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*Prophets in the provinces.
Activity of the Częstochowa Branch of the Literary Society
them. Adam Mickiewicz in the years 1956-2016*

Summary

A prophet is one of the key concepts of romantic literary criticism, encapsulated within the scope of both aesthetics and the romantic worldview, opening a discussion concerning the attributes that should characterize a poet. The use of this category in the title of the dissertation emphasizes, on one hand, the extremely consistent work of the Częstochowa Branch of the Literary Society of Adam Mickiewicz on the promotion and the preservation of the achievements of Polish national poets in the local environment. On the other hand, it metaphorically states the status of the personalities gathered in it - unfulfilled creators, researchers, hobbyists, convinced of their own mission.

This work, as exhaustively as possible, shows the activity and functioning of the Częstochowa Branch, from its establishment in 1956 until 2016, when its 60th anniversary was solemnly celebrated. The dissertation attempted to prove the thesis that the Branch conducted social and educational activities in the provinces, creating literature and culture committed to serving the nation, maintaining romantic and patriotic traditions, and animating local artistic and scientific life. Local teachers and other representatives of the intelligentsia, interested in literature and cultivating the memory of Polish seers and researchers associated with the Częstochowa region, were gathered around the Department.

It is worth noting that since its inception, the Branch has been trying to convey and popularize in Częstochowa the most important romantic and universal values that literature and tradition bring. A strong need for a common and active confirmation of the national identity characterized not only the work of romantic individualists. It was also visible in the Częstochowa province, among local activists, social activists and literary researchers. Częstochowa Branch of the Literary Society of Adam Mickiewicz, promoting the ideas of

national art, at the same time undertook to display the literary diversity and peculiarities of the region. It consciously displayed regional themes and motifs, the local color of its creativity and the Częstochowa dialect as a material. The branch of the Society, under the patronage of Adam Mickiewicz, was established in the literary and cultural province and, for the 60th anniversary of its activity, it strove to connect the local community with the national culture. It also became the motherland of writers who played a significant role in the Polish literary life.

The aim of the work is to present the history of the Częstochowa Branch in reference to the history of the Literary Association of Adam Mickiewicz, founded in 1886 in Lviv, which was of scientific nature and dealt with research on the life and work of the poet, publishing his works and popularizing the cult of the bard. After 1900, the Society expanded the scope of its interests to the entire history of the Polish literature and the entirety of issues related to the knowledge of literature and literary criticism.

The work is monographic and based on source research. The dissertation used the method of document analysis, extracts from archival sources such as: chronicles, minutes of meetings, documents related to the functioning of the institution, as well as press articles. Interviews were conducted with former and current honorary members / members of the Society, with former (still living) and current presidents and members of the Board. The author immersed in the literature on the subject, the most important monographic studies, publications showing the changes in the literary and cultural life of Częstochowa before and after 1945, especially the characteristics of the local Polish language environment, and studies on the activities and functioning of the Częstochowa Branch.

The collected facts were arranged in a chronological and problematic manner. The work consists of five chapters preceded by the introduction. The first chapter refers to the reception of the literature of Romanticism in Poland in the second half of the nineteenth century, it presents the elements of the history of the Literary Society of Adam Mickiewicz in Lviv and shows how the cult of the Polish bard and the memory of him were constituted. The second chapter is devoted to the detailed genesis of the Częstochowa branch of the Literary Society of Adam Mickiewicz depicted on the background of the literary and cultural life of Częstochowa before and after 1945. Thus, it shows the city as a place with specific living and development conditions for creative circles. The third chapter presents the life and activity of Józef Mikołajtis, the first president of the Society's Branch, a Polish teacher and a social

activist in one person. It also describes the most important book by Mikołajtis, devoted to the history of literature in the Częstochowa region. The fourth chapter presents the functioning of the Branch in the years 1987-2016, during the terms of office of successive presidents: Józef Wójcicki, Barbara Kubicka-Czekaj, Krzysztof Czajkowski and Elżbieta Wróbel. The last chapter characterizes the intellectual potential of the people gathered around the Częstochowa Branch, particularly emphasizing its publishing activity, as well as indicates the most important and publications, which have not been yet discussed, of the members and presents the most important organizational activities of the Society.

This dissertation also organizes the literary and cultural life of Częstochowa, shows the interrelationships and dependencies between the authors and the institutions operating at that time. The functioning of local associations and scientific societies inspired the interest in the history of literature in the vicinity. The activity of the Częstochowa branch of the Literary Society of Adam Mickiewicz in the years 1956-2016 became a reference point for many interesting and important literary, cultural and educational phenomena that you can read about in this work.

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