ACADEMY OF ART IN SZCZECIN (AKADEMIA SZTUKI W SZCZECINIE) FACULTY OF OF PAINTING AND NEW MEDIA

MAJOR: Painting SPECIALTY: Painting

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THESIS TITLE:

IS IT POSSIBLE TO WRITE BACHELOR'S THESIS, ABOUT MUTUAL RELATIONS BETWEEN HERRING AND SOLDIER?

BA dissertation

Supervisor:

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SZCZECIN 2019

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Pre-introduction:

"One should expand the scope of one's own "self", that is, one's power in all aspects. One should not shape oneself unilaterally.

Although it is a difficult task, the internal development only occurs through an internal struggle.

A spoiled humankind should feel the joy of fighting, the joy of overcoming what is weak and old in a human. Actions, not verbal declarations, determine who an individual is.

It is the responsibility of each of us to realize the possibilities that lie within us.

Discovering new dimensions of our own existence, we also enter the cultural world in a new, creative way.

Art elevates man above his realized "self". Contact with it saves us from the anguish of will, as art corresponds to our perfected "self", which we should aim at and define in our own way. There is no and cannot be a measure of the perfect "self" common to all."

-Friedrich Nietzsche, Philosopher¹.

¹ M. Szyszkowska., Spotkania w salonie, Wyd. Twój Styl, Warszawa 2002, s. 103.

0. Introduction – aim and scope of the dissertation

Research on the preparation of diploma dissertations on artistic faculties

The survey² conducted among 20 individuals indicates that people outside the Academy of Art in Szczecin tend to think that during painting studies one does not prepare written dissertation, but only paints on canvas and reads books. According to the interviewees, the requirements during the studies are limited mostly to involvement and creativity.

According to the opinions, the students have much free time, which they spend waiting on inspiration. The interviewees define a student of painting as a person humiliated by the life, unwise, layabout, slacker, moonbat, slob, bum, introvert, psychopath, creator of an alternate reality. A person with a head in the clouds. It is also a creative person who thinks on their own, but cannot take criticism – although seemingly they take it into account. To study art means to get to know it by its roots, learn about its history, it also means to shape one's own flexibility and identity.

According to the interviewees, the of a diploma consists of the discussion on a topic given by the supervisor – the person that is able to determine whether the prepared project is or is not art. The interviewees assumed that students of the Academy express a part of themselves in the diploma project, trying to make it useful for a local brand or studio. Instead of a written paper, the students attach notes to the prepared artistic or musical material. According to the answers, people think that during the of a diploma one has to present directions regarding future activities, necessarily introducing new forms to the market and expressing emotions. It is followed by the evaluation and, as claimed by the interviewees, the supervisor will do anything for the student to get a passing grade, while the critic will do anything to prevent that...

So is it possible to discuss anything one wants in a diploma dissertation?

² Link to the survey,

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1kUY5SPY6Y96vkgE9-bUvZumqUOrS98lm/view?usp=sharing [Accessed: 28.08.2019].

After all, a dissertation has to be a scientific one, meeting a rigid form. I have encountered answers from everywhere, stating that it can describe anything that is related to art.

But what is art, basically? There are many definitions of it, they constantly change; nobody is able to precisely determine what it is. Therefore should I follow the definition of art proposed by someone outside of the artistic circle or the one proposed by a member of the said circle?

After all, what we do in the Academy is referred to as modern art. Combining the answers given by the people from the artistic community with those of people not involved in art, I get a common answer that everything is modern art.

What could possibly have an influence on shaping such popular and strongly rooted belief in all human beings? Is it some universal truth that everyone subconsciously feels? Or some flawed motive created in the collective consciousness?

Let me recall the popular Skoda Octavia commercial from 2009³, which presents a smiling couple, watching an exhibition in the gallery of modern art. The couple looks at the watch and heads to the rack, where people gathered at the gallery stand and talk. The protagonist – a man, wades through the crowd and takes the clothing off the rack, then he hands it to his partner and politely helps her to put it on. They both exit the gallery smiling to each other, as if they were laughing at the people they pass by, then they enter the car showroom of the advertised brand. The scene ends with a comment from the narrator: "New Skoda Octavia, you know what is good...". In this way, the mass media has established in the social consciousness the view that everything can be art and that people cannot distinguish between ordinary everyday objects and works of art.

The commercial was aired 10 years ago – in this period significant changes could occur, therefore it is worth overlooking what people think about modern art today. A reliable tool to research public opinion could be social media. I have already used Facebook to create polls, now I will extend to YouTube. It is one of the most accessible sources which enables analysis of the opinions of a wide cross-section of society.

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³ Commercial Skoda Octavia Gallery, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q9zzEvtiXqc [Accessed: 20.05.2019].

After entering the tag "modern art", I have found a video published on December 22nd, 2016 that has over 250 thousand views and is named "THE TRUTH ABOUT MODERN AND CONCEPTUAL ART/THE WAR BETWEEN FAR-LEFT POLITICS AND OBJECTIVISM⁴.". The video is insulting to modern art. However, it has almost 8 thousand likes. After watching the video⁵ I analyse the comments. Users of YouTube have posted the following statements:

"janusz 221136" comments:

"Modern art and contemporary art are two different things."

"Michał Koczoń" comments:

"I'm glad that I have found this channel. I am actually working in the museum of modern art and I have to agree with everything that the author said. Many artists are in a nutshell "pompous assholes and snobs", who do something just to present themselves during a vernissage and drink some wine with their friends "from the industry". Great material. props."

"Ester" comments:

"They do not understand my art, fuck them. This quotation perfectly describes your video.;)"

"Jakub Trela" comments:

"True, true! If art has to evoke emotions, then the greatest art is to throw faeces at people"

So what makes people try to distinguish whether something is or is not art? Do I possess any specific tools to do it, unlike the users I have quoted? The statements presented above suggest that clear demarcation is undertaken mainly by people who are not connected with art.

The necessity to prepare a diploma dissertation allows me to verify popular views and raise the question:

Is it true that on artistic universities one can write about anything? Or maybe it just seems so?

⁴ THE TRUTH ABOUT MODERN AND CONCEPTUAL ART/THE WAR BETWEEN FAR-LEFT POLITICS AND OBJECTIVISM https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MRgo1phznHk [Accessed: 20.05.2019].

⁵ THE TRUTH ABOUT MODERN AND CONCEPTUAL ART/THE WAR BETWEEN FAR-LEFT POLITICS AND OBJECTIVISM https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MRgo1phznHk [Accessed: 20.05.2019].

On the basis of my perspective – that of a student of painting at the Academy of Art in Szczecin, I will consider the topic of my Bachelor's Dissertation:

Is it possible to write a diploma dissertation at the Academy of Art about the relation between the herring and the army?

To assess this, it is necessary to begin with examining the formal requirements at artistic universities. What are the requirements for diploma dissertations at artistic universities?

Formal requirements for diploma dissertations

At the Academy of Art in Szczecin⁶ a diploma dissertation should consist of a precise presentation of the research question and formulation of the aim of the work. They should be followed by the description of methodology and research status, therefore a reference to the conclusions describing the topic chosen by the student that have been stated before and were not created by the student. Presentation of the results of the research should be crowned with a summary and the answer, whether the formulated thesis was stated right. When it comes to the formal editing requirements, every dissertation should contain a title page, a table of contents and their equivalents in the English language. It is also necessary to graphically distinguish the introduction and each chapter, as well as enclose the list of works cited, in other words, bibliography, in alphabetical order. The internet sources should be attached with the date of last access and each illustration should be attached with its source (it is acceptable to enclose the index of used illustrations).

It is also required to enclose the certification statement.

The minimum amount of text included in the diploma dissertation is respectively 15 thousand signs for Bachelor's Dissertation and 20 thousand signs for Master's Dissertation.

