

The aim of the project

The project wants to analyze Irish cosmopolitan movement from the perspective of its impact on Irish prose writers' growing interest in Russian literature and culture in the first decades of the twentieth century. Moreover, the project aims to investigate whether any response of Russian writers to new Irish prose is traceable in later decades of the twentieth century, once such Irish writers as James Joyce have reached the world canon.

The description of research and the reasons for conducting it

The research done so far allows for a statement that the multiplicity of examples of Russian influences visible in the twentieth-century Irish prose are not exceptional, but rather form a certain trend, which has its origin in the cosmopolitan movement. The representatives of the movement promoted reading European literature, including Russian one, in search of new role models to follow. Such an approach was supposed to help the Irish literature to free itself from the English literary influences, which was the first step in the process of Irish emancipation from the British rule. The cosmopolitan approach towards new Irish literature (free exchange of thought and circulation of works among writers from different nations) was initially shared by many different organizations such as Irish Literary Society and the Gaelic League. However, with time, the literary scene divided into promoters of cosmopolitanism and nationalism. In some cases the interest in Russia went far beyond literary dimension including culture, language or even socialist ideology. The independence movements in Ireland led to the infatuation of some revolutionaries with the Bolshevik revolution. This is the second line of relations the project aims to investigate. Consequently, the project analyzes two sources of Russian inspiration visible in the Irish prose – literary and socio-cultural ones. The project will be based on the analysis of chosen individual cases of Irish prose writers who shared interest in Russian literature and culture as well as cosmopolitan way of looking at new Irish prose, such as George Moore, G. B. Shaw, Frank O'Connor, Sean O'Faolain, James Joyce Liam O'Flaherty or Hubert Butler, just to name a few.

The reason for taking up the subject of Irish cosmopolitanism with reference to Irish-Russian literary relations is the will to investigate the topic, which has not received enough scholarly attention so far. The scarcity of academic works in this particular area of study calls for a further analysis. Those, which do touch upon this subject, concentrate on singular examples of the Irish-Russian literary relations or provide a comparative analysis on the basis of texts, whose direct influence has not been proved.

Envisaged results

The envisaged results of the project include the broadening of knowledge about the phenomenon of Irish cosmopolitanism and the nature of the Irish-Russia literary and cultural relations. The project will also add its voice to the ongoing discussion on cosmopolitanism studies in contemporary humanities. The project because of its comparative character incorporates theories from two areas of study: comparative literature and world literature, which will allow for the extension of knowledge in methodology.