

What difficulty characterizes contemporary innovative Polish poetry? How do we read the difficult poem? These questions stand in the centre of the project entitled Innovative Poetics at the Turn of the 20th and 21-st-Century.

One of the most vividly currently recurring themes in the description of the twentieth and twenty-first century literature is the so-called controversy regarding difficult poetry, also called in the Polish studies field – the controversy regarding “incomprehensible” poetry. This debate renews the division into mainstream poetry (poetry of clear and easily accessible sense) and avant-garde poetry of experiment, play with symbols, radical gestures, that invites the recipient to the game and active co-creation of meanings. However whereas mainstream poetry has its fixed conceptualization (mainly based on the rhetoric of emotion, romantic provenance of the poetic expression theory), discussions on the poetry’s reasonable conceptualizations of the returning avant-garde prove to be alive current, and still open.

This project aims to make a critical reflection on categories (such as experiment, innovation, radical/difficult poetics) that could functionally describe various phenomena, which comprise the avant-garde’s problematic returns in the most recent Polish poetry. However, this critical reflection is to provide the avoidance of “the pressure of absolute innovation and originality”.

The main research topics are:

1. avant-garde, innovative, radical, experimental, “difficult” poetics
2. concrete and neo-concrete poetry, and visual prosody in contemporary poetry
3. so-called the new enunciations poetry
4. liberature and e-liberature
5. Polish literary alternative activities from the turn of 1980s and 1990s – mainly Totart group, but also videopoetry
6. digital poetry
7. late (radical) modernism – the status of the contemporary modernist studies

The noticeable and distinct change in Polish poetry at the turn of twentieth and twenty-first century – resulting not only from the systemic change of 1989, but rather from revisions, which were proposed by poets, who forced innovative poetics in their artistic projects – requests a detailed and comprehensive description. I shall make such an attempt in this project.

The results of scientific research created under the project will – on the one hand – present effectively the 20th-century Polish literature (also as a result of innovative interpretation of crucial phenomena of Polish “difficult” poetry), on the other hand, however, they will join in the recognition of the status of contemporary late modernism studies in the world modernist studies. All the project results stand a real chance of influencing the further development of this branch of academic studies by fundamentally changing the currently widely adopted outlook applied to form historical images of experimental literary late modernism.