It is forbidden to copy texts by other authors during the writing of the paper, unless they constitute quotations with mentioned sources, due to the applicable copyright law. Each dissertation is verified by an anti-plagiarism system.

Thereafter the formal editing requirements state that the paper has to be printed inA4 format, the supervisor chooses the cover, whereas the required font type is Arial or Times New Roman in size 12 for the main text and size 10 for the footnotes. The spacing between the lines should be 1.5 line and the margins for every page should be 2.5cm (pagina 1cm). Aligning the text to the margin is applied. Each chapter should begin on a separate page. If one wishes to apply paragraphs, it is only allowed as an indentation or block. Every page should be numbered (from the beginning to the end of the paper).

⁶ Formal requirements for a written work,

https://akademiasztuki.eu/WMINM/Download?file=wymogi-formalne-pracy-pisemnej [Accessed: 20.06.2019].

The images should be attached closely to the text regarding them, they also have to be numbered in the footnotes including other works, in accordance with numbering

corresponding to the order of presentation. Above the illustration, on its left side, there should

be its title, source of the illustration should be placed in the footnotes. Dates also should be

presented in accordance with the pattern provided by the Academy.

At the Władysław Strzemiński's Academy of Fine Arts in Łódź⁷

English equivalents of the title page and the table of contents are not required. Times

New Roman is the obligatory font. Regular font size is 12 and the font size for the footnotes is

10, similarly to the requirements given by the Academy in Szczecin. In Łódź the titles of

particular chapters should be written in bold, in the font size 14, points should be written in

the regular font, size 14.

The left margin should have 2.5 cm, other margins 2 cm. Paragraphs are allowed only with

the preceding indentation. Each footnote should end with a period. The references regarding

illustrations are also required. The spelling contains rules of orthography, date writing, the

spelling of foreign words, as well as a guidance for the correct use of quotation marks, due to

the anti-plagiarism system. It is advised to use generally recognised abbreviations as well as

those referring to names. At the Academy of Fine Arts in Łódź, there is also a set pattern for

the table of contents and rules regarding the footnotes (provided with examples). The final

part of the dissertation should contain conclusions in a synthetic form.

It is possible but not obligatory for the written paper to regard the practical part of the

diploma. The dissertation itself should be consistent, substantial and stylistically correct. At

this university as well, the standard format of the work is A4.

At the Academy of Fine Arts in Gdańsk⁸ the procedure regarding the diploma dissertation is

described on the website named "Candidate's Guide". It contains information about numerous

⁷ The standards of theoretical thesis at the Academy of Fine Arts in Łódź,

https://old.asp.lodz.pl/images/stories/uczelnia/dokumenty/dla dyplomantow/170404-standardy-pracy-

teoretycznej.pdf>

[Accessed: 20.06.2019].

⁸ Candidate's Guide,

https://asp.gda.pl/wydzialy/wydzial-malarstwa/plan-zajec/procedura-dyplomowania,460

[Accessed: 20.06.2019].

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procedures preceding the preparation of a diploma dissertation: familiarising oneself with the criteria of evaluation for one's major and faculty separately, submitting a written statement and familiarising oneself with other diploma documents. Choosing the supervisor is not performed during consultations in person, but through the means of e-mail – this procedure is called registration. Then one should complete a diploma declaration. Only after fulfilling these requirements one can start writing a diploma dissertation.

On the December 13th, 2018 at the Academy of Fine Arts in Gdańsk an order No. 57/2018 of the Rector of the Academy of Fine Arts in Gdańsk was issued. The order introduces "internal procedure of the thesis9" "Plagiarism system" which examines the dissertations for 10-word sequences.

As well as at the academies mentioned before, it is significant for the dissertation to be a product of one's own work. The paper has to consist of a specific structure, similarly to the aforementioned examples. Except for passing the antiplagiarism procedure, the same copyright rules apply.

The printing should be bilateral, the acceptable font is Times New Roman, sizes 12 and 13. Justification rule is the same as at the Academy in Szczecin, required spacing is also 1.5. There are rules regarding word splitting and transfer, calculations, amount of pages and quotations, as well as tables and reproductions. The dissertation has to consist of at least 22 thousand signs in order to be accepted. The "Diploma dissertation abstract" is a summary of a whole written work combined with the documentation regarding practical works. It has to be attached in the final part of the theoretical work at the Academy of Fine Arts in Gdańsk.

At the Eugeniusz Geppert's Academy of Fine Arts in Wrocław¹⁰

It is not obligatory for the diploma dissertation to be the product of one's own work. If the Faculty Council approves, it can be prepared collectively with another student. The topic of a dissertation also has to be approved by the Faculty Council. It is possible for the student to choose 2 supervisors – main and auxiliary, exceptionally the student may choose a person

http://bip.asp.gda.pl/bip download.php?id=2860> [Accessed: 20.06.2019].

⁹ Rector's Order No. 57/2018,

¹⁰ CERTIFICATION PROCEDURE At the Eugeniusz Geppert's Academy of Fine Arts in Wrocław, https://www.asp.wroc.pl/?module=Common&controller=Get&file=81713 [Accessed: 20.06.2019].

from outside the Academy. The diploma dissertation differs significantly from the examples described above. The paper should consist of a maximum of 18 thousand signs, it should contain the description regarding the preparation of the practical work. Commonly accepted spelling rules apply. Written papers are verified for plagiarism only in justified cases. The dissertations are printed unilaterally, archival copy without covers, perforated and tied with a string is printed bilaterally. There is no information regarding the format of the paper.

On the official websites of the Academies of Fine Arts in Warsaw, Cracow and the Artistic University in Poznań there are no requirements regarding written dissertations. The information was not posted on the websites and refused to be given to an outside person. I have encountered information that the students of the mentioned universities receive the formal requirements by means of e-mail.

In conclusion, the most significant feature of the bachelor's dissertation is that it is prepared autonomously, which should be confirmed by a written statement. The idea should also be one's very own; the work should be prepared under the control of a supervisor. It should contain a thesis and its defense, reinforced by references to the history of art or philosophy. One should perform analysis and draw conclusions from it. The thesis has to be written in accordance with the applicable rules of the editing.

1. The concept of symbol in art

The symbol is widely recognised as "a ubiquitous stylistic mean, having one literal meaning and many hidden ones". This describes a specific optics, but where does its consciousness root from?

"[...] To imagine love, paint hate. Or at least flattery or anger or patience. [...]"11

These intriguing words by Cesare Ripa appear on the cover of his *Ikonologia* (*Iconology*). While reading further into the text one can come to the conclusion that the issues once troubling artists of the renaissance and baroque are in the contemporary world considered in a very different manner. As modern people, we agree that today visions, feelings, emotions, ideas, dreams, deliberations and abstract elements can be transferred without using painting means and it does not hinder their reception and understanding, for our goal is not to imagine these thoughts to ourselves, but to pass them to another human being. C. Ripa mentions that "the goal here is a specific expression of a given concept in another person, allowing them to imagine it, that is to arouse their imagination". He indicates that imagination is something essentially different than expression or description through words.

Cesare Ripa states that such challenges of thought have existed since "the human in his creativeness started to differentiate between imitation (gr. *mimesis*; lat. *imitation*) and symbolisation. In other words, the dispute continues since the moment when a fish drawn or painted before began to mean non-fish in the intention of its creator".

Regarding the example of the shape of a fish, combined with its Greek name inscribed in one of the Christian tombs (and explaining that in this instance "it is not about the fish written in Greek language *ichthys*, but about the abbreviation – ICHTHYS, meaning Iesous Christos Theou Hyios Soter – Jesus Christ, Son of God, Saviour"¹²), the author asks the question whether the sign itself is about the letter abbreviation? He concludes that the answer is no, as a fish on a given area over time was connected to multiple meanings. In general, the image of a fish was associated with "water-life" or with death, abyss and at the same time with salvation. Thus, one of the exemplary symbols was born.

