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Who Needs the Book? Copyright in the Late Print Epoch

DOI: 10.18318/td.2016.en.2.14

Arguments presented by supporters of strengthening and expanding copyright protection are usually based on the assumption that it would serve the interests of the artists, allowing them to draw more profit from their work. This is the position taken, for instance, by ZAIKS (the Polish Association of Authors and Composers), one of the oldest and most active organizations of collective copyright management: “ZAIKS strives to protect the rights of Polish artists as true creators of Polish culture and the country’s intellectual elite whose presence is a necessary condition for society’s real development.”¹ In fact, the Polish Act on Copyright and Related Rights in Chapter 8, Article 78.1 points to the creator as the copyright holder.²

A systematic study of the literary field in Poland after 1989 suggests, however, the assumption to be wrong as only a small number of writers identify their interests with the successful implementation of copyright protection. Meanwhile, the unauthorized distribution of digitally copied books – commonly referred to as

Maciej Jakubowiak’s research was funded by the National Science Center, conducted in the course of a project *Modern Literature and Copyright Law*. Decision no. DEC-2012/05/N/HS2/02796. Alicja Pałęcka’s research was funded by the National Science Center, conducted in the course of a project *Pierre Bourdieu and Polish Literature after 1989*. Decision no. DEC-2011/01/D/HS2/05129.

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1 “About ZAIKS,” http://www.zaiks.org.pl/88,36,o_zaiks-ie; accessed October 6, 2014.

2 “Act No. 83 of February 4, 1994, on Copyright and Related Rights,” Dz. U. [Journal of Laws] of 1994 No. 24, item 83.

piracy and almost unequivocally criticized by publishing houses – has proven to be a practice regarded positively by the authors themselves. Yet, the assumption that writers and publishers have opposing interests is patently false in the case of the model of printed books, considered by both groups to be fundamental for literature to function. This comes as a surprise in so far as the printed book determines the central paradigm of copyright law based on the concepts of individual ownership and original creation. This article attempts to shed light on this seemingly paradoxical constellation of interests, pointing to different motivations of both groups and the problem of recognizing one's own position within the literary field. We use the book, then, as a mediatory concept for specific interest groups: writers on the one hand, publishers on the other, and their attitude towards copyright protection.

The article uses empirical data gathered as part of a broader research effort entitled *Literatura polska po 1989 roku w świetle teorii Pierre'a Bourdieu* [*Pierre Bourdieu and Polish Literature after 1989*], led by Piotr Marecki.³ The information gathered includes, among others, seventy-four author interviews (conducted with both prose writers and poets). It is not a representative sample, as the focus was on qualitative research and research on communities that are difficult to access. Furthermore, authors constitute a dispersed, inconstant group and therefore it is impossible to determine precisely the proper number of authors in Poland. The sample represents, nonetheless, groups of diverse achievement (with regard not only to the number of published books but also awards and nominations, translations and citations in academic studies) and of varied ages (the oldest respondent was born in the 1930s, the youngest in the 1990s). Interviews were also conducted with seventeen representatives of publishing houses (editors and owners). The sample included possibly a full spectrum of publishing activity in the field of literature: from one-person publishing houses and even non-existent ones which grew out of journals in the 1990s, to those which are middle-sized and relatively specialized, to large publishing houses offering a wide and diverse range of literature.

Our article analyzes excerpts from interviews relevant to the issue of copyright and the phenomena accompanying the shift from the printed book to online literature. Bourdieu's terminology suggested in the title of the research project will serve only as a frame of reference. Our main task here is to describe the process of remediation as seen today in Poland's literary field, and its consequences.

3 Grzegorz Jankowicz, Paweł Marecki, Alicja Pałęcka et al., *Literatura polska po 1989 roku w świetle teorii Pierre'a Bourdieu. Raport z badań* (Kraków: Hałart, 2014).

