

= Janusz Zajdel =

Janusz Andrzej Zajdel (15 August 1938 ? 19 July 1985) was a prominent Polish science @-@ fiction author , second in popularity in Poland to Stanisław Lem . His major genres were social @-@ science fiction and dystopia . His main recurring theme involved the gloomy prospects for a space environment into which mankind carried totalitarian ideas and habits : Red Space Republics , or Space Labor Camps , or both . His heroes desperately try to find meaning in the world around them . His novels are recognized as classics of science fiction in Poland .

His most famous works are five social @-@ science fiction novels : Cylinder van Troffa (Van Troff 's Cylinder , 1980) ; Limes inferior (The Lower Limit , 1982) ; Ca?a prawda o planecie Ksi (The Whole Truth about Planet Xi , 1983) ; Wyj?cie z cienia (Coming out of the Shadow , 1983) ; and Paradyzja (Paradise : World in Orbit , 1984) .

The Polish science fiction fandom award was named after him : the Janusz A. Zajdel Award . He was a trustee of World SF .

= = Life = =

Janusz Zajdel was born 15 August 1938 in Warsaw , Poland . He studied physics at the University of Warsaw . After graduating , he worked many years as a radiological engineer and an expert on nuclear physics at the Central Laboratory of Radiological Protection in Poland . He published a number of academic works , handbooks of safety regulations , and educational texts .

In his spare time , he popularized science by writing science fiction . With his brother , he started a column in a Polish magazine for young people interested in science and engineering , M?ody Technik (Young Technician) , in which they proposed various futuristic gadgets . In 1961 M?ody Technik published Zajdel 's science @-@ fiction debut , the short story " Tau Ceti " (Polish : Tau Wieloryba) . Other stories by him soon appeared in several other Polish magazines .

His science @-@ fiction book @-@ writing career began in 1965 with the publication of a short @-@ story anthology , Jad mantezji (The Venom of Mantesia) , which included stories from M?ody Technik and some others that had already appeared a year earlier in another anthology . By 1982 he had published four more collections : Przej?cie przez lustro (Through the Mirror , 1975) ; Iluzyt (1976) ; Feniks (The Phoenix , 1981) ; and Ogon diab?a (The Devil 's Tail , 1982) .

His first novel , Lalande 21185 , appeared in 1966 , a year after his first short @-@ story anthology , and was geared toward young adults . His first serious science @-@ fiction novel was a " first contact " -type SF mystery , Prawo do powrotu (Right of Return , 1975) ; but it was his novels of the late 1970s and early 1980s ? Cylinder van Troffa (Van Troff 's Cylinder , 1980) ; Limes inferior (The Lower Limit , 1982) ; Ca?a prawda o planecie Ksi (The Whole Truth about Planet Xi , 1983) ; Wyj?cie z cienia (Out of the Shadows , 1983) ; and Paradyzja (Paradise : World in Orbit , 1984) ? that earned him a reputation as one of the most important Polish science @-@ fiction writers .

He was an active member of Polish and international science fiction fandom , and a Trustee of World SF . In the 1980s he was an active supporter of the Polish Solidarity movement .

On 19 July 1985 he died of lung cancer , after three years ' struggle against the disease .

= = Themes = =

Zajdel 's early works , from 60s and early 70s , can be located in the Cambellian , classic science fiction genre , focusing on scientific inventions and their role in space exploration , alien contact or artificial intelligence . As his writing career continued , however , his stories evolved to focus on the social aspects and often negative consequences of those inventions . Over time , an increasingly visible theme became visible in his works - a concern over dangers inherent in attempts to control the human society . He is also condemning human ignorance , warning against xenophobia , and asking philosophical questions about the nature of the universe , happiness and human destiny . Zajdel 's most important works are from his second period - late 70s and 80s - and represent the genres of social and dystopian fiction . In his works , he envisions totalitarian states and societies

leaving under extreme forms of mass surveillance .