¹¹ C. Ripa, *Ikonologia*, Wyd. Universitas, Kraków 2013, p. 5.

¹² *ibid*. p. 5.

Allegory

In *Ikonologia* (*Iconology*) it is stated that defining meanings, that often seem to be distant from each other, in reference to a symbol is called allegory. The word comes from Greek *allegorein* which means to speak so as to imply something other, whereas scholarly, wide knowledge regarding this field, together with an explanation of the relation between the image and a given meaning is called *allegorizing*. Therefore at first we read the most direct, literal meaning and then we seek for hidden meanings, employing erudition¹³.

Employing a tool, available in a given cultural circle for a viewer familiarised with culture, in order to interpret texts and iconographic images is called image-allegory. However, the most popular form of allegory is incarnation – personification, *ergo* embodiment. One can conclude that allegory with its elements imitates the surrounding world. Significant accents in the iconography of the allegorical imitation are features, properties, objects called attributes, being possessed by main personas – hence personification, for instance, the figure of a child with wings, halo and bow (Amor); the figure of a man with wings, a sword in his hand and a serpent under his leg. All of the attributes enrich the allegory, causing it to be transparent and clear.

It is a widespread belief that art influences senses, it can charm, affect, but also distress, shock, give happiness as well as sadness, one can like or dislike it. Do we think deeply about art? Should we judge art superficially, without considering what we are looking at? In this situation, we shall only see a minor part of the image. Art "communicates" with us by the means of imagery, an image is something that has to be specified, something worth discerning in order to understand the whole work. Discovering the relationship between symbols appearing in various works will awake us and lead to the hidden meanings and allusions

Iconography addresses recognition, description, interpretation and classification of the content elements and symbolic meanings in artistic works. Erwin Panofsky, an art historian, at the beginning of the 20th century has issued a publication in which he developed a method of studying works of art. He believed that everything has a symbolic form – and

¹³ Erudition – wide knowledge regarding the given subject.

interpretation is a mean for reading the internal meaning of a work of art. Iconography reveals the attitude and mentality of the people and society in a given era. It contains pre-iconographic description, including the essential meaning and artistic reasons that caused the creation of a work; iconographic analysis – description of a painting, history and allegory, as well as iconological analysis – explanation of internal meanings and contents.¹⁴

In conclusion, realising the significance of a symbol makes it possible both for the creator and the viewer to escape outside the borders of matter, outside what is visual and tangible. It allows immersion in the sheet of human consciousness and exploration of hidden meanings, originating in the old meanings of the religious symbols, through the symbols present in a cultural circle of a particular person. Nevertheless, it has to be considered that these symbols cross the borders easily and become multidimensional – it testifies the multidimensionality of human psyche and multiculturalism.

Conclusion

The symbols and allegories inscribed in the images disclose wide relations between objects and their definition. They also rise questions but do not provide answers. They reveal to us, people of the modern times, the connections of the objects and their meanings which, despite being deeply rooted in the surrounding world, elude our perception. As for modern people, the majority of us while being in church, visiting graveyards, historic and cultural locations, viewing paintings on smartphones and tablets has become accustomed to asking other people about the allegorical, symbolic sense of the image that absorbs our sight or discovered allegory. The fact that many people remain unfaithful and disinterested in art provokes reflection that it is not obligatory to be familiar with iconography in order to function in the contemporary world. But what about the ability to read symbols? A helpful example would be that of the road signs, the meaning of which everyone has to learn and respect.

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¹⁴ *ibid*., p. 6.

2. Examples of the herring image in art and society

The Polish Language Dictionary defines a herring as "a commonly caught fish; a party organised on the last day of the carnival; a very narrow tie or a wedge impaled into the ground, that holds a line of the construction of the tent"¹⁵. The definition that will be discussed in the content of this dissertation is that of a fish.

The aforementioned fish served as the payment method to the Matthieu de Boulogne, a count of Bologna who used to pay the annuities to the monks in the currency of salted herrings¹⁶. Klemens Małopolanin, the local lord, in the 13th century collected the payment from the traders in the form of one herring from each barrel¹⁷. The residents of Boulogne in France used to pray to Saint Harenc¹⁸, as he has saved their community from the pervasive hunger multiple times.

Since the Middle Ages, a herring was an object of desire in Hanse, which in the 13th and 14th century has fought with Denmark and Norway for the right of fishing for it in the land of Scania. The North Sea was also fiercely contested for herring, as there were heated conflicts between Dutch and English fishermen due to unfavourable fishing regulations introduced by England. It resulted in the military supporting the Dutch fishermen during their work. The image of a herring was popularised in Dutch paintings in the 17th century when the painters have repeatedly positioned its figure as a part of symbolic and allegorical still life composition.

An example of such painting is *Still Life with Herring* by Pieter Claesh¹⁹.

/szukaj/%C5%9Bled%C5%BA.html> [Accessed: 10.08.2019].

ź na Wielki Post,

904-Krol-wod-w-oleju-Sledz-na-Wielki-Post.html?fbclid=IwAR1T-PPM mbNAZHll772onuImT BJw> [Accessed: 10.08.2019].

¹⁷ Encyklopedia staropolska/Ryby, https://pl.wikisource.org/wiki/Encyklopedia_staropolska/Ryby [Accessed: 10.08.2019].

¹⁸ Saint Harenc - fr. Saint Herring.

¹⁹ Pieter Claesh, Martwa Natura ze Śledziem, https://www.wga.hu/html_m/b/bray/joseph/praise.html [Accessed:20.08.2019].

The image of a herring is continuously presented on the post stamps from Greenland, Iceland, England, Germany and Denmark.











²⁰Atlantic Herring (Clupea harengus)

https://colnect.com/en/stamps/stamp/55171-Atlantic_Herring_Clupea_harengus-Fish-Iceland [Accessed: 20.08.2019].

²¹Sustainable Fish, https://rmspecialstamps.com/collections/sustainable-fish [Accessed: 20.08.2019].

²²Fish in Nordic waters - herring: https://www.stamps.gl/en/fish-in-nordic-waters-herring [Accessed: 20.08.2019].

²³Atlantic Herring (Clupea harengus),

https://colnect.com/en/stamps/stamp/375020-Atlantic_Herring_Clupea_harengus-Fauna-Denmark [Accessed: 20.08.2019].

²⁴Saltwater Fish, http://www.collectorzpedia.com/2016/08/Saltwater-Fish.html [Accessed: 20.08.2019].

It even appears on the coins, as for instance on British 20 pence:



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The herring also appears in literature. In Anton Chekhov's *The Siren*, during the court break at lunchtime, the trial participants waiting for the verdict listen to the secretary's monologue about a wonderful dinner:

(...) I was about to say, when it comes to appetizers, one must know one's way about. The best appetizer is herring. You eat a bit of herring with onion and mustard sauce, and without waiting, my friend, while the sparks are still flying in the stomach, you help yourself to caviar, with lemon juice, if you prefer it that way, then you have a radish with salt, and another piece of herring. But I'll tell you what's better still, my friend: salted pink mushrooms, minced, as fine as caviar and served with onion and olive oil... Exquisite!²⁶

Bogdan Wojdowski in *Bread for the Departed*, a novel about the life in Warsaw Ghetto, mentions the herring as a significant nutritional element:

(...) When she had no time, she would put herring wrapped in newspaper in the ash pan. The herring hissed, sang in the fire and when it was baked, the breakfast was ready. Oh, Dawid liked days like that.²⁷

²⁵1984 – 1987 Atlantic Herring 20p, https://coins.co.im/product/1984-1987-atlantic-herring-20p-coin [Accessed:20.08.2019].

²⁶A. Chekhov, *Syrena*, akapit 10, https://wolnelektury.pl/katalog/lektura/syrena.html [Accessed: 20.08.2019].

