

Katarzyna Maćkała

University of Gdansk

<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-8033-1381>

## Ibsen's and Mrożek's *Peer Gynt*

This essay compares Ibsen's drama from 1867, *Peer Gynt*, with Sławomir Mrożek's short story of the same title (published in Polish in 1958 and in English in 1962) through an examination of the absurdist tone present in both works. Mrożek is a preeminent literary figure in absurdist literature in Poland. He employs a direct allusion to Ibsen's work in his title, but also reflects on Ibsen's play and the character Peer in the themes, motifs, and techniques used throughout the short story. Ibsen's Peer was a peasant in nineteenth-century Norway, while Mrożek's Peer is congenially portrayed as a Polish para-communist with a peasant background. The intertextual reading is inspired by numerous allusions to other cultural texts and absurdist tone present in both works.

**Keywords:** Ibsen, Mrożek, *Peer Gynt*, absurd, Polish literature, Norwegian literature, Ibsen in Poland

Henrik Ibsen's dramas have been integral to Polish culture, both in theatrical performances and literary publications, for approximately 150 years. However, their reception remains complex and has not found broad resonance among Ibsen enthusiasts. This is evidenced, among other factors, by the absence of contemporary works directly inspired by Ibsen's oeuvre, particularly among the most esteemed Polish writers of the postwar period. This essay presents an exception by comparing Ibsen's drama, *Peer Gynt* with Sławomir Mrożek's short story of the same title (first published in Polish in 1958 and in English in 1962), through an examination of the absurdist tone present in both works.

The intertextual nature of this comparison is visible not only in the direct allusion to Ibsen's work that Mrożek employs in his title but also in the themes, motifs, and techniques that are used throughout the story. In addition, Ibsen's *Peer Gynt* is a fundamentally intertextual work, full of allusions, incorporating numerous quotations (especially from the Bible) alongside original material. Intertextuality can be understood as a technique to consciously combine various texts. Intertextuality can also be defined as a dense network of relations between separate texts, as Graham Allen puts it: "Works of literature, after all, are built from systems, codes

and traditions established by previous works of literature. [...] To interpret a text, to discover its meaning, or meanings, is to trace those relations. Reading thus becomes a process of moving between texts.” (Allen 2006: 1) Both understandings of the wide term are applicable to the comparative case of the two distinguished modernists discussed here.

The Polish playwright is recognized as one of the preeminent literary figures of Poland in the 20<sup>th</sup> century and is undoubtedly among the most popular. Mroźek’s *oeuvre* primarily belongs to the absurdist genre, a form of expression that resonated profoundly with the Polish reality following the Second World War and significantly influenced Polish culture. As noted by Barbara Kejna-Sharratt (1974), “the late 1950s and the 1960s in Poland were a period of an unprecedented flourishing of the Theatre of the Absurd,” which contributed to the emergence of Polish writers such as Tadeusz Różewicz, Stanisław Grochowiak, and Sławomir Mroźek himself, alongside their predecessors like Witkacy and Gombrowicz, a line of artists who offered an alternative to the Polish romantic traditions.

Long before that, during the *fin de siècle* period of the Young Poland movement, when Henrik Ibsen was still alive, numerous writers engaged in the motifs and themes of Ibsen’s works. However, this engagement did not produce many notable literary works. Neither before the Second World War nor after the descent of the Iron Curtain did Ibsen serve as a major source of inspiration for Polish writers. Only a few primarily established authors, such as Jarosław Iwaszkiewicz, were directly influenced by the Norwegian playwright, while younger generations did not frequently engage with Ibsen’s works. Recent studies by Polish scholars such as Marian Lewko (1996) have explored the reasons for this lack of inspiration. Among the primary factors were poor-quality translations and the immediate transfer of Western stereotypes, which portrayed Ibsen as a solemn feminist or pessimistic apostle of truth (Maćkała 2023). This perspective obscured the comedic elements in Ibsen’s plays and reinforced the stereotype described by Robin Young (1994: 58): “The forbidding seriousness of Ibsen’s later works has become a legend, especially to those who know them mainly by repute”.

