A Minor Apocalypse

Tadeusz Konwicki

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On Global Justice Amid warnings of the earth’s end Peter encounters the Anthropos-Spectre-Beast and travels with the Investigator Dog on mysterious trips into the Universe.

Awaiting Apocalypse No End in Sight offers a critical analysis of Polish cinema and literature during the transformative late Socialist period of the 1970s and 1980s. Anna Krakus details how conceptions of time, permanence, and endings shaped major Polish artistic works. She further demonstrates how film and literature played a major role in shaping political consciousness during this highly-charged era. Despite being controlled by an authoritarian state and the doctrine of socialism, artists were able to portray the unsettled nature of the political and psychological climate of the period, and an undetermined future. In analyzing films by Andrzej Wajda, Krzysztof Kieslowski, Krzysztof Zanussi, Wojciech Has, and Tadeusz Konwicki alongside Konwicki’s literary production, Anna Krakus identifies their shared penchant to defer or completely eschew the ultimate price. Their successors? Advocates of free knowledge like Aaron Swartz, of free software like Richard Stallman, of an enlightened public television and radio network like James Killian, of a freer Internet like Tim Berners-Lee, of fuller rights and freedoms like Edward Snowden. All have been striving to secure for us a better world, marked by the right balance between state, society, and private gain. The concluding section of the book, its largest piece, builds on their work, drawing up a progressive agenda for how today’s free thinkers can band together now to fight and win. With everything shut and everyone going online, The New Enlightenment and the Fight to Free Knowledge is a rousing call to action that expands the definition of what it means to be a citizen in the 21st century.

The Polish Complex A Cruel Theatre of Self-Immolations investigates contemporary protest self-burnings and their echoes across culture. The book provides a conceptual frame for the phenomenon and an annotated, comprehensive timeline of suicide protests by fire, supplemented with notes on artworks inspired by or devoted to individual cases. The core of the publication consists of six case studies of these ultimate acts, controlled by an authoritarian state and the doctrine of socialism, artists were able to portray the unsettled nature of the political and psychological climate of the period, and an undetermined future. In analyzing films by Andrzej Wajda, Krzysztof Kieslowski, Krzysztof Zanussi, Wojciech Has, and Tadeusz Konwicki alongside Konwicki’s literary production, Anna Krakus identifies their shared penchant to defer or completely eschew the ultimate price. Their successors? Advocates of free knowledge like Aaron Swartz, of free software like Richard Stallman, of an enlightened public television and radio network like James Killian, of a freer Internet like Tim Berners-Lee, of fuller rights and freedoms like Edward Snowden. All have been striving to secure for us a better world, marked by the right balance between state, society, and private gain. The concluding section of the book, its largest piece, builds on their work, drawing up a progressive agenda for how today’s free thinkers can band together now to fight and win. With everything shut and everyone going online, The New Enlightenment and the Fight to Free Knowledge is a rousing call to action that expands the definition of what it means to be a citizen in the 21st century.

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illegally, or were received as subservive after the regimes had fallen. Her study challenges common notions of ‘underground’ as an umbrella term for nonconformism. Rather, it depicts it as a sociopoetic reflection of modernity, intimately linked to urban settings, with tropes and aesthetic procedures related to Surrealism, Dadaism, Expressionism, and, above all, pop and counter culture. The author discusses these commonalities and distinctions in Czech, Polish, Slovak, Ukrainian, Russian, and German authors, musicians, and filmmakers. She identifies intertextual relations across languages and generations, and situates her findings in a transatlantic context (including the Beat Generation, Susan Sontag, Neil Young) and the historical framework of Romanticism and modernity (including Baudelaire and Brecht). Despite this wide brief, the book never loses sight of its core message: Underground is no arbitrary decontextualization, but rather the result of a fundamental conflict at the socio-philosophical roots of modernity.

Contemporary World Fiction The second part of this multi-volume project assembles a series of recollections and debates on the Ukrainian revolutions of 1990, 2004, and 2013–2014. After an introduction to the methodology of oral history, it presents twenty interviews with participants and eyewitnesses of the events in Ukraine, and documents a series of workshop discussions conducted at a symposium held in 2017. In these workshops, activists and observers of each of the three revolutions exchanged and compared their memories, analyses, and evaluations. This volume thus not only provides a comprehensive collection of firsthand accounts of the three historic Ukrainian upheavals, but also reveals the interrelations between them. The volume documents assessments from Barbara Krauz-Mozer, Markiyan Ivashchyshyn, Natalya Klymovska, Vitalii Kopylov, Yuliya Tymoshenko, Sr. Anna Lesniak, and Jacek Saryusz-Wolski.