²⁷B. Wojdowski, *Chleb rzucony umarłym*, Wyd. Dolnośląskie, Wrocław 2005, p. 5.

(...) She walked a long way, from the market behind the Iron Gate, holding ashen herring in one hand and a lemon in the other. It was for Friday's dinner, on Friday the grandfather is to come with a prayer on his mouth.²⁸

(...) They walked in the crowd of shouting merchants, women guarding their barrels of herrings and cabbage from dawn until dusk(...)²⁹

(...) If you give away something complete, you can afford bread, you can afford soup, you can afford Friday's herring. (...) And if a Jew does not have a herring on his table once a week?(...)³⁰

In the foreign literature, the English use a phrase *Red Herring*³¹, meaning a piece of misleading information. The symbol of a 'red herring' is used here as an idiom describing a logical error when a person is distracted by apparently reliable, but in the end irrelevant diversionary tactic.

Stanisław Cios in the book *Ryby w Życiu Polaków od X do XIX Wieku* (*Fish in the Life of Poles from 10th to 19th Century*) mentions over 200 indications about herring that he has found in Polish literature and folklore.³²

In the area of Baltic Sea, in the lands of fishing and sailing, maritime culture has expanded, influencing whole countries. Festivals, events, concerts, holidays, artistic happenings, parades, festivities, performances, conventions, celebrations show that the herring has become a hit culture-making stimulant. It is worth noting that the majority of events lasts for more than one day and is of a highly ceremonial character, gathering extremely large crowds.

²⁹ *ibid.*, p. 15.

²⁸ *ibid.*, p. 10.

³⁰ *ibid.*, p. 40.

³¹ Eng. Red Herring = red + Herring; "Czerwony Śledź"

 $^{^{32}}$ M. Krzeptowski, J. Krzeptowska, *Zasolony król* , Wyd. "Bernardinum", Pelplin 2018, s.17, cyt. za: S. Cios, Ryby w życiu Polaków od X do XIX w , Wyd. Instytut Rybactwa Śródlądowego 2007, s.23.

The totemising of herring has developed to the extent that it has become "the king of Dutch fish and even the fish of Dutch rulers". In the mentioned country, a durable tradition forced the first barrel from spring fishing to be delivered directly into the hands of the Queen. It was delivered by the captain of the ship to Vlaardingen, where the Queen tasted the herring and auctioned the remaining fish. The price of one barrel ranged from 20,000 to 95,500 euros³³. The income was donated to charity. The most significant Vlaggetjesdag event takes place every year on the beach in Scheveningen, near Hague. This day was officially approved as the herring festival³⁴ and attributed mainly to this seaside resort since 1947. By the end of May or at the beginning of June the tourists gather in Scheveningen, as the largest annual event takes place on the beach. When the first barrel of herring arrives at the harbour and the ruler tastes the first herring, everyone starts celebrating, as the official Hollandse Nieuwe³⁵ begins. This event is also the beginning of the official herring trade. If anyone tried to sell even a tail of a herring before the Queen, they would face a fine of 11,000 euros for such an attempt.

In Siglufjordur in Iceland, the Herring Festival is celebrated every year during the first weekend of August³⁶. 100 per cent of a local community participates, except those who left on vacation. In honour of herrings, "The Herring Era Museum"³⁷ was founded there in 1994, being the only herring museum in the world.

In Poland, the Herring Festival is celebrated in Niechorze. It is described on the website of Gmina Rewal:

The Herring Festival is a unique event for the entire Baltic Sea coast.

(...) It is a fishing festival organised in Niechorze every year at the beginning of the vacation. Its goal is to popularize the vanishing profession of boat

³³ Vlaggetjesdag, https://nl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vlaggetjesdag [Accessed: 20.08.2019].

³⁴ Vlaggetjesdag, op. cit.

³⁵ Hollandse Nieuwe, https://nl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hollandse Nieuwe> [Accessed: 20.08.2019].

³⁶ THE HERRING FESTIVAL, http://hatid.is/events/sildaraevintyrid-a-siglufirdi/?lang=en [Accessed: 20.08.2019].

³⁷ The Herring Era Museum of Iceland, http://www.sild.is/en> [Accessed: 20.08.2019].

fisherman, to cultivate the old tradition of sea fishing in the Baltic Sea and to promote local products.(...)³⁸

An interesting fact is that in Eyemouth in Scotland the first fishing Herring Festival was held in the celebration of the end of World War I and therefore was named the Peace Picnic. Today it is called the Eyemouth Herring Queen Festival³⁹ and takes place on the 20th of July. Days of the Herring are also organised in Helsinki⁴⁰ in Finland, in Dieppe⁴¹ in France and in Kaliningrad⁴² in Russia.

In addition to open festivities, there are also other events for limited numbers of guests organised in order to celebrate the herring. A helpful example would be that of "The Nights of the Herringeaters" ("Noce Śledziożerców").

Herring enthusiasts, artists, politicians and many other important people gather together in Szczecin for The Nights of the Herringeaters every year since 2000. The meetings take place in the Ducal Castle, where to this time over 1000 dishes with herring were invented and consumed. There was even a book *The Nights of the Herringeaters* published in 2011, as a result of intensive meetings.

In the case of Szczecin, it is significant to note that it was "the main German herring exporter".⁴³

³⁸ Święto Śledzia Bałtyckiego 2019,

http://www.rewal.pl/index.php/pl/turysta/aktualnosci/wydarzenia2/2131-swieto-sledzia-baltyckiego-20 [Accessed: 20.08.2019].

³⁹ EYEMOUTH HERRING QUEEN FESTIVAL,

https://www.visitberwickshirecoast.co.uk/listings/eyemouth-herring-queen-festival-2019 [Accessed: 20.08.2019].

⁴⁰ Herring fair, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Herring fair> [Accessed: 20.08.2019].

⁴¹ LES FÊTES DU HARENG EN NORMANDIE,

http://www.normandie-tourisme.fr/a-voir-a-faire/gastronomie/fetes-gastronomiques-pour-tous-les-gouts/les-fetes-du-hareng-408-1.html [Accessed: 20.08.2019].

⁴² День селёдки-2018, http://www.grazdanin-gazeta.ru/archive/2018/aprel-2018/24-19-aprelya-2018/1828/ [Accessed: 20.08.2019].

⁴³ R. Czejarek, Sekrety Szczecina, Wyd. Księży Młyn, Łódź, 2014, p.114.

Moreover, this year the 15th International Fair of Fish and Food Products "Polfish"⁴⁴ was held in Gdańsk, where The National Marine Fisheries Research Institute grants the prize "The Golden Herring" for processing and promotion of the Baltic herring. Near Gdańsk, in the Bay of Puck, the March of Herring⁴⁵ is organised every year since 2002. The event consists of a water rally of about 12 km through Rybitwia Mielizna (pl. Tern Shallows). The rally is held under the patronage of the local government, the Chairman of the Maritime and Colonial League as well as the Director of the Maritime Office in Gdynia.



The herring becomes culturally associated. In 2006 WizzAir airlines at the London Luton airport encouraged visiting Poland with a catchline "Vodka & herring form £1.49. Thirsty & hungry? Book a flight to Poland" However, the advertisement did not appeal to the former Polish president, Lech Wałęsa, according to whom "promoting the vodka-like aspect of Gdańsk is intolerable" The president's statement nonetheless lacked a reference to the herring. I decided to quote the advertisement, as it is a product of culture and therefore an element of art.

It is also fascinating that on the 1st of October 2018 an article about the scientists of Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń was issued. The article regarded scientists' work on

⁴⁴ POLFISH, http://www.polfishfair.pl [Accessed: 20.08.2019].

⁴⁵ Marsz Śledzia, http://www.marszsledzia.pl/historia [Accessed: 20.08.2019].