The Principle of the Book

At least since the 16th century, or since Gutenberg's invention of print, the codex has served as a concept structuring the way people think about writing literature. A book is not simply a medium for literary content. First and foremost, it shapes the basic categories for describing texts and their qualities, such as cohesion, integrity, immutability, individual character, authorship, and so on. Jay David Bolter comments that:

it seems natural to think of any book, written or printed, as a verbal unit. For the book is already a physical unit, its pages are sewn or glued together and then bound into a portable whole. Should not all the words inside proceed from one unifying idea and stand in the same rhetorical relationship to the reader?⁴

In addition, early concepts of copyright protection were based on the codex, as seen clearly in the example of the debate held in Germany in the second half of the 18th century concerning the emerging issue of copyright.⁵ Its participants characteristically always based their arguments on the book as a material object. It was Immanuel Kant and Johann Gottlieb Fichte who first made the distinction between material and immaterial aspects, which served as the first and the most difficult step to justify the need for the legal protection of literary works. Both philosophers were faced with the problem of redefining the concept of the book in a way that would combine the unlimited ownership of the copy purchased by the reader with the projected rights of the author to benefit from the published work and to be protected against illegal reprints.

Kant notes that “[a book] is not a thing which is thereby delivered, but an act [*opera*], namely a speech, and, what is more, literally.”⁶ By introducing a dual meaning of the book – seen as both *opus* and *opera*, an outcome and an act, “an external product of mechanical art (*opus mechanicum*)” and “a discourse of the publisher to the public,”⁷ Kant could propose a rational framework for

4 Jay David Bolter, *Writing Space. Computers, Hypertext, and the Remediation of Print* (New York and London: Routledge, 2010), 10.

5 See Martha Woodmansee, “The Genius and the Copyright: Economic and Legal Conditions of the Emergence of the «Author»,” *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 4 (1984).

6 Immanuel Kant “On the Injustice of Reprinting Books” after Friedemann Kawohl “Commentary on Kant’s essay *On the Injustice of Reprinting Books (1785)*” in *Primary Sources on Copyright (1450-1900)*, ed. Lionel Bently and Martin Kretschmer, www.copyrighthistory.org; accessed May 14, 2015.

7 Kawohl, “Commentary on Kant’s essay *On the Injustice of Reprinting Books (1785)*.”

tackling the abovementioned conflict of interests. Fichte, similarly, introduces the distinction between the physical and the ideational aspect of the book in an attempt to extract from the material object a part that would remain the property of the author regardless of its copy being purchased by the reader.⁸

This example points to three important issues. First, it reveals how deeply rooted the book is in the thinking about literature. Its material qualities transform into metaphors, used in the descriptions of literary discursive practices en bloc. Seen as a closed corpus of text, bound by a cover and with the name of the author and the title printed on it, the book thus determines the basic model of literature.

Second, the problems which the paradigm of the book poses to Kant and Fichte reveal the incompatibility of this seemingly unquestionable model with the literary practices of early modernity. The influence of technological change on the rapid development of the book market, dating from the end of the 18th century,⁹ renders the two-centuries-old book metaphor inadequate for describing the emerging phenomena. Among them was also, to use Kant's formulation, the "unjust reprinting of books," which led to the creation and spread of copyright laws as a tool for protecting the interests of authors and publishers. The analytical acrobatics which both philosophers had to perform are proof that the book had already ceased to be a fully functional metaphor of literature, even though it continues to serve, despite everything, as the primary point of reference.

Third, the legislative movement aimed at regulating the growing book market, together with the economic and technological processes which have transpired since the end of the 18th century, have created strictly modern institutions – publishing houses, distribution companies, bookstores, literary criticism – preserving the influence of the book metaphor on the shape of practices within the literary field. Quoting Maciej Maryl, if "literature in our culture has taken the form of a closed, printed text existing in the context of institutionally determined conventions of reading and writing,"¹⁰ it is necessary to emphasize precisely the institutional adoption of the models which shape the practices within the literary field for the broadly defined methods of distribution and consecration.

8 Johann G. Fichte "Proof of the Illegality of Reprinting: A Rationale and a Parable," in *Primary Sources on Copyright (1450-1900)*, ed. Lionel Bently and Martin Kretschmer, www.copyrighthistory.org; accessed May 14, 2015.

9 Maciej Maryl, "Technologie literatury," *Pamiętnik Literacki* 2 (2012): 171.

10 *Ibid.*, 162.

