

Introduction

This volume gathers together a series of articles by widely appreciated researchers who accepted the challenge to tackle issues associated with meaning in various areas of human activity. They cover a broad thematic scope: from philosophical reflection on the meaning of the activities of individuals within the existential approach, all the way to the influence of purpose on communicative activities in various areas (politics, business, arts), which modifies the notion of meaning. Individual researchers decided on the objects of their studies and the methods they applied. As a result, their studies cover a wide range of issues and various perceptions of different phenomena. Some of the authors discussed phenomena which are currently developing, while others discussed selected problems from the historical perspective.

The collected articles are divided into four sections. The theoretical and methodological section opens with a text by Aleksy Awdiejew, which is devoted to the theory of meaning formulated in reference to human communicative activities. Using numerous examples, Grażyna Habrajska discusses the procedure, based on the methodology of communicational grammar, of complementing communicative meanings to which perfective predicates refer. Jan Pleszczyński focusses on the phenomenon of the “rationmorphism of meaning” and concludes that in modern communication meanings are increasingly determined by technorationmorphism, which is devoid of culturally conditioned axiology. Jakub Z. Lichański considers whether a speaker violates a stabilised reference, the tools of rhetoric can be useful in the process of seeking meaning. Marek Ostrowski discusses the difficulties in seeking the meaning of multi-code communications, while perceiving meaning itself as the result of the combining and layering of semiospheres.

The second thematic section consists of studies on the practices of social communication. Zbigniew and Szymon Nęckis assume that a situation can be understood by different people in different ways, which is why they present different reactions and engage in different activities in the practice of business communication. The problem of understanding communication is also discussed

by Elżbieta Laskowska, who analyses the essence of the fairness of understanding. The article by Wiesław Czechowski is devoted to a communication-based analysis of the 'bez sensu' [pointless, meaningless] phraseme, Anita Filipczak-Białkowska reflects on whether the phenomenon of a standard interpretation exists, and Anna Barańska-Szmitko seeks an answer to the question of what the image-related significance of the application of gesticulation has for the communication of one's image. Rafał Leśniczak presented his conclusions from an analysis of the curricula of journalism and social communication majors at selected Polish universities. The section of the collection devoted to communication practices concludes with an important text by Mariusz Wszolek, which constitutes a counterbalance to the previous discussions. According to this researcher, the outcomes of a creative process, including of communication, are always unpredictable from the point of view of the consequences of activities and project achievements, which is why one must abandon them and focus on efficiency. Instead he proposes the concept of high-efficiency communication.

The third section consists of a series of articles devoted to notions related to art. Mariusz Bartosiak indicates the dissonance between the notion of meaning perceived as a subjective phenomenon and the notion of reference which must be understood as a specific verifiable reference to discursive objectivised knowledge. He also emphasises the importance of active participation in the culture (broadly understood). The difference between the subjective sense of meaning and meaning as an objective category also resonates in Włodzimierz Adamiak's article. His intention is to establish the value of participation in art activities. Zofia Władyka-Łuczak discusses the process of seeking the hidden content enclosed in works of art. Finally, Krzysztof Ozga's text describes the specifics of the ASMR method, which is a kind of a therapeutic influence through sounds.

The historically perceived phenomenon of dictatorship discussed within the contexts of media studies and communication studies was the focus of the authors of the texts collected in the fourth section. In its cultural policy towards its own citizens, dictatorship exerts influence on individuals and their socio-cultural conformity. Therefore, a major issue in this field is the context of the historical and cultural policies of dictatorships: in the Polish People's Republic (PRL), the DDR, the Third Reich, and the USSR, to name the major ones. The first two texts of this section focus on the area of literature: Marek Rajch analyses the works of Henryk Sienkiewicz, a Nobel Prize laureate, whose works were verified by the DDR's censorship, while Andrzej Wicher studies the possible sources of inspiration for Orwell's concept of Newspeak presented in *Nineteen Eighty-Four: A Novel*. The next text is an article by Dorota Suska, which analyses the style of Polish samizdat press pieces in the late-1970s, which provide a textual record of the independent discourse of that period. Marek Ostrowski discusses the principles of the PRL's

cultural policy towards the DDR, Anita Grzegorzewska's text addresses the topic of good manners in the PRL based on the examples of the children's and young adult press of the time, while Krzysztof Grzegorzewski studies the phenomenon of anti-alcohol propaganda in *Polska Kronika Filmowa* (Polish Film Chronicle) films produced by WFDiF. In an extremely engaging article, Jakub Z. Lichański focusses on *The City of Man* initiative, while Rafał Leśniczak discusses the political discourse of Chancellor Angela Merkel. Finally, Rafał Siekiera focusses on the problem of socialist propaganda in the Polish sports press of 1950–1959.

We believe that our readers will find these articles interesting, that they will help them to reflect on the discussed phenomena, and inspire them to personally grasp the cores of the issues.