⁴⁶ Wódka i Śledź, https://pasazer.com/img/images/news-old/temp/vodka.jpg [Accessed: 20.08.2019].

⁴⁷ Polish translation: "Wódka i śledź od 1,49 funta. Spragniony i głodny? Zarezerwuj lot do Polski".

⁴⁸ Kiełbasą w Szweda, wódką w Angola,

https://www.pasazer.com/news/2423/kielbasa,w,szweda,wodka,w,angola.html [Accessed: 20.08.2019].

a drive for an artificial herring, created in order to spy on foreign naval objects, commissioned by the Naval Academy in Gdynia⁴⁹.

As can be seen, the image of a herring has strongly rooted in the culture. Beginning with totemising and rendering it as sacred, using it as an allegory and symbol in painting, employing in literature or as a language symbol, through functioning as a currency, placing it on post stamps or coins, to becoming an icon of numerous festivals or even a ritual element in the hands of Dutch king. The herring was made a royal fish, many days and holidays were named after it. A golden herring in a form of a trophy became an object of desire on the international fair in Gdańsk, whereas its avatar becomes a modern military device. It is an inseparable part of language and its image in culture constitutes a significant iconographic element. Therefore everything indicates that a herring can serve as a topic for a diploma dissertation.

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⁴⁹ Sztuczny śledź namierzy okręty podwodne. Pracują nad nim polscy naukowcy,

https://www.tvn24.pl/wiadomosci-z-kraju,3/naukowcy-tworza-sztuczna-rybe-ma-wykrywac-okrety-marynarkiwojennej,

3. Examples of the soldier image in art and society

The Polish Language Dictionary defines a soldier as "a person on military service" 50, which indicates explicitly that its image is integrated with a wider circle of the army, it is a part of it.



51 The first visual representation of an army in which a form of a soldier can be distinguished could be found as early as in prehistory. It is the battle scenes that are written on the plain walls of the caves in the city of Morella la Vieja, dating back to 7,000 BC, depicting "Battle between Archers". It is the first historical painting that represents the army. The composition portrays tribal combat between 8 archers. The dynamism and expression of the figures make the impression as if they were only a part of a larger troop, but in more detailed observation it is

brought to our attention that the arrows protruding in front of figures are somehow an extension of their bodies, their wills. Due to the unconventional alignment of the characters, it is not possible to distinguish which direction they are firing at, if they reach for any particular aim or whether the weapon here is portrayed as a tool for fighting or fun. However, it is clear that the weapon is portrayed in the same position, but in various directions, just like the figures.



52 The notion of the army of the 3rd millennium BC is to be found in the "Stele of the Vultures". This monument represents the army as the soldiers equipped in helmets, shields and spears. The image of a king as a pivot man is presented here for the first time. The soldiers led by him step on the defeated opponents. The king is also portrayed with a spear and a sword in a form of a sickle, he does not wear any armour. Therefore one can come to a conclusion that those are not tools for fighting, but attributes.

⁵⁰ Żołnierz [a soldier], https://sjp.pwn.pl/sjp/zolnierz;2548251.html [Accessed: 20.08.2019].

⁵¹ Bitwa Łuczników, prehistoryczne malarstwo naskalne w Hiszpanii, Morella la Vieja.

Z. Żygulski, Sławne bitwy w sztuce, Wyd. Pagina, Warszawa, 1996, p. 11.

⁵² *ibid.*, p. 12.

Thus it comes to mind that it is possible that the soldiers in the battle between archers could also be portrayed with attributes instead of weapons.

53



In the Victory Stele of Naram-Sin of the 2250 BC the ruler is portrayed as a figure almost twice as tall as the soldiers. He is holding attributes in the form of a horned helmet, a spear, a bow, a jeered and a hatchet. The troops behind him hold flags, javelins and bows. They are presented in a mountain landscape. In addition to the distinctive figures of the ruler and the mountains, the glowing sun, star and a tree attract attention, therefore the picture represents the first elements of a landscape painting.



⁵³ *ibid.*, p. 12.

⁵⁴ *ibid.*, p. 14.

While describing antiquity it is essential to mention an Aryan relief "The Assyrians Destroying Elamites". It presents a very complicated battle. It contains elements of a landscape painting such as palms. The soldiers have not only weapons and massive armours but also horses, on which they ride and attack their opponents. It is another work of art introducing the figure of a soldier. A new artistic element here is the portrayal of an army as a more expressive group, held in the air.

It is also significant to mention Greek vases, more popular in the modern days while describing battle scenes in such bygone times⁵⁵:



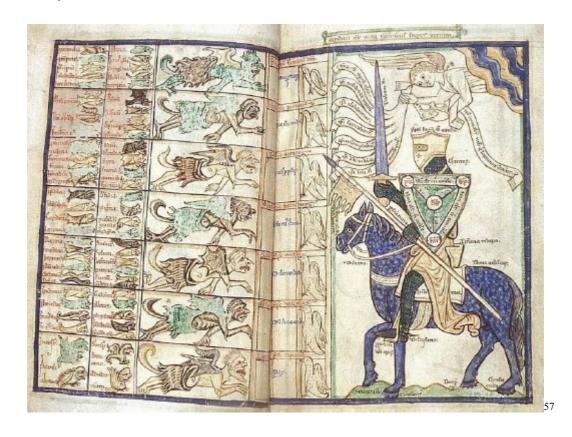
The Chigi vase was made in the 650 BC. There is a scene between two opposing armies painted and burned on it. All depicted soldiers are of equal height, the only things that differ them are decorations and shields. In this work, the figure of the army was extracted and clarified from the battle scene.

The depiction of armies in the Middle Ages was strongly connected to the idea of chivalry. Through spreading and preservation of Christianity, the soldier has become not only a defender of his lands but also a warrior of spiritual and moral values. A soldier was titled a knight. Its figure, connected to the religious values, was preserved in painting and music, and furthermore in literature. Hence most of the figures of a knight come from the illuminated manuscripts. Since literature was originally one of the most important elements of human consciousness, in the Middle Ages painting was not yet a separate field of art.

⁵⁵ Detail from the Chigi-vase, https://pl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Waza_Chigi#/media/Plik:Detail_from_the_Chigi-vase.jpg. [Accessed: 20.08.2019].

In the European culture, painting has evolved into an independent field of art, originating from the portraits of knights. It began with large tapestries hang in the castles because of their meaning, decorative value, but also because they warmed the massive, cold rooms. Possession of a great number of tapestries was also a presentation of the King's wealth, religiousness and devotion to God. The knights, as they were worshipped by the crowd, became extolled heroes during their life, available not only for the rulers but also for ordinary people. They were somehow like the modern celebrities, promoted by the mass media, referring to the definition of stars in relation to the society in Guy Debrod's play⁵⁶.

The knights, supported by everyone, were becoming wealthy, funding churches and building new castles. They totemised themselves as they commissioned preparing their effigies, retaining their images in the public art, which resulted in a significant contribution of their money to the art of the time.



⁵⁶ In *The Society of the* Spectacle by Guy Debord, the stars embody the inaccessible result of social work. In this meaning, political power can also manifest itself in one pseudo-star; the star, through promotion, receives pseudo-power over the way of life of the masses. By entering the stage during the show, they get rid of their own qualities to represent the highest values of virtues and talents, which are admirable in people's consciousness.

 $^{^{57}}$ Peraldus Vices and Virtues, < https://www.bl.uk/IllImages/Kslides%5Cbig/K066/K066090.jpg> [Accessed: 20.08.2019].