The analysis presented based on writers' interviews focuses on the extent to which the book has remained a model for the institution of literature. The notion of remediation describes the process where "a newer medium takes the place of an older one, borrowing and reorganizing the characteristics of writing in the older medium and reforming its cultural space."¹¹ What results from this process of remediation, from this evolution of media and forms of communication, is a "reconfiguration of the communication structure, in fact, of the entire cultural order resting upon it."¹² It is precisely the technological change, entailing broader social and cultural transformations, that invalidates the neutrality (or "naturalness") of the book principle, which in turn allows for a critical analysis of its determinants. The social and technological phenomena of today – a time described by Bolter as "the late age of print"¹³ – allow us on the one hand to look into the historical determinants of the institution of literature via the de-naturalized medium of the codex book, and on the other hand, to observe the process of remediation (in other words, of two crashing paradigms of description and literary function) and a critical analysis of the ideologies and interests behind them. The latter will be explored in more detail further in this article.

Remediation

The process of remediation, between the printed book and the digital book, indicates that participants of the literary field are attempting to transfer the qualities of the older medium to the new one – they define and use the new medium while relying upon the categories developed in connection with the older medium. The use of the word "page" to refer to contents presented online is a classic example of this phenomenon.

This article focuses on the remediation between the printed book and the digital one in the context of those principles regulating the literary field and the literary market, in particular with regard to copyright. This includes issues such as the means of distribution, mechanisms of evaluation (also economic evaluation) and the methods of individualizing copies. The basic problem that the publishers are faced with amounts to a distinction between scarce and free goods. Printed books published in certain numbers and constituting material objects clearly belong to the first category. Meanwhile, digital

¹¹ Bolter, *Writing Space*, 23.

¹² Grzegorz Godlewski, *Słowo – pismo – sztuka słowa. Perspektywy antropologiczne* (Warszawa: WUW, 2008), 285.

¹³ Bolter, *Writing Space*, 1.

books, especially due to the minimal costs of reproduction and distribution¹⁴, have the status of being a free good. Thus, as publishers aim at transferring the characteristics of scarce goods to digital books, they use copyright laws as their main tool. Bolter notes, "If technologies really determined cultural values, then the notion of copyright would already have been severely curtailed, if not abolished, at least for electronic publication. Hypertext certainly seems to suggest a different economic and social model."¹⁵ Remediation in this case means applying copyright to control the circulation of digital books and as a consequence, creating economic scarcity not justified by the technical conditions of reproduction. Remediation reveals itself as not only a neutral cultural process but also as a tool used for the protection of interests of a certain social group.

This process takes place for instance in the distribution of electronic books. Although the electronic form of the text allows for distribution through several available channels, in practice (determined by economic interests and legal regulations) the number of distributors of electronic books in Poland is severely limited, mirroring in fact the state of the printed book market. Capital relationships between e-book distributors and the biggest parties of the book market perpetuate and copy the relations associated with the printed book to the digital book market.¹⁶ Reproduction of these relations applies even to the distribution costs which in the case of e-books are proportionally the same as in the case of printed books.¹⁷

One of the publishers surveyed in the research confirmed that electronic distribution by the market's strongest players reflects the distribution model of traditional books. Meanwhile, the costs of printing have been replaced by

14 Chris Anderson, *The Long Tail: Why the Future of Business is Selling Less of More* (New York: Hyperion, 2006), original essay published as „The Long Tail,” *Wired Magazine*, October 2004.

15 Bolter, *Writing Space*, 211.

16 Key distributors of electronic books in Poland include Nexto (part of the Ruch SA group), Virtualo (Empik), Publio (Agora SA) and Woblink (owned by Grupa Wydawnicza Znak). Allegro, Merlin and Platon (one of the biggest distributors of printed books) also have their own platforms for e-book distribution.

17 "When asked how much a publisher of e-books has to pay for distribution, Virtualo dodged the answer citing «trade secrets», but a representative of a Warsaw publishing house revealed to Polskie Radio that the distribution costs look similar for printed and digital books. E-book distribution «devours» between 40% to 50% of the publication costs." (Hanna Uszyńska, "Wiemy dlaczego Polacy przepłacają za e-booki" ["We Know why Poles Pay too Much for E-books] *PolskieRadio.pl* 2013, <http://www.polskieradio.pl/42/259/Artykul/964519,Wiemy-dlaczego-Polacy-przeplacaja-za-ebooki>; accessed July 27, 2014).

a tax on goods and services paid by the publisher, which amounts to 23 percent for e-books and 5 percent for codex books. This reveals the influence of the state on the literary field and on the preservation of the book principle, as the VAT rate on e-books is determined against the interests of the actors in the field, including the readers. Regardless of the size and position of the represented publishing house, responding editors admitted in interviews that the current solutions are “bizarre” and prevent the development of the medium in Poland. Preferential tax rate favors the printed book as a special good requiring protection and popularization, attributing to e-books the status of being an object qualitatively different from the paper medium.