The tumultuous history of the 20<sup>th</sup> century did not create a conducive environment for the reception of Ibsen’s plays in Poland. The sequence of catastrophic events, even within a relatively brief period following Ibsen’s first premiere in 1879, included a protracted struggle for independence lasting over a century, World War II, a near-civil war thereafter, the communist regime, and a subsequent challenging democratic transition. Ibsen’s works did not resonate with Polish traumas and were not used in this context. In contrast, Mroźek is among the Polish authors whose success is attributed to his capacity to critique the absurdity of Polish post-war reality. Through the use of satire, parody, and pastiche, he addresses complex and problematic issues associated with life in a communist country by employing a bold absurdist style in his dramas and prose. Like Ibsen, Mroźek drew inspiration from journalism (they both read newspapers and used stories from them in their

literature) and adeptly manipulated the *newspeak* (Žračka 2017) of the communist press, which became emblematic of the use of clichés in meaningless dialogues devoid of genuine intent. This technique enabled him to effectively depict the lack of communication between his characters, particularly in works such as *Peer Gynt*.

The concept of communicative impossibility is fundamental to modernist thought and central to absurdist literature, and is illustrated through various techniques. Barbara Kejna-Sharratt (1974) identifies the 'materialization of a metaphor' as one of Mrožek's preferred methods. For instance, in *The Elephant*, Mrožek interprets metaphors literally, exemplified by the idiomatic expression 'to balloon someone' (meaning to deceive someone). In this narrative, a real zoo animal is replaced with a rubber one to economize and to 'balloon' the schoolchildren. Ibsen employed a precursor to this technique by juxtaposing metaphoric and literal representations of wild ducks and dollhouses. The question of absurdism in Ibsen's plays has been raised by Fatemeh Karim Pour and Modgan Abshavi (2021) who analyze *A Doll's House*, and conclude that themes of absurdity are evident in the play. The elements of miscommunication, such as clichés, prolonged silences between characters, meaningless dialogues, and most notably, deceit, are evident. Additionally, the dynamics of the master-slave relationship, characterized by materialism, a money-centric approach to life and relationships, vanity, and narcissism, are present. The themes of hopelessness and confusion, manifesting as feelings of isolation or alienation, static plots, and stagnation, are also discernible. The authors assert that these absurdist features are identifiable in *A Doll's House*. These are certainly present in other works by Ibsen. Even so-called keywords, such as Nora's *wonder*, serve as further evidence of misunderstandings between characters. Furthermore, as early as *Peer Gynt*, the absurdist perspective of the world is apparent, although the modernist technique may not yet be as prominent as in Ibsen's later plays.

The narrative commences with the lamentations of Peer's mother, who is profoundly distressed by her son's conduct: "Lies, all lies Peer!" (Ibsen 2007). Peer engages in deceit not only with his mother but also with nearly every individual he encounters throughout the five extensive acts of the play. Concurrently, he frequently fails to comprehend the words and needs of others. Much of the discourse surrounding Peer's familial background is linked to his father squandering the entirety of his inherited wealth. Peer's mother clings to the hope of reclaiming financial stability and social status, while Peer constructs his aspiration of becoming a king upon this hope: to possess and wield power. Overall, his cynical outlook on life undergoes minimal, if any, transformation throughout the play, rendering him a character ill-suited for metamorphosis and perpetually immature. He walks in circles like in his mother's comment on the old stories he repeats only a little reedited: "Yes, and lies get changed, you dunce, get dolled up and magnified, fitted with a new-found hide so the carcass won't show through." (Ibsen 2007) At the end of the play, he seems to understand some of his mistakes, but still talks about

an empire: "It's real! – This isn't a game to be played! Good grief! – My empire was here if I'd stayed!" (Ibsen 2007).

