

*(Un)concealing the Hedgehog* is a study of experimental modernist and postmodernist American poetry through the lens of the so-called "poetheories" of Jacques Derrida and Roland Barthes. The metaphor informing the title originates from Derrida's famous essay "Che cos'è la poesia?," in which the French philosopher compares a poem to a hedgehog – prickly, solitary, untamed, fragile and self-protective, rolling itself up into a ball at the first sign of danger or when in the hands of an intruder. Derrida locates his hedgehog on a highway, which exposes it to the multiple perils of the world, including our attempts to tame it in our renewed efforts of reading and interpretation. The book explores the rich implications of this metaphor for the poets of High Modernism, such as William Carlos Williams, Wallace Stevens, Gertrude Stein, Marianne Moore, and Mina Loy, as well as for contemporary poets – Susan Howe, A.R. Ammons, Rosmarie Waldrop, Bruce Andrews, Charles Bernstein and Ellen Hinsey. The critical theories, treated here as a discourse parallel to that of poetry, serve to reveal the major tensions and interpretive powers hidden within the enigmatic script of modernist and postmodernist poetic practice: the increasingly strained and critical relationship between art and the world, and the equally problematic relationship between poetry and its readers.

"*(Un)concealing the Hedgehog* by Paulina Ambroży joins a series of Polish treatises on American poetry, initiated at the turn of the 1970s by Andrzej Kopcewicz's *Funkcja obrazu w strukturze wiersza* and *Poezja amerykańskiego Południa*, Marta Sienicka's *The Making of a New American Poem*, and Teresa Truszkowska's dissertation on the Romantic roots of Stevens' poetry (...). Similarly, Ambroży's monograph (...) is testimony, and certainly not the last one, to an ongoing interest in poetry."

(from the review by prof. Marek Wilczyński)

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ISBN 978-83-232-2483-9

ISSN 0554-8144



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and Contemporary Critical Theories



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