The most complete representation of a knight and his imagery can be observed in the work of a French Dominican, William Perault. The figure of a Christian knight is in my opinion the most accurate portrayal of the Middle Ages, the Catholic rendering of a soldier with multiple assigned symbols. This painting compares the seven deadly sins⁵⁸, presented as seven demons on the left side, to the seven Cardinal virtues⁵⁹ on the right. The virtues are sent as a gift from the Holy Spirit in the form of doves in the sky, constituting the answers to the sins. The knight appears accompanied by the virtues, almost swathed in them. He rides a horse, holding a shield, which symbolically stands for the Shield of the Trinity, also called a Shield of Faith, representing theological virtues⁶⁰.



61 With the development of human consciousness, religious fracture was progressing. In the continuous separation of painting from religion it is possible to observe the return of the army and the soldier, gradually separating from the image of a knight and idea. An example of a painting indicating this stratification are the military scenes inscribed in over 112 miniatures in "Froissart", a work that belonged to a Middle Age

courtier, a bibliophile and a soldier Lewis de Bruges. These Froissarts are the first example of the representation of the army in the Middle Ages from the secular perspective. The aforementioned work presents a soldier as an ordinary man.

⁵⁸ Seven Deadly Sins – the Catholic basic classification of human sins and flaws from which all others originate.

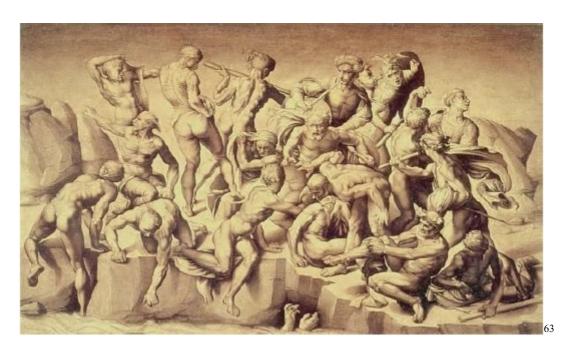
⁵⁹ The cardinal virtues are a concept in the theology of the Christian religion constituting human virtues of crucial significance. In modern teaching of the Catholic Church, they are characterised by prudence, justice, moderation, fortitude.

⁶⁰ The theological virtues are a concept in the theology of the Christian religion referring to the virtues of faith, hope and love.

⁶¹ Battle of Nicopol aftermath, https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/4/44/
Battle_of_Nicopol_aftermath_Thr_masacreofthecristians_revenge_for_rahova_massacre.jpg>
[Accessed: 20.08.2019].



The San Romano Battle – symbol and allegory for the first time were used in painting in relation to the portrayal of the army. The artist has obtained this result by painting the spears in the arrangement of a chessboard. The masters are presented on white horses, whereas other soldiers are riding on black destriers. The symbol of a weapon and a chessboard becomes an allegory in this case, for the usage of the tool – a weapon, regarding the intentions of its owner, could serve to kill as well as to have fun.



Michelangelo in his sketch "La Batalla de Cascina" renders a battle scene, depriving the soldiers of their chivalry, religious symbols, equalising them to ordinary men possessing

⁶² San Romano Battle,

https://pl.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Plik:San_Romano_Battle_(Paolo_Uccello,_London)_01.jpg [Accessed: 20.08.2019].

⁶³ La batalla de Cascina,

https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/a/a2/La_batalla_de_Cascina_-_Sangallo.jpg [Accessed: 25.08.2019].

weapons. This was the first work to disrobe the army of its chivalry and religion, strengthening its image as a separate being. Each of the figures is looking in a different direction, representing selfhood of an individual.

The aforementioned paintings will result in the awareness of human figures, their expression, body position, research on the human and its individuality, because artists of the renaissance have proved their skills in portraying positions, particularly in battle scenes. They have also subjected the army to meaning interpretation and assigned various symbols and allegories to it.

Szymon Boguszowicz, an obscure painter, at the beginning of the 17th century, was the first artist to create a grand painting of "The Battle of Klushino".



The painting is to this day a significant iconographic source. It depicts a battle, portraying the armies as dense groups in a realistic way that seems to represent the reality accurately, almost from the perspective of a reporter. One may say that nowadays we would use a shot similar to this in order to document a battle from a drone. The consciousness of documenting was born.

65 During the Napoleonic Wars nationalism gradually developed, whereas painting was a rough, dramatic political topic and embodiment of the artist's persona. Grand, expressional canvas regarding contemporary political

nem [The Battle of Klushino], media.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/2/25/Battle_of_Klushino_1610.PNG/1920px-1610.PNG> [Accessed: 25.08.2019].

Shiwa pod Somosierrą [Battle of Somosierra], https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/b/b0/ Battle_of_Somosierra_by_Piotr_Micha%C5%82owski.PNG> [Accessed: 25.08.2019]. events were created. These works were painted much more often than ever. It was connected with multiple commissions of such work for public institutions. Apart from the complicated, expressional human forms, the mood presented by the means of colour was significant. In the 19th century, in Paris Salon, a new artistic movement was created – military painting. Military and battle art caused the discontent of the London Royal Academy, whereby English artists have only circled around the battle painting, without coming into direct contact with it.



Over time, together with the 19th-century battle painting, the photography was developing, divesting painting of its documentary function. One of the first military photographs is the work by Carol Szathmari, depicting the Turkish soldiers on the battlefield in Krym in 1854.

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⁶⁶ Jan Matejko Bitwa pod Grunwaldem [Battle of Grunwald],
https://pl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bitwa_pod_Grunwaldem#/media/
Plik:Jan_Matejko,_Bitwa_pod_Grunwaldem.jpg> [Accessed: 25.08.2019].



Polish artist Artur Żmijewski in 2000 has presented the army through stripping 8 soldiers and their commander and providing them with weapons similar to those portrayed on the Battle Between Archers from 7000 BC. He equipped them with tools, which meaning is transferred somehow from Uccello – it kills, but could also serve as a toy, a mean of entertainment. The soldiers are singing cantos, performing drills and therefore show symptoms of patriotism. However they are aware of the camera's presence, they perform exercises without uniforms, naked on request of the artist, and therefore in a different manner than usual. They realise that the scene is enacted.



⁶⁷ Omar Pacha with his aide de camps,

https://www.rct.uk/collection/2500622/omar-pacha-with-his-aide-de-camps [Accessed: 25.08.2019].

⁶⁸Artur Żmijewski KRWP, http://artmuseum.pl/pl/filmoteka/praca/zmijewski-artur-krwp?age18=true [Accessed:25.08.2019].



In the film of an Israeli video artist, Omer Fasta, "5000 Feet is the Best" of 2011, the figure of a contemporary, modern soldier is presented. He is an ordinary man, living in his country, neighbourhood, living everyday life in his house. The duty of saving his homeland



⁷⁰for him is a work, which he performs in a hotel room. Using his computer he controls unmanned military aerial weapon called a drone, which is in the other end of the world. The artist demonstrates, that the contemporary figure of a soldier is impossible to grasp.



⁶⁹ *ibid*.

⁷⁰ Omer Fast, 5000 Feet Is The Best, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K-8dW1dg7KY [Accessed: 25.08.2019].

⁷¹ *ibid*.



The image of a soldier has strongly rooted in our culture. Beginning with portraying them as figures with bows, through a person in an organised unit serving a commander. A horse-riding, armoured warrior has turned into a knight, representing multiple symbolic meanings and becoming an idealised role-model for the whole community. Subsequently deprived of his holiness and idealisation, he fought as an ordinary man in the name of nationalist ideas, whereas his portrayals were based on emphasising the surrounding mood and individualisation through the presentation of his face and clothing. Finally, the fights in which a soldier participated were documented by means of reporting, recording battles as early as in the 19th century through photography instead of painting. Artur Žmijewski using a video, therefore a photographic mean, deprived the soldier of his anonymity, exposing his individual body in a similar way to Michelangelo's sketch. Omer Fast has presented a soldier as a person incorporated into the modern technological system, resulting in a loss and invisibility of his image in the world, whereas the only depiction of the battle is visible from the perspective of a weapon, that still can be a tool to play with or kill with, which was already pointed by Uccello.

