⁹

Peter Rychlo writes about numerous churches in Chernivtsi: "The Spirit needs vast space" („Der Geist braucht viel Raum"³⁰). Herbert called Chernivtsi "the last Alexandria of Europe", "Stronghold of Europeanism". Others used different terms: "Europe in miniature", "Little Paris", "Jerusalem-upon-Prut".³¹ Zvi Yavetz in his book *Erinnerung an Czernowitz. Wo Menschen und Bücher lebten* (*Memories of Chernivtsi. Where people and books lived*) writes that Bukovina attracted those Russian Jews from the steppes who grew tired of freezing cold, snowstorms, and fearful of the plague and cholera (E, 16). According to the author, in 1777 Chernivtsi had a total population of no more than 359 families (E, 12). The author of the book quotes here the 1930 statistics: 380 000 (44,5%) Romanians, 236 000 (27%) Ruthenians, 92 500 (10,8%) Jews,³² 75 000 (8,9%) Germans, 8000 (0,9%) Russians.

"Czernovitz expelled its Jews, and so did Vienna, Prague, Budapest, and Lemberg. Now these cities live without Jews, and their few descendants, scattered through the world, carry memory like a wonderful gift and a relentless curse" – wrote Aharon Appelfeld in *Buried Homeland*, personal testimony from his childhood visit to the city published in *New Yorker*. The author

zialgeschichte der deutschen Literatur, Tübingen 2003; *Jüdische Lyrikerinnen aus Czernowitz zwischen Tradition und Moderne*, in: „Moderne“, „Spätmoderne“ und „Postmoderne“ in der österreichischen Literatur, Graz 1996, p. 91-100; „Gdziekolwiek się znaję, Czerniowce zawsze pójdą za mną“. *Obraz Bukowiny w twórczości Gregora von Rezzori*, in: *Bukowina po stronie dialogu*, ed. K. Feleszka, Sejny 1999, p. 235-241; H. Merkt, *Poesie in der Isolation: deutschsprachige jüdische Dichter in Enklave und Exil am Beispiel von Bukowiner Autoren seit dem 19. Jahrhundert; zu Gedichten von Rose Ausländer, Paul Celan und Immanuel Weißglas*, Wiesbaden 1999; H. Gold, *Geschichte der Juden in der Bukovina*, Tel Aviv 1959; M. Hirsch, L. Spitzer, *Ghosts of Home. The Afterlife of Czernowitz in Jewish Memory*, Berkeley-Los Angeles-London 2010. Further on I use the GH.

²⁸ This quotation of Zbigniew Herbert comes from J. Szwedowska's radio programme *Poeta i język* (broadcast on 26 December 1997, Polish Radio 2), my transcription also included in study *Herbert. Studia i dokumenty*, Warszawa 2008, p. 281-286.

²⁹ H. Böttiger, *Paul Celan. Miasta i miejsca*, ed. J. Ekiel, Olsztyn 2002, p. 18.

³⁰ O. Rychlo, *op.cit.*, s. 8.

³¹ The preceding paragraphs come from my book, J. Roszak, *Południk spotkania. Paul Celan w polskiej poezji powojennej*, Poznań 2009.

³² In 1941 Germany and Romania ordered deportation of Jewish population to Transnistrian camps. On 28 June 1940 Chernivtsi saw the march of Russian troops. On 7 July 1944 mass scale action against the Jews started.

writing in Hebrew was born in Chernivtsi in 1932. After his mother's death together with his father, he ended up in a concentration camp. He managed to escape.

Many writers from this area shared the same fate:

Written in Pencil in the Sealed
Railway-Car
here in this carload
i am eve
with able my son
if you see my other son
cain son of man
tell him that i...³³

Dan Pagis (1930-1983), whose excerpt containing the rhetorical *aposiopesis* and 20th-century Eve as the lyrical subject, his most quoted one, was born in Radautz, in the Romanian part of Bukovina. His poem *Gift* describing one's loss of identity, was devoted to his home city.

My home city of Radautz in Bukovina
expelled me when I was ten, the very same
day it forgot me as the one who is dead. And I
forgot it, too. It was equally satisfying for both. Yesterday,
forty years later, it sent me a gift
an intrusive aunt, demanding affection on the basis
of blood ties [...].³⁴

Together with his grandfather, Pagis spent several years of his childhood in a concentration camp in Transnistria, Ukraine. He managed to escape in 1944 and in 1946 moved to Palestine, where in Jerusalem he became a professor of Medieval and Renaissance Hebrew literature. In his poem *Europe, Late*, the lyrical addressee – madame, in the first half of 1939, is still to be trustful in the safety of the enclave she lives in, and the spirit of the place. ("You'll see, madame, / that everything will be all right, / you wait and see, / No it could never happen here"). Hans Bergel in *Bukowiner Spuren. Von Dichtern und bildenden Künstlern* repeated after John Donne: „No Man is an Island”. The sea of post-war re-colonization, I dare to paraphrase the most famous English baroque metaphysicist, deprived Europe of this spiritual piece of the continent that Chernivtsi once used to be.

³³ D. Pagis, "Written in Pencil in the Sealed Railway-Car". *Truth and Lamentation: Stories and Poems on the Holocaust*, ed. M. Teichman and S. Leder, Urbana and Chicago 1994, p. 491.

³⁴ D. Pagis, *Pisane ołówkiem w zaplombowanym wagonie*, in: *Ostatni*, Warszawa 2004, p. 15 (transl. JR).