Even the love of Solveig, who sacrifices her entire life to be with him, fails to effect any change in Peer. Moreover, Solveig is metaphorically subjugated by Peer, for whom she waits indefinitely, and when she defends him, he himself says to her: "That lad was conceived in your mind" (Ibsen 2007). Her behavior is absurd, as she takes no action to liberate herself; indeed, her entire existence is reduced to futile waiting, and her feelings can no longer be described as love. In the fourth act of the play, Peer symbolically represents the master-slave dynamic by engaging in the slave trade. In the final act, he epitomizes the absurd and despairing human condition: a man who has lost everything, including wealth and family, because of actions driven by vanity and greed. He is isolated and pitiable, yet when confronted by the Button-molder, he remains oblivious to the accusations against him. He fails to recognize that he has been neither virtuous nor malevolent, as the molder comments: "It takes more than mere mud that you've wallowed in; you need dedication and strength for a sin" (Ibsen 2007). Peer's entire existence is rendered meaningless absurdity, and he is on the verge of being repurposed as material. In the concluding scene, Ibsen employed wordplay to create a puzzle, leaving the audience with an open-ended conclusion.

Peer Gynt preferred illusion over reality. He chose to be an illusory emperor rather than a genuinely industrious man and husband. He chose fleeting pleasures over authentic relationships and was never prepared to engage in anything substantial. Instead, he relished exerting power over others. Like many subsequent characters in Ibsen's works, he is willing to embrace and perpetuate falsehoods if they provide him with comfort and satisfaction. His only opportunity to become an emperor arises in a madhouse, as he lacks the genuine qualifications to master any discipline. Indeed, all his seemingly absurd adventures may occur solely within his imagination, underscoring his existential void as he exists only for himself.

The concept of a madhouse epitomizes deception, duplicity, and pretense. This metaphor was prevalent in communist Poland, where the oppressed nation was frequently likened to a mental institution in various literary works. A madhouse represents a setting where norms are inverted, unpredictability reigns, and the unexpected becomes foreseeable. It is also a realm where one can construct reality akin to divine creation; for example, Peer as a friend of the Sphinx. The motif of appearance, akin to a theatrical performance enacted in reality, is a prominent theme in Ibsen's body of work. This is evident in plays such as *A Doll's House* and his final play, *When We Dead Awaken*, in which the substitution of the real world presents a significant impediment to the discovery of genuine love. Henrik Ibsen's renowned seriousness in his plays often serves as a façade, as exemplified in *The Wild Duck*. The protagonist, Hjalmar, bears a striking resemblance to Mrożek's Peer, as his daily life resembles performance rather than reality, with Ibsen imbuing him with numerous comedic characteristics.

In her seminal analysis of Ibsen's modernism, Toril Moi (2012) examined the modernistic elements in Ibsen's later works, highlighting the tension between modernism and idealism as opposed to juxtaposing idealism with realism. Although *Peer Gynt* is not included in the plays analyzed by Moi, elements of modernism can be discerned in this play, along with Ibsen's perspective on idealism. In his later plays, Ibsen "demonstrates that idealist notions of love, beauty, and sexuality will destroy human relationships, imprison us in skeptical isolation, and, in the end, make us fit only for death" (Moi 2012: 14). This critique extends to ideas purported to save the world, which Ibsen addressed extensively in, for example, *The Wild Duck*.

In *Peer Gynt*, he critiques the political ideologies of colonial and military states as well as the notion of pseudo-neutrality, which he characterizes as the passive observation of others' suffering. Ideologies purporting to save the world, such as fascism and communism, evolved into the tyrannies of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and served as fundamental inspirations for absurdist literature in the post-war period. Albert Camus (1951: 184) wrote in *The Rebel*: "Authoritarian socialism has confiscated this living freedom for the benefit of an ideal freedom, which is yet to come. In so doing, whether it wished to or not, it reinforced the attempt at enslavement begun by industrial capitalism". *Peer Gynt*'s characters are subjugated to intangible concepts, such as the capitalist notion of ownership, the concept of eternal and unconditional love, the ideologies manifested by nation-states, and the aspiration to achieve personal distinction. In *Peer Gynt*, Ibsen critiques not only the idealized perception of femininity through the creation of the unremarkable character Solveig, but also the archetype of the idealistic adventurer who, akin to many explorers of his era, disregarded the lives of others in pursuit of personal objectives. The narrative also explores the history of an individual who predominantly believes in the concept of himself. Ibsen illustrates how individuals with Gyntian conformist tendencies seamlessly integrate into societies structured by ideologies, where morally upright individuals find themselves ensnared in a relentless cycle of subjugation. Peer's vanity and self-admiration, or his conviction of his own potential for greatness, render him an ideal candidate for a communist. This theme is adeptly utilized by Sławomir Mrożek in his short story *Peer Gynt*, where he skillfully engages in the ambiguous context of Ibsen's play.