One should not underestimate also the importance of international copyright regulations, such as the Berne Convention (signed for the first time in 1886 and later amended several times, ratified by Poland in 1934), Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) from 1994 and the Treaty of the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO). All of these regulations are closely tied to the economic models dominant in the late capitalism, which suggests that the described mechanism is not a consequence of particular policies of states (including the Polish state) but a global tendency.¹⁸ The interests of the state in maintaining the traditional book market result also from the attempt to preserve an entire economy sector related to print: publishing houses, printing houses, paper production, and so on.¹⁹

However, the policy of the state does not explain fully the strategy of the largest publishers to transfer the traditional distribution model onto online content and, as a consequence, maintaining the principle of the book. Representing their publishing houses, editors themselves are entangled in the book market (different from the literary field). As a result, they discuss the electronic forms mostly in the context of market mechanisms. This logic can

18 Protection of intellectual property, including copyright, is one of the key activities of the World Trade Organization and acceptance of existing regulation is a prerequisite for joining the WTO. See: http://www.wto.org/english/tratop_e/trips_e/trips_e.htm, accessed October 6, 2014].

19 “The Minister [of Finance, in reply to an inquiry of the Commissioner for Human Rights] remarked that even in the event of changes in the EU law, any change in the Polish regulations on the matter would have to be preceded by a study of the impact of such an amendment on the publishing market, to ensure that a lower rate would cause no harm to the traditional book market.” (“Inquiry submitted to the Constitutional Tribunal concerning the difference in VAT rates for printed digital publications.” Office of the Commissioner for Human Rights, 2013, <http://www.sprawny-generalne.brpo.gov.pl/szczegoly.php?pismo=1774751>, accessed October 2, 2014).

be seen even in an interview with the editor of one of the smallest publishing houses participating in the research, one whose business yields negligible profits:

We haven't made such plans yet. Regarding the digital format of our books we rather talked about releasing some [for free] from time to time rather than distributing them at certain prices. We will rather head towards such anarchistic cooperative models which may prove to be more effective. Because there are analyses showing that such content release may generate interest in the traditional form. Sometimes the publishers themselves release their books to, I don't know, *torrent sites* [...] which sometimes animates sales.

It could be argued then that publishers and their special interests shape the global tendencies with regard to the legal regulation of the book market. However, regardless whether it is the state or the publishers' primary interest to maintain the scarcity of produced goods, there is no doubt that their efforts appear to be convergent (as they were at the birth of the modern copyright law²⁰) and are realized using a wide range of copyright protection structurally tied, in the late print period, to the principle of the book.

However, this is not the case when it comes to authors. Their interests, as has been said in the introduction, are usually cited as the key argument for the strengthening of copyright protection. Interviews with writers being analyzed here, as well as a more general analysis of the literary field, clearly suggest that the interests of authors are not identical with the interests of the publishers and do not involve copyright protection or preserving the methods of codex book distribution. Nonetheless, this discrepancy is not reflected in the attitude towards the paradigm of the printed book which remains the basic model determining the ways for evaluating literary production. The following section of the article contains an analysis of the diagnosed discrepancy.

²⁰ This remark is a reference mainly to the general observations made by Michel Foucault in "What is an Author?," in *Language, Counter-Memory, Practice: Selected Essays and Interviews* by Michel Foucault, ed. Donald Bouchard (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1980), 113. More detailed historical inquiries point to, among others, the monopoly of the printing trade granted to the London-based Stationers Company but dependent on the institution's taking the responsibility of acting as censor. See also John Feather "From Rights in Copies to Copyright: The Recognition of Authors' Rights in English Law and Practice in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries," in *The Construction of Authorship: Textual Appropriation in Law and Literature*, ed. Martha Woodmansee and Peter Jaszi (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 1994), 195.

"That Which Really Exists, Exists on Paper"

Generally, two seemingly contradictory tendencies emerge from the interviews with the authors. On the one hand, there is a certain resistance within this group against electronic media and digital forms of literature – a resistance to recognizing the Internet as a medium offering new opportunities, different from the one offered by paper – on the other hand, however, unauthorized distribution of literary texts online ("piracy"²¹) is not usually perceived in negative terms, as it serves certain desirable ends.