A soldier constitutes an inseparable part of the language, his image is strongly rooted in the most significant historical representations. It was indissolubly connected with allegory and its symbol – the weapon, without which it cannot exist. Therefore the image of a soldier can be a topic for the diploma dissertation.

4. Relationship between the herring and the soldier

Hereinabove I have proven that both the image of a herring and of a soldier are significant elements of the culture, strongly rooted in art and social consciousness. Through looking at the world and the surrounding reality from the perspective of symbolic meaning,

⁷² ibid

familiarising myself with an arsenal of characters and paintings (foremost with painters, great creators, historical people), increasing the quantity of asked questions regarding the existing art as well as through seeking the answers to the issues that concern me in the works and records of the lives of artists, I have understood the function of allegory. By the means of increasing the scope of my actions behind the walls of the Academy, through personal and email contact with the artists, creating new networks, increasing the pace of the viewed art, getting to know it from the distance as well as experiencing it, directly expressing my own feelings, broadening my knowledge in the field of psychotronics, burnishing my head in terms of articulating perception with meaningful and symbolic terms and simultaneously observing the world carefully, I have obtained agility in combining meanings of apparently distant things and gravity of respecting visions.

One of my visions was darkness, from which a school of fish emerged. It was right above myself, but I could not change my position to see it clearly. My physical sight did not see anything, could not notice anything in the darkness, and yet it felt something beyond, something it could not grasp. In this impasse, another consciousness was born. Only the capability to "observe from the side", look at myself from above and thus "by the means of consciousness", was able to notice that, unfortunately ambiguously. I did not see myself, my body, as I did not exist – I was approaching. The only thing I saw was small, luminescent beans in formation, emerging from the darkness. They were glowing perfectly, like a roe abandoned in the bottom of a desert; as I debonded another sense, I saw something different. It was a horde of still, pale and emaciated fish, with shining camo colours along their spines. I inhaled, I knew that only art can overtake speech, explain a vision.

I feel and see many relations between them that I cannot explain completely, using the language available to me at the moment, but I can use specific optics.

Both figures – that of a herring and of an army, contain symbolic, iconographical meaning, they are present in the culture, art, everyday life, they are totemic. Herrings are salty, soldiers can be salty as well when they sweat. The army of Genghis Khan usually relieved themselves on the horseback, in the historical sources it is recorded that they smelled like bad herrings. Herrings are packed in cans, a soldier is in armour, always has something made of metal or is inside the tank, he can also be locked in a can (American English for

prison) without any opportunity to get out, just like the packed herring fillets in Lidl⁷³. "The fish likes to swim", as Polish saying goes, and the soldiers drink a lot. A herring in the crust – soldiers in a social crust. These are the first connotations combining the figure of a herring and that of a soldier that are clear to most of the people, now let us look deeper, through the prism of a symbol. Deep waters nowadays connote only with a political situation. The territorial extension of a herring is unbelievably corresponding to the areas, where the omnifarious politics thrive. At daytime, herrings scavenge closer to the bottom and at night time they are closer to the moon, so they float under the power of light. From the Mountains of the Moon (Pyrenees)⁷⁴ to the archipelago of Novaya Zemlya (Severny Island)⁷⁵.



Word has it that herrings are gifted with a "social sense", what it could possibly mean? Let us take a closer look. Herrings in the shoal are organizing as a group, therefore they have consciousness, their structure meaning a language, relationships, common goals, a method for organisation common for all. Just like the army in its structure has a hierarchy, submission and conquering system. The military, trained to survive on the battlefield, have to be

 $^{^{73}}$ Lidl – a variety chain shop.

⁷⁴ Pyrenees - mountain chain on the Spanish-French border.

⁷⁵ Northern islands - islands belonging to Russia by the Kara Sea, also known as the world's largest radioactive waste disposal site.

⁷⁶ Mapa występowania [Occurance map],

https://pl.wikipedia.org/wiki/%C5%9Aled%C5%BA_oceaniczny#/media/Plik:Clupea_harengus_ma pa.svg> [Accessed: 25.08.2019].

completely physically fit – there is no place for disabled, as well as in the shoal, in nature, the law of survival functions. The whole power of a fish is in its tail. In offensive and in defense, both an army with the soldiers and a shoal of herrings acts intelligently. They defend, organise in formations. Attack on the shoal is not an ordinary attack of other fish – a predator on the weak, as it happens in nature. Herrings have developed a similar system to that of warfare, for offence – defense. For decades, centuries, the formation has been determined how to act during an attack. If the driving force of defense is stronger than that of offence, then the advantage of defense is much more significant than one could imagine. That often results in retention in the predator's offence and loss of willingness to attack. The creation of this difference consumes and overwhelms the opponent.

Both soldiers and herrings practice their exact positions in the formation. Under the danger, herrings from columnar movement form expansion line, a particular formation from which it is possible to head in any direction. Thus they form a slant. They often form whirlpools, tornadoes, beautiful, breathtaking, complicated and fluent systems, expanding their awareness to all sides. In a shoal, the first fish takes over the command and responsibility for the whole large group. In the blink of an eye, the commanding fish knows the position of the shoal and its location, whereas the knowledge of the position of the opponent is based only on uncertain messages, its actions have to be predicted in a very short time. The knowledge regarding the way of movement of a particular opponent must be drawn from the observation. Therefore the herring has to think logically and bear the burden of responsibility.

Both herring and soldier have a great tendency to overestimate the enemy rather than underestimate them. It is in animal nature. The power of will is a foundation created in the collective minds – if it is possible to talk about anything collective. More powerful motives make it stronger and, as we know, this tendency itself is a product of strength. Both herrings and soldiers only take their formation when the signal "Danger" reaches them. The emotion that becomes activated during the realisation of such situation is courage, although observing it with scepticism we can reconcile it with a wise calculation. What else is left, when their visual field is limited? Through aspects such as the strength of sight, scale, transparency, level of lighting, the herring in a shoal has a limited visual field.

Therefore could one say that a herring is courageous?

After all, it is said that the fish only sees the bait, but does not see the hook. In the army, among soldiers there is no place for pseudo-courage, manifested through such features as belief in risk, audacity, impudence, odds. Moreover, the herrings had to gain awareness that not every attack is regular and fast enough for immediate distribution, on the contrary, it is a manifestation of strength that does not spread equally and evenly, especially when it comes to a single unit like a predator. Often just the pressure of their formation is enough to push the predator away and change his attack into awaiting. Their formation comes in a given mathematical order, once faster, once longer in order to give it another direction over time and thus subject it to the consciousness of the intellect leading it.

Constant life in order, according to the rules, standing at attention, facing the possibility of being attacked from multiple sides and keeping in line with accordance to the same rules that were obeyed by predecessors, who brought them forth. In the hike forward, like arrows penetrating unknown lands, for which they have to be prepared. The rules to which they were born, according to which they live and die. Existence held on the thin line of life, that can be ripped during an opponent's attack. So operating in formation or shoal is not only a defense of one's own existence but also protection of a whole species, inalienable law. A shoal is a homeland of the fish, they protect it, they are born to it and within it they die. In a shoal they perform grand, complicated positions, in which we observe a significant strain, obedience, unswerving loyalty, factors that escalate this action. They are ruled by strain, speed, rapidity. The soldiers have to accommodate their psyche and body to life in the army. During the training, they push various interior limits, for instance, individuality. It happens during every step, beginning with the introduction of military language called jargon. It consists of specific vocabulary. And so squad means army, joe stands for a soldier, ham and claymores describe a meal and boots and utes mean a uniform. Soldiers are trained to have low self-esteem in order to flatten their moral compasses and temporal values. Do professional soldiers have moral compasses at all? Perhaps they are as flat as spines of the fish? A soldier should not think on his own, he should indiscriminately follow orders; he should have no self-esteem and be an extension of the commander's will. On the other hand, the soldier himself cannot be reckless, which on a battlefield could lead to a disaster on a

personal and even populational scale. In front of a soldier there is always a weapon, he follows it – just like a fish follows its muzzle – an executive weapon. And as it is commonly said, if you smoke fish too much, it will be dry.