Marketa Goetz-Stankiewicz (1971) writes: "The situation is idyllic: a man and a woman in their home, surrounded by arcadian nature". The author posits the simplicity of their existence; however, when considering the social context of post-serfdom peasants in communist Poland, a more intricate depiction emerges, characterized by post-war poverty intertwined with an illusion of prosperity. Adjacent to the modest dwelling of the young Peer stands a birch tree, emblematic of Polish identity and the nation's enduring tradition of rebellious resistance. This symbolism is satirized by Mrożek through a straightforward dialogue that reveals the Gyntian nature of the young Peer, who aspires to greatness yet remains inactive:

"The wife said: 'The roof needs mending; there's a hole in it and the rain comes through.'

'It will be mended,' he replied, following her with loving eyes." (Mrożek 2010: 90)

Mrożek's Peer transports a local schoolmaster to a meeting in a nearby town. The contrived nature of festivities is evident: the hall is adorned with paper flowers. Peer's wife expresses her sorrow as they part way, reluctant for Peer to embark on his journey into the wider world. However, he becomes oblivious to her distress upon hearing the orchestra's performance: "We are building a new house!" (Mrożek 2010: 90), a typical propagandistic appeal aimed at motivating post-war reconstruction and consolidating communist authority. Mrożek initiates the theme of perpetual pretense. The construction of a New House is evidently an act of ostentation. Subsequently, a typical scenario unfolds: District officials solicit critical feedback, a task fraught with complexity, as it is uncertain how much criticism is permissible.

Mrożek's character Peer, a young peasant, chooses to contribute due to what Mrożek describes as his 'simple and honest nature,' (Mrożek 2010: 90) which, in this context, suggests a rather primitive disposition and a desire for recognition. Upon being asked to state his name and social background, he identifies himself as a peasant – a declaration that is met with applause. A journalist from the town subsequently characterizes him as 'a people's tribune.' This scenario highlights the absurdity inherent in the paradoxes of the Soviet era, which, through revolution and the promotion of 'great ideas,' sought to overturn the social structures of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. However, this upheaval ultimately resulted in further injustice, merely transferring power from a tsar or kaiser to the party. Mrożek reflects on the deceptive narrative of redistributing wealth from the affluent to the impoverished, as exemplified during the communist era when university applicants received additional points for having a farming background. Such absurdities rendered the tragic struggle for class justice into a mere farce. This is illustrated in the subsequent dialogue involving a communist official who expresses skepticism – "I've no idea what's possessed him" – and another who is electrified by the idea: "My dear fellow [...] he's a real peasant." (Mrożek 2010: 91) A statement that could be expressed in a zoo setting, yet it serves as a critique of the hypocritical nature of the communist regime. In reality, this regime showed little concern for the welfare of peasants, prioritizing the superficial appearance of advocating for the populace and their freedom.

Peer endeavors to engage the audience by employing straightforward language, as if he perceives his message as divinely inspired or intended for authoritative ears. Introduced as an activist, he articulates the need for tiles and nails in his village, receiving enthusiastic applause from the audience. Mrożek introduces another layer of absurdity: despite widespread shortages of food and clothing, and arbitrary imprisonments, the paramount concern was the construction of the communist façade as the outward appearance of progress under communism, exemplified by the proliferation of new housing. While many intellectuals faced censorship



and publication bans, an arbitrary, scatterbrained individual could be swiftly recognized and lauded as a 'sturdy fighter' (Mrozek 2010: 91) as noted by the journalist. All participants in the meeting assume a farcical role, engaging in acts of crying, cheering, and singing *The Internationale*.

