

## SUMMARY

*Following the Roman Route of Sarbiewski* is an attempt to familiarize readers with the journey to Rome of Maciej Kazimierz Sarbiewski (1595–1640) – a Jesuit poet from the Baroque era who wrote in Latin. In September 1622, he left Poznań for the Eternal City to continue his theological studies there at the Collegium Romanum, where two of his friends, Andrew Rudomina and Nicholas Zawisza, were also supposed to study. They were accompanied by two fathers: the Italian Augustyn Vivaldi, who set out on a journey to take up the function of the Roman provincial, and the Pole Jan Gruzewski, who was going to the meeting of the procurators of the Society of Jesus.

Sarbiewski described the journey through Europe that he took in their company in an elegy entitled *Iter Romanum* (*The Roman Road*), which he gave the form of a poetic letter sent in December 1622 to his former professors and friends at the Jesuit college in Pultusk. However, this work was never published during the poet's lifetime and appeared in print only in 1754 in Dresden. That is why *Following the Roman Route of Sarbiewski* is one of the least known works by Sarbiewski, who gained European fame and the name of "Christian Horace" (Latin: *Horatius Christianus*) mainly thanks to his odes and epodes.

The purpose of this monograph is to recreate the poet's route against the backdrop of the panorama of 17th-century Europe, as well as to describe a contemporary journey made along the poet's route. The authors repeated his route during a trip organized along the same route 400 years later. The layout of the volume, the successive parts and chapters of which focus on various aspects of the topic taken up, is subordinate to this intention. First, readers receive a new Polish translation of *Iter Romanum* by Aleksander Wojciech Mikołajczak with an accompanying commentary. Then they get acquainted with Sarbiewski's life and work so that they can more empathically and consciously accompany the poet on his way to Rome. At the end, recipients gain the opportunity to compare their own reading experience of the elegy with the realities of a contemporary journey through Europe.

The first chapter entitled *The Currents of Sarbiewski's Life and Work* brings a new look at his poetry from the perspective of hitherto underestimated biographical contexts. This approach focuses on the impact that the multi-ethnic culture of the First Polish Republic had on the development of the poet's talent. Although Sarbiewski was born in Mazovia and initially educated in Pultusk, he spent the long and most creative years of his life in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. The poet's stay in Rome from 1622 to 1625 gave his poetry a universal European dimension, and his poems

began to reach readers from Lisbon to Vilnius and from England to Rome. This was due to the poet's brilliant ability to combine the ancient tradition with the Christian themes of his works, thanks to which he was perfectly able to express the anxieties and problems of the people of the Baroque era.

In the second chapter of the book entitled *To Rome in the Baroque era* we follow Sarbiewski's journey leading him to the Eternal City through Greater Poland, the German principalities, Tyrol and finally the regions of northern and central Italy. We put forward the hypothesis that the first part of his journey (from Poznań to Kostrzyn on the Oder), the poet traveled by water, sailing down the Warta River. We then analyze the subsequent stages of his journey, running through Leipzig, Bamberg, Regensburg, Ingolstadt, Munich, Hall in Tyrol, Brixen, Trento, Mantua, Florence and Siena, among others. The descriptions of these places contained in *Iter Romanum* are confronted with the accounts of other 17th-century travelers and with the historical knowledge of the time. This allows the poet to show the culture of Baroque Europe and to give a glimpse of the conditions of daily life on the road, which he encountered during his two-month journey.

The third chapter entitled *Through Europe Four Centuries Later* brings the insights evoked by today's European journey along Sarbiewski's trail. It contains reflections inspired by the content of *Iter Romanum* relating to the problems facing Western civilization today. These include such issues as recognizing the importance of Christianity in shaping Europe's historical and contemporary identity, as well as identifying the role played by the Greek and Roman cultural heritage in this process. The chapter also raises issues of environmental awareness, the threats of consumerism and the development of mass tourism, and finally the problems of cultural and linguistic diversity of our continent. Looking at these issues from the perspective of Sarbiewski's poetry allows readers to form their own opinion about the civilizational condition of Europe today.

The book is the result of an innovative research project that, in addition to Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznan, involved Audi Poland and the Province of Greater Poland and Mazovia of the Society of Jesus. The involvement of these entities has placed the study of the travel elegy of Maciej Kazimierz Sarbiewski in the contemporary space of social and cultural life. They provided a reference point for literary and Europeanist reflections inspired by the poet's text. Conceived in this way, the project made it possible to undertake interdisciplinary research using empirical methods rarely applied in philology. As a result, the impressions of journalists who participated in the journey along the poet's trail, which are included in the book's epilogue entitled *Splinters of Impressions*, also became an important element of the book.

*Translated by Nune Srapyan*