

“MUSTERING THE KINSHIP OF THE STORM” JAN KASPROWICZ’S PATHS TO GREATNESS

Summary

The volume consists of studies dealing with various aspects of Jan Kasprowicz’s literary activity, many of which were involved with the Greater Poland region (in its extended borders that include Kuyavia). Because of this, the poet was held in high esteem in Poznań and the region and it was here, before World War II, that academic research on the poet’s legacy began, which involved scholars not only from Poznań University but also other academic centers. Poznań also received Kasprowicz’s book collection, although this was unfortunately destroyed during the German occupation. This collection connects with that tradition of scholarship, which is presented in detail in the introduction. Several studies are devoted to Kasprowicz’s relationships with Poznań, multifarious and complex, although often marginalized. Others offer analysis of the aesthetic and philosophical values of his works, including his translations and criticism, comparisons with world literature phenomena, literary alliances and friendships.

The first two studies present Kasprowicz as a poet beginning his poetic career and engaging with his literary masters, Józef Ignacy Kraszewski and Teodor Tomasz Jeż (Zygmunt Milkowski). Magdalena Rudkowska’s text, which comes first, touches on the important problem of egotism in poetry in times that so often question the right of lyrics to express emotion, or to exist at all. Wiesław Ratajczak’s study points at the importance of Jeż’s paper published in “Wolne Słowo Polskie” journal in 1888 (*Notatki biograficzne. Jan Kasprowicz – Biographical notes. Jan Kasprowicz*) and the writer’s introduction to the first volume of Kasprowicz’s poetry.

Another field in which Kasprowicz’s involvement with the world was of interest to the authors of this volume was his collaboration with several prominent literary and cultural magazines of the late nineteenth century. Radosław Okulicz-Kozaryn looks at his cooperation with “Przegląd Poznański”, Joanna Zajkowska with “Tygodnik Ilustrowany” and Warsaw’s “Życie”, analysed by Małgorzata Okulicz-Kozaryn. The themes outlined in these papers are picked up on by scholars later in the volume. Dawid Osiński analyses Kasprowicz’s translations from English and German continuing Małgorzata Okulicz-Kozaryn’s interest in Kasprowicz’s Polish version of Shelley’s works. Beata

Obsulewicz takes up Radosław Okulicz-Kozaryn's analysis and builds a parallel between the author of *Z chatupy* (*From a Cottage*) and his patron from Greater Poland, the poet and writer about the Tatra Mountains, Józef Kościelski. Urszula Kowalczyk in her analysis of Kasprówicz's poetic anthology *Album współczesnych poetów polskich* (*The Album of Contemporary Polish Poets*) points at the writer's relationship with the great figures of that era's literary life – Adam Asnyk and Piotr Chmielowski – and his ambition to be one of those poets who decide on “what remains”. This approach to Kasprówicz 'growing up' as a poet and his 'growing into' the era's sensibility is complemented by studies focusing on his emancipatory inclinations, on his “liberating” approach to versification shown using the example of *Hymny* (*Hymns*) by Magdalena Saganiak and on his involvement with modernist revaluations. Analysing those trends, Urszula Pilch reflects on the category of 'lack' in Kasprówicz's poetry, Marcin Jauksz builds a parallel between Kasprówicz's and Sherwood Anderson's ambitions to rediscover religion as a source of human power, and Rozalia Wojkiewicz builds artistic and architectural framework for the poet's imagination. These studies, together with Katarzyna Sadkowska's biographical investigation on Kasprówicz's relationship with the poet and philosopher Kazimierz Twardowski in post-war Lviv and Piotr Kopszak's commentary on a poem written into Aleksander Rajchman's album collection of dedications complete this scholarly journey through the Kasprówicz's life and work.