Peer is now being referred to as a comrade by ideological proponents who have invited him to deliver a speech the following day at a meeting of a grocers' cooperative in a provincial town. He is informed that the event is political in nature and serves to promote the authorities. Although he personally supports the cause (pertaining to tails and nails), the forthcoming meeting is merely another spectacle where the audience applauds the guest indiscriminately, regardless of the content of his speech. The following morning, he is requested to deliver a speech to intellectuals at a meeting for comrades artists. The proceedings unfold in a manner consistent with previous experiences. Additionally, he is sculpted and invited to a dinner with a typical hypocritical figure, an artist who profits significantly by exploiting the work of impoverished students. In the interim, Peer gradually neglects his initial focus on the nails case, deriving satisfaction from receiving accolades, and is unable to resist persisting in his role as a 'professional speech giver.' This is not a legitimate profession, and Peer lacks formal rhetorical qualification. He represents the absurdity of the communist era, wherein a peasant or working-class background was sufficient to establish a profession centered on embodying an ideology. In the backdrop of this absurdity, Mrozek employs the stage decorations from Leoncavallo's opera *Pagliacci*, a tragedy centered on comedians. This setting serves as the literal background for Peer's subsequent 'performance' – a ceremony honoring Mickiewicz,<sup>1</sup> the eminent Polish Romantic poet. This event unfolds in a theater, where Peer, a peasant, is directed by a wealthy artist to portray the ideal peasant, 'happy and proud' (Mrozek 2010: 94). The artist assures him that there is no need for homecoming – no rain is expected, and the roof can wait. Peer is directed to execute his role as an archetypal peasant in a highly theatrical manner, characterized by emphatic foot-stomping and initiating speeches with phrases such as "We smallholders" while vociferously proclaiming "Three cheers for China!" (Mrozek 2010: 94). When the meeting ended, there were buckets of rain.

He attains fluency, delivers speeches at various assemblies, participates in conferences at the central level, and derives satisfaction from his performances. He adeptly masters the art of performance, becomes a member of committees, and receives commendation from authorities who utilize him according to their objectives. Subsequently, he begins to purchase cologne and adopts the demeanor of a patrician of the era.

In Mrozek's narrative, the protagonist's final encounter is emblematic of a conventional conclusion to a stereotypical career. Peer finds himself among fellow scientists, encountering individuals who will not indulge his customary expectation

<sup>1</sup> The author's name is omitted in the Penguin translation.

of applause for his trivialities. Upon introducing himself as a peasant, he is requested to display his hands, which bear no evidence of labor. Consequently, he is neither a farmer nor a scientist, nor a dedicated communist theoretician. He has become a man devoid of distinct qualities. The house adjacent to the birch is now in ruin, and the caretaker is an elderly woman. When she greets her husband, she perceives him as an unfamiliar presence, incapable of expressing affection or engaging in conversation, unable to revert to his former self, and only capable of reciting the rehearsed speech he delivered over the years. Notably, he arrives without nails.

In this brief narrative, Mrozek effectively explores Polish trauma associated with the communist era while simultaneously engaging with Ibsen's universal themes, which are central to both versions of *Peer Gynt*. One such theme is the intrinsic human desire for existence, recognition, and appreciation, a desire frequently manipulated by ideological forces. Paradoxically, this yearning can result in the antithetical outcome of losing one's freedom and authentic self. Ibsen's *Peer Gynt* seeks to discover his true identity, yet in the process, he forfeits the very foundations upon which he could cultivate it. Consequently, he becomes indistinct, embodying neither virtue nor vice but rather a nebulous, mediocre entity. Mrozek's *Peer* similarly abandons both his farm and his wife to become a mere instrument in the communist party's spectacle, pursuing lucrative ideals yet ultimately becoming insignificant. He seeks recognition but will never join the ranks of party leaders directing the spectacle. He can no longer return to his role as a farmer. Much like Ibsen's *Peer*, he fails to comprehend his lack of distinctiveness, even during his pitiable conclusion; he is only capable of delivering the speech. Freedom also encompasses the freedom from manipulation. *Peer* not only consents to participate in the spectacle, which is not a genuine life, but merely a collection of ideas, but he also remains oblivious to his own inadequacy within this performance. By bringing the *Pagliacci* opera to the picture Mrozek builds a multiple literary allusion: to the Shakespearian and post-modern metaphors of life as a stage and people merely as puppets, to the opera itself and the Ibsenian play where this metaphor appears in the asylum.

