

INTRODUCTION

The present volume of *Studies in Logic, Grammar and Rhetoric* entitled *Language, Culture, Meaning* introduces diverse texts and yet all of them perfectly correspond with the formula of the series. The majority of works contained in the volume are dedicated to the issue of language, including its particular variety, the legal language. The main subject of the volume is the problem of meaning, not only of linguistic signs but also of extra-verbal semiotic systems. It is significant and emphasised unanimously by the Authors that the meaning is not of an autonomous character, it is an evolving entity, a resultant of diverse factors, the most important of which are cultural conditionings.

The volume begins by a group of texts the leitmotiv of which is language, its various functions and its role in traditional Aristotelian triad 'language–thought–reality'. The issue of language occupied a significant place in 17th century philosophy when a conviction became common that studying the world depends, to a large measure, from an appropriate approach to linguistic questions. The problem of language is taken up from a historical perspective concentrated on the 17th century by three Authors of the volume; J. Usakiewicz studies the relationship between the elements of Aristotelian triad in the philosophy of A. Geulincx, while H. Świączkowska analyses the cognitive functions of language in G. W. Leibniz system. R. Piotrowski looking for the foundations of contemporary cybernetics in the 17th century, finds them in Leibniz, the creator of the idea of 'the alphabet of human thought'. D. Botting dedicates less space to linguistic questions, he accentuates the primary standing of the mind and reasoning in the process of cognition of the world and also analyses diverse types of reasoning. The formal aspect of reasoning is studied by A. Kozanecka-Dymek in an article devoted to temporal logic.

The second group of texts undertake a wide ethical-legal problematic. The Author of the first article, L. Kopciuch considers the relationship between moral relativism and notions from the field of ethics elaborated by Scheler, Hartmann and von Hildebrand and proves that these notions are still valid nowadays which authorizes criticism of moral relativism. The texts of A. Breczko, L. Rodak and M. Andruszkiewicz concentrate on the issues of legal language as a specific and specialist language distinguished on the

Introduction

basis of characteristic aspects of the law itself. A. Breczko indicates the inadequacy of legal language concerning the regulations of bioethical questions; the fast-changing reality in this sphere makes the legal language lag behind, and as a consequence courts are forced to adopt decisions based on unclear and imprecise regulations. L. Rodak studies legal facts from semiotic perspective, determining conditions in which they obtain the status of objective facts, M. Andruszkiewicz dedicates her text to the analysis of cultural determinants of legal language and legal interpretation. The text by K. Doliwa establishes the relationship 'positive law – natural law' in the system of T. Hobbes reducing the law of nature to the role of a catalyst of state-building attitudes.

The articles by M. Pawlak and A. Dacza-Budzyńska deal with rhetorical questions; the first one, referring to the antique figure of god Kairos, researches cultural conditionings of the communication act, the second one, also with reference to the tradition of classical rhetoric, analyses construction of ad populum arguments in American pre-election debates.

Next text in the volume concentrates on the issue of translation of legal texts – B. Piecychna presents Gadamerian concept of the act of translation in which the translator appears to be an interpreter of texts facing various obstacles and difficulties caused, among other things, by cultural diversity.

Two closing texts refer to non-verbal communication systems. The first one, by Renata and Jakub Botwina describes the process of formation of meanings through creation of space; it presents a scenery being an effect of historical, social and cultural interactions, allowing to interpret diverse meanings, concealed in it, while the last text by J. Auron-Górska is concerned with photography as a carrier of meaning. Both articles treat of cultural conditionings in the sphere of semiotic meanings and accentuate the thesis saying that to make a sign function in culture it is necessary to consolidate it in a code common to the sender and receiver and in a convention connecting them.

The Authors of the texts assembled in the present volume represent various fields of science and the considerations of semiotic character included in the volume emphasise the interdisciplinary status of semiotics. A diversity of topics in the volume allows to notice the fact that the meaning is not stable, universal; it evolves in time and space and is a derivative of cultural conditions. Reading the presented volume provokes reflection that semiotics is continuously broadening its dominium, the systems of sign-function are appearing in different and new fields of reality which confirms the hypothesis of Umberto Eco that, in fact, culture, in all its aspects, is communication.

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