Electronic forms of literature were treated with reserve by the majority of respondents. Among fifty-seven opinions where the traditional book was directly compared to the e-book, thirty-two clearly favored paper. Twelve authors unambiguously affirmed the efficacy of electronic forms, while eight respondents were referring only to e-books, often identified as Internet literature.²²

Among the reasons for the codex book preference, the respondents mentioned sensual contact with the object ("The book needs to have its paper, its shape, its smell"), as well as the low demand for e-books (based both on their own experience and intuition), and lack of interest in the subject on account of their habits and tastes; reading a printed book was also compared to a face to face meeting. E-books are thus seen as complementary to paper, and publication only in the electronic form as a source of disappointment. Paper is a necessary element of book distribution.

Such opinions voicing the importance of printed books were accompanied by evaluations of the Internet which are very telling in the context of this analysis: "it's some sort of dump", "those blogs and whatnots also contain a lot of thrash", "there is no filter". Of course, the Internet is a space where every user may receive any type of online content, but it is also a space where they may produce content and share it with millions of other users. This truism has its consequences also for the literary field, regulated by institutions with the power to consecrate and bestow symbolic capital. The Internet seems to be a threat for the traditional mechanisms of distribution and control of literature, and at the same time, it still has not developed its consecration tools, thus remaining subordinate to the mechanisms of another order. Media

21 Although "piracy" as a term is often used neutrally in the public debate, it carries clear axiological connotations and implies a classification of discussed practices as illegal; we have decided avoid the term in order to highlight their complex determinants.

22 Several interviews with respondents possessing additional knowledge concerned also, i.a. blogs, periodicals, and literary portals (Liternet.pl, Nieszufłada.pl, etc.), as well as literary forms specific to the Internet (hypertext, literary games, etc.).

recognition, anointment by an authority, as well as literary prizes are simply contingent upon the primacy of print.

Literary awards are a good example of the primacy and dominance of print and perhaps one of the most important consecration tools governed by the criteria of the literary field,²³ which they shape in several dimensions. Since awards are also an institution where important writerly interests converge, we will use this example to present and explain those interests.

Publisher's representatives who took part in the survey clearly confirmed that awards compel people to read certain authors and may even guarantee peer recognition of both the book and its author. Secondly, awards provide a significant income boost, often allowing the authors to continue with their work over the next several months. "Frankly speaking, it's a kind of subsidy for the writer". Third, attaching the name of the award to the name of the writer opens further opportunities for earning a living from the literary activity, or rather, from activities related to literature. Remuneration for actual literary work is low or non-existent for the vast majority of writers, especially in the case of poetry.²⁴ Their proper income is earned through full-time employment, various types of commission or capitalizing on their position as authors by publishing essays, reviews and other short texts for the popular media, various short forms for literary journals and anthologies, conducting workshops, meetings with the readers, participation in festivals, fellowships and so on. Awards facilitate recognition in the system of libraries, cultural institutions, popular and professional journals; they are the writer's *raison d'être*.

However, to apply for awards, the printed form is required.²⁵ The editors of a mostly online publishing house commented:

Well, no, there's no other option. You have to send the paper version. If this doesn't change, we'll have to continue [investing in] paper... Initially we hadn't planned for any paper [publications]... And then it turned out that we had an opportunity to print those few books and it proved beneficial. I mean, to the authors, not to us.

23 See Jankowicz, Marecki, Pałęcka et al., *Literatura polska*.

24 Ibid.

25 Rules for submitting literary work for the Silesius, Angelus and Gdynia awards require sending between seven to ten physical copies of the book and submission rules for other competitions (e.g. Nike, Gryfia, Nagroda Literacka Miasta Stołecznego Warszawy, Wielki Kaliber, Nagroda im. Janusza A. Zajdla) do not specify the form of submission. Only in the case of Nagroda Kościelskich, submission rules clearly state that "as an exception, particularly valuable applications may be taken into consideration based on publication in journals, in the form of booklet, typescript or electronic record."

Turning away from print entails an exclusion from institutional circulation. Thus, the following words of one of our respondents can be taken quite literally: "That which really exists, exists on paper."²⁶

Maciej Maryl observes: "If the transmissions called literature today used to function in smaller circulations enabling mutual interaction between the receiver and the sender, industrial scale printing shatters this interaction. The audience is vast and silent, and there emerge intermediaries between the writer and the reader in the form of institutions such as literary criticism."²⁷ Habits, likes and attachment to the scent, texture and shape appear to be functional rationalizations in the context of authorial interests. If the literary field is structured by the book principle, existing in it (or even entering it) is also dependent on the principle and on the printed form.