In both Ibsen's play and Mrozek's story, the character *Peer* ultimately returns home, remaining oblivious to the insignificance of his own identity. His return is not motivated by a conscious desire to reconstruct or reclaim his life but rather as an escape from a challenging situation, seeking refuge when no other options are available. Moreover, both Solveig characters serve as archetypes for the 'every-woman,' just as the *Peers* represent the 'everyman.' Neither woman attempts to forge a new life for herself; instead, they both wait and lament. Solveig even loses her sight from crying, but she says on welcoming *Peer* home: "You've not sinned ever, my own dearest boy!" (Ibsen 2007). Mrozek's *Peer* similarly finds his wife in the same location, with the house in disrepair due to neglect, as she too failed to renovate it. Both women are incapable of taking action or recognizing the futility of their waiting. Their idealistic, unconditional, maternal-like love lacks inspiration and,



as in Ibsen's conclusion, merely induces a state of dormancy. Ibsen's Solveig utters the last words of the play and they are an encouragement for Peer to dream on: "Sleep and dream, my darling boy!" (Ibsen 2007). Mrożek's Peer lacks genuine authority and fails to become a legitimate politician or a member of the party's leadership. However, his vanity leads him to revel the applause, blinding him to the fact that it is merely theatrical, a scripted scenario. He is not truly their leader and their applause is empty, lacking genuine admiration. In pursuit of an illusory ideal, he forfeits any innocence that he might have possessed. Both characters are also entangled in a play of national ideas but the nationalistic concept is ridiculed by both Ibsen and Mrożek. The latter criticizes both the traditional romantic vision and absurd communist nationalism, which was a way of manipulating people and cultivating hatred towards other nations. Mrożek uses theatrical motifs and literary allusion to describe pompous shows where "little girls in national costume recited a poem" (Mrożek 2010: 92). Ibsen laughed at the concepts that modern Norwegian nationality is built on, such as the equality that Norwegians solemnly believe in until today.<sup>2</sup> Ibsen (2007) ironically wrote about restoring the Norwegian 'peasant language':

Ah, but aliens then invaded, –  
the forest's ur-tongue was degraded.  
Four long centuries of starkness  
brooded o'er the ape in darkness;  
and nights, we know, of such duration,  
mark a country's population. –

The recently republished Mrożek's *Peer Gynt* (Mrożek 2024) has not been recognized as a means of adapting *Peer Gynt* for theatrical performance, although certain productions such as the 1970 *Peer Gynt* directed by Maciej Prus may share some similarities. Nevertheless, this short story exemplifies a possibility of Ibsen's integration into Polish culture, characterized by its unique attributes and detectable as early as 1958. Humor has emerged as a significant medium for addressing traumatic issues, particularly during the communist era when such themes were subject to prohibition and censorship. Forms of humor, such as irony, parody, absurdity, cabaret, and happenings, often enabled individuals to circumvent censors and convey democratic ideas. Humor has also consistently been regarded as integral to the Slavic spirit, with the bittersweet image of Stańczyk exemplifying this myth by embodying laughter through tears. Humor was an important element of the work of Ibsen, now perceived as a precursor of the modernist concepts.

Besides both *Peer Gynts* treat about the destructive influence of idealism, ideology and stereotypes on people's lives that in the end become ridiculously pointless.

<sup>2</sup> See: Fersk NRK-undersøkelse: Dette elsker nordmenn mest med Norge. NRK. [www.nrk.no/norge/fersk-nrk-undersokelse-dette-elsker-nordmenn-mest-med-norge-1.17410451](http://www.nrk.no/norge/fersk-nrk-undersokelse-dette-elsker-nordmenn-mest-med-norge-1.17410451) [accessed: 09.05.2025].