The Autobiography of Joseph Stalin “We live, as we dream—alone,” Conrad revealed in “Heart of Darkness.” This novel by Tadeusz Konwicki, a Pole writing in his own language, is an extension of the theme of dream and life and their interlocking realities, and man’s attempt to come to meaningful and personal terms with an existential and absurd universe. The artist (in the Camusian sense) is shown at the opening of the novel just coming out of a coma, having tried to commit suicide by poison. He is surrounded by provincial townsfolk, villagers who in their isolation and emotional impoverishment have turned their energies to creating a new religion—a private, God, non-identifiable as either Christian or non-Christian. Called “one of the most terrifying novels in postwar Polish literature, greeted upon its appearance (in 1963) as a major literary sensation” (Czeslaw Milosz, “History of Polish Literature”), *the novel moves through a series of flashbacks between present reality and recalled experiences. The language is that of a dream sequence with metaphors of nightmarish quality, both in intensity and “illogic.” The young Pole who narrates his experiences reveals himself to be caught up in a labyrinth leading nowhere, driven by an urge which ultimately is a need for punishment, and represents man’s longing for a responsive and benevolent force over his destiny. Acutely feeling the lack, faced with a godless universe, he sees his choice to be between selfassertive survival at any price—moral, sensual, intellectual—or the selfpronouncement of worthlessness and the denouement of peace attained by suicide. The hero “escapes” death and is condemned to death-in-life. Konwicki’s descriptions of the brutal mutual massacres of some of the war experiences of the narrator are unforgettable in their irony. The dialogue is witty and ironic, and retains the vernacular thrust of the Polish original. The author’s experience as director and script writer earned him a Grand Prix (1958) at Venice for a film entitled “The Last Day of Summer.” His vivid awareness of the passing values in an increasingly superficial world of interrelationships and goals makes this passionate work a powerful indictment of modern man’s progress in guilt and war and his impotence in melding his idealistic dreams and his life.

The Politics of Literature This collection of essays aims to recapitulate the state of grotesque poetics in modern and post-modern writing. It concentrates on Central and Eastern Europe, introducing the Western reader to the variety and ingenuity of the region’s literary traditions, ranging from German and Russian to Lithuanian and Romanian literature. At the same time, it seeks to highlight the importance of the grotesque mode of writing in the West. The volume includes new readings of canonical figures such as Mikhail Bakhtin (including but not limited to) in the works of Mikhael Shabalin. The historic scope of the volume ranges from the legacies of the Nazi dictatorship and exile to the post-communist times, but it is especially focused on the Soviet era. Scholars, not only from Central and Eastern Europe, but also from Great Britain, Ireland, and Turkey, analyze the literary devices of the grotesque, examining the relationship between the socio-political and literary subversive representations of the grotesque. Many studies take on a comparative and transnational approach. Alternatively, some studies aim to present important and innovative creators of grotesque texts in greater detail. This book, which features, among others, contributions by Professor Galin T’ihanov, George Steiner Chair of Queen Mary College at the University of London; Professor Alexander Ivanovtsky of the Russian State Institute of University; Professor Aligis Kalėda of the Lithuanian Institute of Literature and Folklore; Professor Peter Arnolds of Trinity College, Dublin; and Dr Carmen Popescu of the University of Craiova, Romania, will appeal to a broad academic readership, including both students and professors wanting to discover more about the literary grotesque and Central and Eastern European literature and culture.

Alternative Theatre in Poland The Polish Complex takes place on Christmas Eve, from early morning until late in the evening, as a line of people (including the narrator, whose name is Konwicki) stand and wait in front of a jewelry store in Warsaw. Through the narrator we are told of what happens among those standing in line outside this store, what happens as the narrator’s mind thinks and rants about the current state of Poland, and what happens as he imagines the failed Polish rebellion of 1863. The novel’s form allows Konwicki (both character and author) to roam around and through Poland’s past and present, and to range freely through whatever comes to his attention. By turns comic, lyrical, despairing, and liberating, The Polish Complex stands as one of the most important novels to have come out of Poland since World War II.

