

## INTRODUCTION

Where does verse come from?

This is not a question concerning the inspiration behind the theme of a poem. Instead we are interested in the sources of its form.

Using a biological metaphor, once popular, one could say that in the creation of a specific verse the ontogeny repeats the phylogeny. Even if an author follows a pre-existing metrical pattern, he or she is not using a ready-made product. This is due to the fact that even the best-known poetic forms must be combined anew, must be created from more basic elements, in order to find, in a moment of illumination, the rhythm that was achieved in the literature that spans the centuries. However, whenever there is such a review of verse history, it occurs at a different stage in the development of language and culture. Therefore, the meter can never be fully repeated, and its reminiscences cannot always follow one and the same algorithm. So the English pentameter, the Polish thirteener and the Russian tetrameter are constantly created anew and in some respect they are always different. This applies to both the creation of the poem in a poet's mind, and the co-creation provided by a reader.

Thus, it follows that in the question concerning the sources of various versification forms, not only the past is relevant. Most of all it is the present that concerns us and the issue becomes interestingly complex if one takes into account all the past events and epochs in which historical verse forms participated, namely oral culture, manuscript culture, print culture and now Internet culture. Even if a convention led to the preservation of a given meter, it could not be perceived in the same way. Paradoxically, in the case of modern poetry many historical metrical variants are often recalled when reading, so that previous visions of verse form tend to be confronted with their successors. The non-identity of a seemingly identical meter in comparison with its earlier incarnations is usually one of the sources of the deep semantic layer of a poem.

Another area within which verse experimentation always existed is the field of translation. The poet who investigates foreign meters must provoke in the target culture the rapid appearance of a form that in the source culture was created over many centuries. Despite such obstacles, in the history of poetry the same paradox can be systematically observed: national types of verse are idiomatic

and hermetic, but at the same time it is translation that often becomes the basic source of the dominant versification systems in a given country.

Consequently, diverse sources of verse, the dynamics of the renewal of its forms in the history of both literature and reading, its dependence on music and print, on folk inspirations and academic conceptualisations, as well as the translation of poetry are the subjects of the articles published in this issue.

In the text by Witold Sadowski the concept of prosodic memory is introduced. The individual and cultural memory of various past experiences of speech, sound and rhythm, activated during the reception of verse, is discussed in the paper using the neuropsychological priming effect concept, as well as examples from poems by Claudel, Eliot and Liebert. The next article, written by Robert Ibrahim and Petr Plecháč, is an examination of the thesis that quantity is a non-accidental but substantial factor in 19<sup>th</sup>-century accentual-syllabic verse. The analysis employs computer-based statistical methods. The third paper, by Arkadiusz Sylwester Mastalski, discusses the relationship between the assumption of conceptual frameworks in Polish theories of verse and the descriptions of Polish medieval versification, which seem to be a result of a given scholar's theoretical convictions. The following text, by Anna Tenczyńska, is an overview of the ways in which verse construction in folk songs is referred to or imitated in 20<sup>th</sup>-century Polish poetry. The next article, by Joanna Dembińska-Pawelec, shows how Stanisław Barańczak's work as a translator of the poetry by Gerard Manley Hopkins influences his own versification forms, as well as other stylistic aspects of his poems. In the sixth paper, by Joanna Grądział-Wójcik, an explanation is provided of how the ideological and cultural convictions of Czesław Miłosz and Wisława Szymborska determine their metrical choices and their patterns of verse. The article written by Tamara Brzostowska-Tereszkiewicz introduces the idea of conceptual translation, which is discussed as a basis for diverse examples of experimental art and poetry, often closer to intermedia rather than traditionally understood literature. Finally, the paper by Aleksandra Kremer is an examination of various elements of contemporaneous culture (such as painting, typography, design and aesthetic theory) which are reflected in the poetics of Eugen Gomringer, and especially in the versification structure of one of his poems.

The question regarding the sources of verse is forced to go beyond the field of versification as such. Yet the papers presented in this volume demonstrate that answers can be provided by considering the matter from numerous perspectives, which take into account the history of both literature and other cultural practices, and which encompass, among others: close reading, genre theory, intertextuality, translation studies, neuropsychology, generative linguistics and constructivism.

The present issue of *Philological Studies. Literary Research* consists of two parts, devoted to two different themes. While the problem of the sources of verse is discussed in this part of the issue, the second part, published separately in Polish, is dedicated to the subject of metamorphoses.