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INTRODUCTION: *Ulysses* 100 Years After. Joyce Studies in Poland

On 2nd February 2022 the literary world celebrated the centenary of the publication of James Joyce's *Ulysses*. Inspired by that anniversary, this thematic issue presents articles written by Joyce scholars who are based in or coming from Poland. Three of the five papers concern reception of Joyce, including translation and theatre adaptations. The other two examine Joyce's work in the context of the Irish Revival, and the emergence of New Physics.

Compared to many European languages, the Polish translation of *Ulysses* was published with a delay of almost 50 years. Until then arguably little Joycean scholarship had appeared in Poland, limited to a few essays and just one monograph – Egon Naganowski's *Telemach w labiryncie świata* [Telemachus in the Labyrinth of the World; 1962]. While some eminent literary scholars such as Stanisław Helsztyński (1939), Zbigniew Bieńkowski (1958) and Jerzy Strzetelski (1959) published essays to familiarise readers with the modernist author, Joyce's critical reception in Poland was scarce compared to the increasingly developing Western scholarship. It was only the publication of *Ulysses* in Maciej Słomczyński's translation in 1969, followed by his translations of Joyce's poetic works, *Exiles*, and excerpts from *Finnegans Wake* that stimulated a wider scholarly interest in the work of the Irish writer. It focused on studying allusions and quotations (Paszek 1984), stream-of-consciousness techniques (Zbigniew Lewicki 1975), and occasionally on translation (Tabakowska-Muskat 1972). Worth mentioning at this

point is a later, impressive study of the maze and the tree as controlling metaphors of Joyce's novel by Piotr Paziński *Labirynt i drzewo: studia nad "Ulissesem" Jamesa Joyce'a* (2005).

Translation studies has become an important trend in Joycean studies carried out by Polish scholars (e.g., Wawrzycka 1997, 2009; Szczerbowski 1998, 2000; Bazarnik 2010; Senn et al. 2012; Barciński 2018; Wawrzycka and Mihálycsa 2021), stimulated in part by a wave of retranslations and Krzysztof Bartnicki's rendering of *Finnegans Wake* into Polish in 2012. It is represented here by Jolanta Wawrzycka, whose Joycean preoccupations are versatile, and whose essay of 2009 established "translation" as one of the crucial contexts for studying Joyce's works. In her current article she highlights some challenges that intertextuality poses for translators, discussing to what extent Joyce's Shakespearean borrowings can be recognised by readers of Polish *Ulysses*, setting them against examples from French and Italian. Her article takes account of both Polish translations: Maciej Słomczyński's one of 1969, and the recent one by Maciej Świerkocki, published in the autumn of 2021.¹

Joyce's impact on 20th-century Polish fiction was also relatively limited (cf. Anessi 2004). However, his inspiration is more evident in other arts, especially theatre. No wonder then that two of the five essays featured in this issue are devoted to Joyce's presence on Polish stages. Barry Keane traces how theatrical adaptations of *Ulysses* and *Finnegans Wake* have become an important part of the history of innovative Polish theatre. Keane's reflection illuminates how Joyce's reception became entangled with and refracted through the local context. In contrast, Katarzyna Biela focuses on analysing one production: Zenon Fajfer and Katarzyna Bazarnik's *Finnegans Make*. It is significant insofar as its staging marked the beginning of a new phase of Joyce's reception in Poland (Wawrzycka 2004, 226, 229). The play premiered at Joyce Summer School in Dublin, and the company's director and cast were instrumental in launching a series of Bloomsday conferences that resulted in further Joycean publications (Bazarnik and Fordham 1998; Bazarnik 2002; Bazarnik and Kucała 2010; Bazarnik 2011), and invigorating Joyce-related studies in Poland.

Whereas Joyce's Polish reception in the 21st century still remains an open project, especially considering a series of Joyce's retranslations – *Dubliners* by Zbigniew Batko in 2002, the *Portrait* by Jerzy Jarniewicz in 2005, the outstanding "polonisation" of *Finnegans Wake* as *Finneganów Tren* by Krzysztof Bartnicki in 2012, Joyce's aesthetic writings brought out by Officyna in 2020, and Maciej Świerkocki's *Ulysses* published by the same press in 2021 – the other two essays testify to a widening scope of engagement with Joyce's work. Leszek Drog presents Joyce as a sympathetic visitor to the West of Ireland, who looks at his native country from a transnational perspective. Dominika Oramus examines Joyce's pre-Einsteinian Universe through Bloom's and Stephen's different 'temperaments' and argues that claims about the presence of New Physics in *Ulysses*

¹ It is worth mentioning that in March 2023 Świerkocki's *Łódź Ulissesa* (The Boat of Ulysses; a pun on the name of his native city of Łódź), a monumental companion to his translation, won Prof. Tadeusz Kotarbiński Award for outstanding works published in humanities.

are exaggerated. Selective as it is, this collection testifies to varied responses that Joycean studies in Poland elicit, and, hopefully, may provide a spur to renewed reflections of Joyce's reception in different linguistic and literary ecosystems.

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