His works are also recognized as being a critique of the totalitarian , communist state , a reality of his life in People 's Republic of Poland . Science @-@ fiction genre , with its outer @-@ worldly , clearly fictional , and often allegorical setting and invented jargon was able to debate fundamentals of such systems with frankness that more mainstream literature would not be allowed to .

= = Importance = =

Zajdel has been described as the second science fiction writer in popularity in Poland after Stanisław Lem . He has also been described as the writer who replaced Lem as the " top Polish SF writer " , after " Lem vacated [this position] earlier of his own volition " .

He is recognized as an originator of the social science fiction genre in Polish science fiction , known in Poland as the sociological speculative fiction (*fantastyka socjologiczna*) . He has been an inspiration to a number of younger Polish science fiction authors such as Maciej Parowski and Marek Oramus .

His works have been translated into Belorussian , Bulgarian , Czech , Esperanto , Finnish , German , Hungarian , Russian and Slovenian . Almost none of his works have been translated into English ; the only exception is the short story *Wyjtkowo trudny teren* (" Particularly Difficult Territory ") that Zajdel wrote for the English language *Tales from the Planet Earth* anthology edited by Frederik Pohl and Elizabeth Anne Hull .

= = Recognition = =

In 1973 Zajdel received an honorary award *Magnum Trophaeum* from the *Młody Technik* (Young Technician) magazine for long @-@ term cooperation . In 1980 Zajdel was recipient of the Polish Ministry of Culture and Arts Award for *Van Troff 's Cylinder* . Zajdel also received the *Golden Sepulka Award* two times : for *Limes Inferior* (1982 novel ; 1983 award) and *Wyjcie z cienia* (" Out of the Shadow ") (1983 novel ; 1984 award) .

In 1984 Polish fantasy and science fiction fandom (associated with the Polish SF convention *Polcon*) decided to establish an annual award , initially named *Sfinks* (" Sphynx ") . Janusz A. Zajdel became the first winner of this award , for his 1984 novel *Paradyzja* . He won the award posthumously in 1985 , shortly after his death , at which time it was decided to rename the award after him , and it became known as the *Janusz A. Zajdel Award* .

Frederik Pohl dedicated the anthology *Tales From The Planet Earth* to Zajdel and A. Bertram Chandler . This book also contains the English translation of one of Zajdel 's short stories , *Particularly Difficult Territory* . It is his only work to have been translated into English to date (as of August 2015) .

= = = Novels = = =

Lalande 21185 , 1966

Prawo do powrotu (*Right of Return*) , *Nasza Księżarnia* , 1975

Cylinder van Troffa (*Van Troff 's Cylinder*) , 1980

Limes inferior (*The Lower Limit*) , 1982

Cała prawda o planecie Ksi (*The Whole Truth about Planet Xi*) , 1983

Wyjcie z cienia (*Coming out of the Shadow*) , 1983

Paradyzja (*Paradise : World in Orbit*) , 1984

Drugie spojrzenie na planetę Ksi (*A Second Look at Planet Xi*) , posthumously completed by Marcin Kowalczyk , 2014

= = = Short @-@ story collections = = =

Jad mantezji (*The Venom of Mantesia*) , *Nasza Księżarnia* , 1965

Przejście przez lustro (Through the Mirror) , Iskry , 1975)
Iluzyt , Nasza Księgarnia , 1976
Feniks (The Phoenix) , Nasza Księgarnia , 1981
Ogon diabła (The Devil 's Tail) , KAW , 1982
Dokąd jedzie ten tramwaj ? (Where Is This Streetcar Going ?) , 1988
Wyższe racje (Higher Considerations) , Wydawnictwo Poznańskie , 1988
List pożegnalny (Farewell Letter [including outlines of unfinished novels]) , Alfa , 1989
Relacja z pierwszej ręki (First @-@ hand Account) , superNOWA , 2010