Is it possible to say that there is politics in the ocean's water?

It is certain that in the ocean, as well as on the whole planet, there are many possible types of interaction between species. Life in constant alertness is not favourable to the development of consciousness, or even the development of being aware of having this consciousness. The ability of rapid reflection is intensified when the fish conclude about the enemy's action by looking at their character, size, type and surrounding conditions. Constant exercise of the body does not aid exercise of the spirit, the pressure in a shoal, as well as in the army, is put on perfection in using one's body in order to survive. Therefore, the meaning of the development of consciousness is so insignificant that it is no longer a value.

"The fish don't need to know why they're in the water."

- Marty Rubin⁷⁷

As research shows, it is the survival that constitutes the main reason why people join the army. There is a saying that the head is what rots first in the fish, before everything else – "a fish rots from the head down". During writing this dissertation many questions have arisen in my head, as well as many doubts. Fortunately, I have encountered a poem by Wisława Szymborska, in which the author seems to combine the image of a herring with that of a human, including a soldier.

In Heraclitus' River

In Heraclitus' river

a fish fishes for a fish,

a fish quarters a fish with a sharp fish,

a fish builds a fish, a fish lives in a fish,

a fish escapes from a beseiged fish.

In Heraclitus' river

77 Marty Rubin – Polish translation: "Ryby nie muszą wiedzieć dlaczego są w wodzie."

a fish loves a fish,
your eyes – says she – glitter like fishes in the sky,
I want to swim together with you to the common sea,
oh, most beautiful of the school of fish.

In Heraclitus' river
a fish invented a fish beyond fish,
a fish kneels before a fish, a fish sings to a fish,
asks a fish for an easier swim.

In Heraclitus' river
I, the sole fish, I, a fish apart
(say, from the fish tree and the fish stone)
at certain moments tend to write small fish
in silver scales so briefly,
that could it be the darkness is winking in embarrassment?

Wisława Szymborska (1997)⁷⁸

I figure that most animals do not experience dreams, in which they imagine certain things as people do. I do not think they are dreaming about anything at all. In my opinion, the development of fantasies and dreams ensues from art. I do not have any evidence to support that statement, but that is what I feel. We as humans have developed dreaming, we dream about ambiguous, impossible, symbolic and allegorical things, often unviable in the real world, but because of that, because of these dreams, our creativity crosses the borders of our existence.

As artists, we tend to willingly reside in the imagination and by means of that imagination, we explore the concept of fate, happiness, the uncertainty of a feeling. The unknown and unexplored thing attracts us to the search, through which we can perfect ourselves and create new layers of the consciousness of existence.

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⁷⁸ W rzece Heraklita [In Heraclitus' River – translation by Joanna Trzeciak], https://poezja.org/wz/Szymborska_Wis%C5%82awa/60/W_rzece_Heraklita [Accessed: 25.08.2019].

5. Does this dissertation meet the criteria for written theses on the Academy of Art?

No, the presentation of the relationship between a herring and a soldier does not constitute a standardised diploma dissertation on the Academy of Art in Szczecin. This possibility is restricted by complicated formal requirements. Also, a herring and a soldier apparently do not have anything in common, neither for a student of the Academy of Art nor for a person not involved in art. In the described relationship I have not stated a research question, I have not defined the aim of the thesis, characteristics of the object of research or any related research methods. There are no extensive analysis and clear conclusions. One could have the impression that the whole thesis about the relationship between a herring and a soldier was written without prior consideration of formal requirements, style, language. Occasionally characteristic vagueness of the dilatation may reflect the elusiveness of the creative process.

This dissertation was most significantly an attempt to describe a vision, in which a painting was created. An attempt to transfer a painting into a text while at the same time explaining the imagined sense of a mentioned vision, which in a wider perspective is based mainly on the transfer of intuition, reaches to the description of personal feelings and my whole interior knowledge, images created in my dreams and viewed by my eyes, where everything connects at once. Nevertheless, the topic of my dissertation was the following question:

Is it possible to write a bachelor's thesis about mutual relations between herring and soldier?

Regarding the specific optics, connecting the concepts and knowledge with which I am operating as a student of the Academy of Art, including:

- the description of concepts of allegory, symbol and iconography,
- thorough analysis of the presentation of the image of a herring in art, society and broadly understood culture,
- thorough analysis of the presentation of the image of the army (in art and society);

considering discretion in the choice of topics at the university and the system of writing dissertations at other artistic universities I conclude that it is possible to write a diploma dissertation about mutual relations between a herring and the army.

Both a herring and a soldier are strongly rooted and present in the culture. And what is culture itself?

A culture is a form of social contact, facilitating human interactions and filling them with content, orienting human actions and evaluating them. Without culture there would not be any interactions between individuals, there would be no activists. The most important in culture are values. They constitute the base of its existence and development. Every cultural phenomenon embodies a value, respected by the human. The world of culture is the world of values. In the cultural reference, values exist outside individuals. The individuals meet them, experience and exteriorise them or not, and if they consider them to be their own, they pursue them in their own way. Cultural values often demand sacrifices and renunciation from individuals, yet give them an experience of happiness and benefit.⁷⁹

Considering the concept of culture as a system and symbolic communication towards this system, it involves the existence of objects of communication. These objects are the images of a herring and a soldier. The culture is always someone's culture. It is the human subjects that crate it, communicate and express themselves through it.

However, the dissertation goes deeper than that. Despite constituting mainly theoretical work, its beginning consists of a description of performed experiments. This experiment was a questionnaire regarding the definition of a problem in writing diploma dissertations at artistic universities. It indicates that students of artistic subjects, despite various opinions about them, in the society not connected to art are considered to be unintelligible. Except for the outcomes of the questionnaire, I have provided examples of comments under the recording of a performance from a social media website and the image of art as incomprehensible, preserved by the mass media in a form of advertisement.

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The majority of us, painting students, interprets the world in a nonverbal way, we learn it in a polisensory way, we have a developed intuition and high sensitivity regarding the surrounding reality. That means we operate with images created in our minds more efficiently than with words. The fossilised university system damages our abilities. In painting the truth is synthetic, it abandons insignificant details in order to show the truth of essence, a particular situation, history. Painting is not a medium that explains concepts, it is a medium that creates in the other person.

On the 31st of August 2017, an article was issued in *Gazeta Prawna* about the fact that the Ministry of Science wants to abolish diploma dissertations⁸⁰. One of the commenting parties stated that this idea could work in terms of practical studies, for instance, painting. Unfortunately, the issue went silent as soon as it was raised. The vast requirements regarding diploma dissertations completely discourage students from writing, especially students of a free artistic movement. Formal requirements do not leave space for exteriorising many items approximated in the thesis, they equalise creativity of a student to the ability to conclude, using examples provided by others and proper usage of a closed system, namely the language. Therefore, there is not much space for creating new things, which results in the impediment of an artistic dilatation.

Unfortunately, everyone wants to seal the artists in the formal requirements. Ordinary viewers of art recorded on a YouTube video as well as the universities. Writing a dissertation by the students means destroying their creativity, as they are obliged to obey strict rules. After all, from the society's point of view, an artist is a free person, thinking outside the system, a creator of a new reality, who goes beyond the convention; beyond thinking. A human being that perceives the world in a realistic way, without considering symbols, cannot write such dissertation. An attempt that I have taken, forced by the system, could be an attempt to struggle with myself, and if I struggle with myself, am I a real artist?

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⁸⁰ Prace dyplomowe nieobowiązkowe. Zamiast nich może być egzamin,

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