"I Jack Things Myself"

The character of the Internet reshapes the distribution of literature and "piracy" becomes one of its major forms. It is commonly assumed that unlicensed content distribution works against the interests of its producers, however, considering the current system of remuneration for literary work (or rather, its lack), piracy appears to serve desirable functions from the perspective of the authors, which distinguishes their interests from those of the publishers. Among fifty-five opinions on piracy, only eight were unequivocally negative, invoking primarily its negative impact on income:

This is our job, this is where we put our efforts and how we earn our living. It seems like some sort of a socialist utopia that everything can be free and I absolutely cannot accept it. I do believe that it is the authors' sacred right to control where their work is published and if it is related to any kind of sale, it is the authors' sacred right to benefit from that sale.

²⁶ The domination of the printed book resurfaces also, in a seemingly banal form, at the stage of critical reception. It is a common practice for the publishers to send out free copies of books, which may (but does not have to) result in the publication of a review, analysis or a critical note. One could assume that it is a practice employed to simplify the distribution process, benefitting both the publisher (whose product may potentially be discussed in a press release) and the critics (who do not have to invest their own funds to purchase book copies). Meanwhile, as one of the recorded responses suggests, reviewer copies are seen also as informal remuneration.

²⁷ Maryl, "Technologie," 172.

However, the above position represents the minority. The remaining forty-seven interviews mentioned mostly piracy's function of disseminating the text, which proved to be the primary objective of the authors. Since income from writing is negligible, direct financial gratification is not taken into consideration. What is important is the symbolic capital which becomes a compensation in itself and/or is used to profit from paraliterary work and commissions.²⁸ The possibility of broadly distributing the work becomes one of the basic sources of symbolic capital, in this case translating into audience recognition as opposed to the consecration by the standard tools of the field, such as literary criticism and awards. Two authors directly describe this mechanism in the following words:

There's a conflict of interest between the publishers and writers. Many authors, the ones I know, those within the *belles-lettres*, don't really strive so much for some sort of great financial success and having wads of money. What they want is more like... recognition. You know, getting attention, all the accompanying forms of appreciation that come with the book. So the authors are more willing to give something away for free, because they want to communicate.

Considering the way I function and the situation when a book is not a source of income for me, I don't see [piracy as] a problem. The more people read it, the more they will reach for other things written by me and that strengthens my position. ... I know that a lot of famous music bands work like that, I mean, they release albums but earn their money through concerts. It's the same with the kind of books I write. Bestsellers, obviously, earn money but the author gets only a fraction of it – there is a huge machinery in between and it sort of reduces the income.

One of the respondents cited above is a widely recognized author, earning her living from literature and firmly established in the market. The number of positive opinions regarding unlicensed online distribution indicates that such an attitude is unrelated to the author's position in the literary field. However, in the case of popular, commercial literary production, such an attitude probably isn't as pervasive.

²⁸ Such as writing essays, reviews and other forms of writing for the popular media, as well as short texts for anthologies and literary journals, conducting workshops, participation in festivals and meeting with the authors, scholarships etc., which are the actual source of income in literature.

In other words, recognition of one's own position in the publishing "food chain" is accompanied by a very pragmatic acceptance of piracy as one of the desired distribution methods. The respondents repeatedly referred to their own position in the book market, ten mentioned low income from sales or occupying a niche position (especially in the case of poets) where any financial gratification is excluded from the process of work. In situations like these, unlicensed online distribution is, in fact, welcomed:

Maybe it's a matter of my life situation which simply determines my position here... God, I'd be glad if someone [pirated my work]!
If anyone thinks great numbers of people are going to buy something like that at a bookstore, I just find it ridiculous. It's better to spend more time on trying to encourage people to read in general, in any way, than to argue about copyright on the Internet.

The unauthorized online distribution of books, viewed in an unambiguously negative light by publishers as a form of reducing the economic capital of all entities engaged in the production of literature, reveals itself as a mechanism conducive to the increase of symbolic capital, the latter constituting the primary interest of the authors themselves. Of course, as we have already discussed,²⁹ this priority should not be explained by the field's high degree of autonomy, but rather by the structure of access to the economic capital in the literary field. As a result, the interests of the publishers and the interest of the authors are located within different stages of the book's functioning in the market. The former profit from sales, the latter from their works' reception.