The Anthropos-spectre-beast This text provides a source of citations to North American scholars related specifically to the area of contemporary Europe and the former Soviet Union. It indexes fields of scholarship such as the humanities, arts, technology and life sciences and all kinds of scholarship such as PhDs.

Grotesque Revisited Russians from all walks of life joyously celebrated the end of Nicholas II’s monarchy, but one year later, amid widespread civil strife and lawlessness, a fearful citizenry stayed out of sight. T Sylvia Hasegawa offers a new perspective on Russia’s revolutionary year through the lens of violent crime and its devastating effect on ordinary people.

Dystopian Fiction East and West Sketches and reminiscences describing life on New World Avenue in Warsaw and in the author’s native Wilno, now part of the Soviet Union, are woven together half-playfully, half-seriously to address Polish censorship

A Dreambook for Our Time

100 Great War Movies: The Real History Behind the Films are we to read the world after the fall of the Berlin Wall? Form and Instability brings notions of figuration and translation to bear on the post-1989 condition. “Eastern Europe” in this book is more than a territory. Marked by belatedness and untimely remainders, it is an unstable object that is continually misapprehended. From the intersection of comparative literature, area studies, and literary theory, Anita Starosta considers the epistemological and aesthetic consequences of the disappearance of the Second World. Literature here becomes a critical lens in its own right—both object and method, it confronts us with the rhetorical dimension of language and undermines the ideological and hermeneutic coherence of established categories. In original readings of Joseph Conrad and Witold Gombrowicz, Form and Instability unsettles cultural boundaries as we know them.

The American Bibliography of Slavic and East European Studies for 1994

The Melancholy of Resistance

The first biography of one of the greatest Russians of the twentieth century.

No End in Sight

Innovated by the spatial turn in the humanities and social sciences, Mapping Warsaw is an interdisciplinary study that combines urban studies, cinema studies, cultural studies, history, literature, and photography. It examines Warsaw’s post-World War II reconstruction through images and language, juxtaposing close readings of photo books, socialist-era newsreels called the Polska Kronika Filmowa, the comedies of Leonard Buczkowski and Jan Fethke, the writing and films of Tadeusz Konwicki, and a case study on the Palace of Culture and Science—a “gift” from none other than Stalin—this study investigates the rhetorical and visual, rather than physical, reconstruction of Warsaw in various media and genres. Ewa Wampuszczyk roots her analysis in the historical context of the postwar decade and shows how and why Poland’s capital became an essential part of a propaganda program inspired by communist ideology and the needs of a newly established socialist People’s Republic. Mapping Warsaw demonstrates how physical space manifests itself in culture, and how culture, history, and politics leave an indelible mark on places. It points out ways in which we take for granted our perception of the meanings and places we assign to it.

Bohin Manor

This book serves as a fascinating guide to 100 war films from 1930 to the present. Readers interested in war movies will learn surprising anecdotes about these films and will have all their questions about the films’ historical answers answered. • Applies an internationalist perspective to the war film through entries from countries including Britain, France, Germany, Russia, Australia, Japan, Poland, Finland, and Latvia • Defines great war films as the most artistically accomplished, politically subversive, and thought-provoking, not merely as the most popular or commercially successful, and is therefore a relevant reference for students and film and history buffs • Provides clearly written and informative histories of the films themselves as well as of the cultural context surrounding the making and reception of them • Recounts critical controversies and analyzes the ideological biases implicit in these films in its examination of how the films shaped their source material and what they included, distorted, and added or left out

Bohin Manor

This much-needed guide to translated literature offers readers the opportunity to hear from, learn about, and perhaps better understand our shrinking world from the perspective of insiders from many cultures and traditions.

Bliss was it in Bohemia

A wildly comic story about the fate of a Czech family from the 1960s onward.

Belorussian-Lithuanian world that disappeared by 1945 but survived in the collective memory of the Polish people.