It is no wonder that the publisher of the new edition of the Mrozek stories referenced a classic Polish cultural text, the film *Man of Marble*, by the Oscar-winning director Andrzej Wajda, who filmed it years later.<sup>3</sup> This assertion is entirely valid, as Wajda explored the narrative of an individual manipulated by communism, albeit in a more tragic context.

Mrozek's absurdist interpretation of *Peer Gynt* presents an opportunity to make Ibsen's work more relatable to Polish audiences. By employing his esteemed writings, Mrozek addresses issues pertinent to Polish discourse, offering a novel perspective on Ibsen's play. The potential of this approach warrants further exploration through comparative studies.

## Bibliography

- Allen, G. (2006). *Intertextuality. The New Critical Idiom*. London–New York: Routledge.
- Camus, A. (1951). *The Rebel* (A. Bower, trans.). London: Penguin Books. [archive.org/stream/in.ernet.dli.2015.507721/2015.507721.The-Rebel\\_djvu.txt](https://archive.org/stream/in.ernet.dli.2015.507721/2015.507721.The-Rebel_djvu.txt) [accessed: 30.03.2025].
- Fersk NRK-undersøkelse: Dette elsker nordmenn mest med Norge. NRK. [www.nrk.no/norge/fersk-nrk-undersokelse-dette-elsker-nordmenn-mest-med-norge-1.17410451](http://www.nrk.no/norge/fersk-nrk-undersokelse-dette-elsker-nordmenn-mest-med-norge-1.17410451) [accessed: 09.05.2025].
- Goetz-Stankiewicz, M. and S. Mrozek. (1971). Two Forms of the Absurd. *Contemporary Literature* 12(2): 188–203.
- Ibsen, H. (2007). *Peer Gynt. A Dramatic Poem* (J. Northam, trans.). Ibsen.net. [www.hf.uio.no/is/tjenester/virtuelle-ibsensenteret/Oversettelser/114049.pdf](http://www.hf.uio.no/is/tjenester/virtuelle-ibsensenteret/Oversettelser/114049.pdf) [accessed: 30.03.2025].
- Kejna-Sharratt, B. (1974). Sławomir Mrozek and the Polish Tradition of the Absurd. *New Zealand Slavonic Journal* 1: 75–86.
- Lewko, M. (1996). *Obecność Skandynawów w polskiej kulturze teatralnej w latach 1876–1918*. Lublin: Red. Wydawnictw KUL.
- Maćkała, K. (2023). *Ibsen w Polsce*. Kraków: Universitas.
- Moi, T. (2012). *Henrik Ibsen and the Birth of Modernism*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Mrozek, S. (2010). *The Elephant*. London: Penguin.
- Mrozek, S. (2024). *Krótkie, ale całe historie. Opowiadania wybrane*. Warszawa: Noir Sur Blanc. Oficyna Literacka Noir sur Blanc. <https://www.noir.pl/produkt/418/krotkie-ale-cale-historie-opowiadania-wybrane> [accessed: 9.03.2025].
- Pour, F.K. and M. Abshavi. (2021). Investigating the Concept of Absurdity in A Doll's House by Henrik Ibsen: A Critical Study. *International Journal of Linguistics, Literature and Translation* 4(10): 46–52.
- Young, R. (1944). *Ibsen and Comedy*. In: J. MacFarlane (ed.). *The Cambridge Companion to Ibsen*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, p. 58.
- Żrałka, E. (2017). Principles of 'Newspeak' in Polish Translations of British and American Press Articles under Communist Rule. *Research in Language* 15(1): 97–118. [https://cejsh.icm.edu.pl/cejsh/element/bwmeta1.element.ojs-doi-10\\_1515\\_rela-2017-0003/c/2969-2581.pdf](https://cejsh.icm.edu.pl/cejsh/element/bwmeta1.element.ojs-doi-10_1515_rela-2017-0003/c/2969-2581.pdf) [accessed: 30.03.2025].

<sup>3</sup> Oficyna Literacka Noir sur Blanc. <https://www.noir.pl/produkt/418/krotkie-ale-cale-historie-opowiadania-wybrane> [accessed: 9.03.2025].