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The Aesthetic Phenomenon of Alfonsas Nyka-Niliūnas

Summary

One of the most respected poets of Lithuanian diaspora, Nyka-Niliūnas, can be regarded as a representative of literature in general of the 20th Century West. His work discloses the radical collapse of the traditional symbols which have dominated Western civilization for centuries. The poetically depicted figures which show the collapse are “demonic”, but in such a way that they no longer represent anything: they simply signify the fragmentation of the known world

toward chaos. This collapse also abolishes any semblance of identity. Thus, the second level of his poetry is a striving to capture the “aesthetic” dimensions of the world, allowing the poet to be drawn back into the world of phenomena which are not identical with any characteristic of things. In the article such phenomena are explicated from various writers and even painters, showing the preoccupation by major artists with “pure aesthetic awareness”.

Keywords: the demonic, chaos, collapse, death, aesthetic, worldly, phenomenal.