Reflects post-war Polish history, politics, and Sovietisation. In portraying the impact of these changes on people in general and on the intelligentsia in particular, Konwicki recreated the complex Polish-Jewish-

The Economics Anti-Textbook

Highlighting the most important events, ideas, and individuals that shaped modern Europe, A Concise History of Modern Europe provides an overview of the tremendous range and scope of translated world fiction available in English. In so doing, it will help readers get a sense of the vast world beyond North America that is conveyed by fiction titles from dozens of countries and language traditions. Within the guide, approximately 1,000 contemporary non-English-language fiction titles are fully annotated and thousands of others are listed. Organization is primarily by language, as language often reflects cultural cohesion better than national borders or geographies, but also by country and culture. In addition to contemporary titles, each chapter features a brief overview of earlier translated fiction from the group. The guide also provides in-depth bibliographic essays for each chapter that will enable librarians and library users to further explore the literature of numerous languages and cultural traditions. • Over 1,000 annotated contemporary world fiction titles, featuring author’s name; title; translator; publisher and place of publication; genre/literary style/story type; an annotation; related works by the author; subject keywords; and original language • 9 introductory overviews about classic world fiction titles • Extensive bibliographical essays about fiction traditions in other countries • 5 indexes: annotated authors, annotated titles, translators, nations, and subjects/keywords

Pharaoh

The complex nature of the relationship between theatre and politics is explored in this study of the Polish theatre scene. It traces the development of the alternative theatre movement from its origins, in the 1950s, through to its decline in the late 1980s.

Biblical Blaspheming

This book explores the strange persistence of “blasphemy” in modern secular democracies by examining how accepted and prohibited ways of talking and thinking about the Bible and religion have changed over time. In a series of wide-ranging studies engaging disciplines such as politics, literature and visual theory, Yvonne Sherwood brings the Bible into dialogue with a host of thinkers including John Locke, John Donne and the 9/11 hijackers, as well as artists such as Sarah Lucas and RenéMagritte. Questions addressed include: • What is the origin of the common belief that the Bible, as opposed to the Qur’an, underpins liberal democratic values? • What kind of artworks does the biblical God specialise in? • If pre-modern Jewish, Christian and Islamic responses to scripture can be more ‘critical’ than contemporary speech about religion, how does this affect our understanding of secularity, modernity and critique?

Sakharov Feffer provides an incisive historical background to the current political and economic conflicts that are dramatically reshaping daily life in Eastern Europe and offers critical and guardedly hopeful speculation about the future of the region. Feffer draws upon hundreds of interviews he has conducted with the region’s policymakers, trade unionists, grassroots activists, and scholars.

Judge On Trial

“Erika Gottlieb explores a selection of about thirty works in the dystopian genre from East and Central Europe between 1920 and 1991 in the USSR and between 1948 and 1989 in Poland, Hungary, and Czechoslovakia.

The Economics Anti-Textbook

Highlighting the most important events, ideas, and individuals that shaped modern Europe, A Concise History of Modern Europe provides a readable, succinct history of the continent from the Enlightenment and the French Revolution to the present day. Avoiding a detailed, lengthy chronology, the book focuses on key events and ideas to explore the causes and consequences of revolutions—be they political, economic, or scientific; the origins and development of human rights and democracy; and issues of European identity. Any reader needing a broad overview of the sweep of European history since 1789 will find this book, published in a first edition under the title Revolutionary Europe, an engaging and cohesive narrative.

The New World Avenue and Vicinity

This book examines, for the first time in English, the literary work of Tadeusz Konwicki, one of the most popular and widely translated twentieth-century Polish writers whose prose reflects post-war Polish history, politics, and Sovietisation. In portraying the impact of these changes on people in general and on the intelligentsia in particular, Konwicki recreated the complex Polish-Jewish-Belorussian-Lithuanian world that disappeared by 1945 but survived in the collective memory of the Polish people.

Bliss was it in Bohemia

A wildly comic story about the fate of a Czech family from the 1960s onward.

Three Revolutions

Mobilization and Change in Contemporary Ukraine II In these pages, Stalin's psychology is fully revealed, every atom of his madness explored, every twist of his homicidal logic followed to its ruthless conclusion.

The Palace Complex

Judge On Trial

Ivan Kl-ma’s epic novel about those who stayed in Prague after 1968. When middle-aged judge Adam Kindl is asked not only to try a double murder case but is also expected to

ruthless conclusion.
country’s past which has been mis-shapen first by Nazism, then Stalinism, the false hope of the Prague Spring and the collaborationist regime that followed.

Moonrise, Moonset Amid warnings of the earth’s end Peter encounters the Anthropos-Specter-Beast and travels with the Investigator Dog on mysterious trips into the Universe.