However, online distribution of unlicensed copies, while it may contribute to the symbolic capital of the writer, is itself determined by the mechanisms related to the printed book. In other words, only after the book is printed is the text seen as valuable enough to become subject to unofficial distribution. Printing appears to be the first, most preliminary stage of consecration, which opens access to the following stages, such as winning awards, participating in festivals and so on.

While the interests of the publishers thus focus primarily on the codex book model as a limited good, the interests of authors are related to it only temporarily. In the case of the latter, books function only as a condition for participating in the literary field, allowing for further stages of consecration. This is also the reason for the authors' ambivalent attitude to copyright protection and the principle of the book: they provide "the right of entry" to the field but do not make it easier to function in it effectively.

²⁹ Jankowicz, Marecki, Pałęcka et al., *Literatura polska*.

Unequivocal consent to the option of free distribution afforded by the Internet suggests that perhaps we may be witnessing the emergence of a new consecration method based on the “democratic” mechanism of approval by a direct vote (counted in downloads, clicks and interaction with the online text), characteristic of the Internet age. Naturally, this consecration mechanism is partly based on the media field as well as promotional activities by both publishers and authors themselves. Importantly, it is an explicit inclusion of the audience as an actor into the literary field.

Asked about success indicators, editors at a publishing house operating almost exclusively online enumerated such tools of consecration as an audience award from a portal, download numbers for books of poetry, or “[Facebook] likes and shares”. They admit the latter to be a vulgar approach but one that nonetheless provides measurable indicators for the reach of their publications. A similar tone can be heard in the majority of interviews with the authors. Online dissemination of the text “means that it gets somewhere, that it means something not just to me, but to other people as well.”

One of the authors emphasized the aspect of sharing involved in piracy: “What is today referred to as piracy, may one day... if we manage to change the law, become something normal, an act of sharing. So I don’t like this negative definition”. Another respondent said: “I don’t think that we’re talking about property here so I also don’t think we can talk about theft”. Recommendations, sharing and exchange are all proper to the culture of Internet literature. This particular aspect was omitted in the statements made by representatives of publishers. Representing economic entities whose purpose (in addition to publishing and promoting literature) is to yield profit (or, in the case of smaller publishers, survive in the market), they view the book more in terms of *opus* than *opera*, as an object to be sold in the market and not as content which can be distributed with the help of the Internet at almost no cost.³⁰

The ephemeral nature of online evaluation and consecration is symptomatic of the remediation process taking place in the late age of print, a process whose outcome is far from settled. As an expression, “late age of print” seems to assume an inevitable decline of print, however, this does not mean that the mechanisms of the new medium are in any way determined.

30 Commentaries on piracy mentioned also high book prices, making the readers download them for free. “I jack things myself so I’m not going be angry at people who do the same.” This argument, repeated by six respondents, is important as it reveals authors to be also participants of culture, sharing the attitude of the audiences they address. The use of unauthorized copies is sometimes also seen as a stage leading to a proper purchase, a “trying out” of the product before making the decision to pay for it.

The transplantation of the paradigm of the codex book by the medium of the Internet, a process controlled by the most powerful participants of the literary field and market (i.e. big publishers and distributors), proves that, as Bolter rightly points out, technology in itself is not enough to determine the ways it is used.³¹ This becomes strikingly clear in the case of copyright whose current trends suggest a strengthening of the earlier model associated with the technology of print and the principle of the book, rather than attempts to create new solutions to the challenges posed by Internet technologies. However, a recognition of the key actors in the literary field, the structure of domination and the ways of engagement which are tied to a preference for a particular medium, is necessary first and foremost to understand the ongoing processes and to avoid hasty identifications. As we have tried to show, a strong attachment to the printed book, invoked today in almost all discourses related to literature, readership promotion, education and also copyright, may in fact signal completely different interests. The paradigm of the codex book has at least two aspects. On the one hand, it determines the specific shape of restrictive copyright. On the other hand, to go back to Kant, the book as an *opus* still reveals itself as a necessary element to legitimize the *opera*, a condition necessary for the recognition of the work, and consequently, its author.

Translation: Anna Warso

³¹ Bolter, *Writing Space*, 12 and elsewhere.