History and Politics in Tadeusz Konwicki’s Fiction The current obsession with the ‘end of the millennium’ illustrates the enduring power of the idea of endings. This fascination cannot be simply dismissed as faulty logic, a form of madness, or a primitive survival of childish thinking. Opening a path of understanding between ancient conceptions of meaning and the sceptical predicates of modern science, Awaiting Apocalypse shows how ordinary and extraordinary endings are inherent in the narrative structure of human experience and the sedimentation of that experience as historical meaning.

T he New Enlightenment and the Fight to Free Knowledge Debates about global justice have traditionally fallen into two camps. Statists believe that principles of justice can only be held among those who share a state. Those who fall outside this realm are merely owed charity. Cosmopolitans, on the other hand, believe that justice applies equally among all human beings. On Global Justice shifts the terms of this debate and shows how both views are unsatisfactory. Stressing humanity’s collective ownership of the earth, Mathias Risse offers a new theory of global distributive justice—what he calls pluralist internationalism—where different principles of justice apply. Arguing that statist and cosmopolitans seek overarching answers to problems that vary too widely for one single justice relationship, Risse explores who should have how much of what we all need and care about, ranging from income and rights to spaces and resources of the earth. He acknowledges that especially demanding redistributive principles apply among those who share a country, but those who share a country also have obligations of justice to those who do not because of a universal humanity, common political and economic orders, and a linked global trading system. Risse’s inquiries about ownership of the earth give insights into immigration, obligations to future generations, and obligations arising from climate change. He considers issues such as fairness in trade, responsibilities of the WTO, intellectual property rights, labor rights, whether there ought to be states at all, and global inequality, and he develops a new foundational theory of human rights.

T he Fiction of Tadeusz Konwicki First published in 1895–96 as a serial in the Warsaw Illustrated Weekly, Pharaoh is one of the classic novels of Polish literature. It sets a timeless political drama in ancient Egypt during the fictional reign of Ramses XIII. Representing extensive historical research, this engrossing novel presents a panoramic and unforgettable view of Egyptian statecraft, industry, and social life. This new translation by Christopher Kasparek supersedes an earlier incomplete English version published in 1912.

Mapping Warsaw Mainstream textbooks present economics as an objective science free from value judgements; that settles disputes by testing hypotheses; that applies a pre-determined body of principles; and contains policy prescriptions supported by a consensus of professional opinion. The Economics Anti-Textbook argues that this is a myth - one which is not only dangerously misleading but also bland and boring. It challenges the mainstream textbooks’ assumptions, arguments, models and evidence. It puts the controversy and excitement back into economics to reveal a fascinating and a vibrant field of study - one which is more an ‘art of persuasion’ than it is a science. The Economics Anti-Textbook’s chapters parallel the major topics in the typical text, beginning with a boiled-down account of them before presenting an analysis and critique. Drawing on the work of leading economists, the Anti-Textbook lays bare the blind spots in the texts and their sins of omission and commission. It shows where hidden value judgements are made and when contrary evidence is ignored. It shows the claims made without any evidence of the alternative theories that aren’t mentioned. It shows the importance of power, social context and legal framework. The Economics Anti-Textbook is the students’ guide to decoding the textbooks and shows how real economics is much more interesting than most economists are willing to let on.

A Minor Apocalypse This study of post-war Polish intellectual history analyses the interface between politics and literature under communism. It suggests that it was not the Catholic Church but the writers of the lay-left who were the critics and opponents of Stalinism.

A Cruel Theatre of Self-Immolations In A Minor Apocalypse, Robert Blobaum explores the social and cultural history of Warsaw’s “forgotten war” of 1914-1918. Beginning with the bank panic that accompanied the outbreak of the Great War, Blobaum guides his readers through spy scares, bombardments, mass migratory movements, and the Russian evacuation of 1915. Industrial collapse marked only the opening phase of Warsaw’s wartime economic crisis, which grew steadily worse during the German occupation. Requisitioning and strict control of supplies entering the city resulted in scarcity amid growing corruption, rapidly declining living standards, and major public health emergencies. Blobaum shows how conflicts over distribution of and access to resources led to social divisions, a sharp deterioration in Polish-Jewish relations, and general distrust in public institutions. Women’s public visibility, demands for political representation, and perceived threats to the patriarchal order during the war years sustained one arena of cultural debate. New modes of popular entertainment, including cinema, cabaret, and variety shows, created another, particularly as they challenged elite notions of propriety. Blobaum presents these themes in comparative context, not only with other major European cities during the Great War but also with Warsaw under Nazi German occupation a generation later.

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