

WŁADYSŁAW PANASIUK (Chicago, Illinois, the USA)
[WŁADYSŁAW PANASIUK (Chicago, Illinois,
the United States of America)]
e-mail: info[at]literaci.org

The John Paul II Association of Polish Writers in Chicago: a Report on the Activities in the Years 2006-2013

During his two-year stay in America Cyprian Norwid wrote one of the most beautiful hymns of longing:

“ For the country where a piece of bread
Is picked up from the ground with respect
Due to a heavens’ gift...
I am longing, my Lord...”.

The Polish Writers Association of John Pope II (PWA) was founded on 9th July 2006. Maciej Andrzej Zarębski, a guest from Poland and honorary member of the Board of PWA, was present at the first official meeting of the Association.

Members of the Board of PWA in Chicago in the years 2006-2013

The Board of the Polish Writers Association was formed for the term of 2006-2010 and Alina Szymczyk was elected President of the Association, Elżbieta Chojnowska – Vice-President and Władysław Panasiuk – Secretary. Later, Janusz Kopeć and Andrzej Chojnowski were added to the Board as new members. Since February 2010 to March 2012 the PWA was directed by the President –Alina Szymczyk, the Vice-President – Andrzej Chojnowski, the Secretary – Robert Paweł Redliński, the Members – Janusz Kliś and Jan Kamiński, and the Man of Trust – Józef Maciasz Broda.

Since 18th January 2012 to the election of 21st March 2012 the Board consisted of the following persons: President – Alina Szymczyk, Vice-President – Andrzej Chojnowski, Secretary – Anna Konarska, the

Members: Janusz Kliś, Jan Kamiński, Man of Trust – Józef Maciasz Broda.

On 21st March 2012 an election meeting took place and a new board was created: President – Alina Szymczyk, Vice-President – Andrzej Chojnowski, Secretary – Barbara Żukrowska, Financial Secretary – Maria Mili Purymaska, Man of Trust – Józef Maciasz Broda, President of the Control Committee – Jan Żółtek, Delegate of ZKP (Związek Klubów Polskich, the Polish Clubs Alliance) – Robert Paweł Redliński.

Members of the Polish Writers Association

On 23rd June 2013 the John Paul II Polish Writers Association included the following members (names given in the alphabetical order; if not written otherwise - the country of residence is the United States of America):

1) Antoni Bosak, 2) Andrzej Chojnowski, 3) Leonard Gogiel, 4) Elżbieta Idziak, 5) Janusz Kliś, 6) Anna Marzena Konarska, 7) Józef Maciasz Broda, 8) Henryk Musa, 9) Władysław Janusz Obara (Poland), 10) Elżbieta Oliwkiewicz-Alen, 11) Bogusław Pacer, 12) Eleonora Przybyło-Trzpit, 13) Maria Mili Purymaska, 14) Katarzyna Murawska, 15) Robert Paweł Redliński, 16) Anna Waluś Sikoń, 17) Marianna Maja Soroborska, 18) Ewa Sporna, 19) Grzegorz Stefanek, 20) Alina Szymczyk, 21) Izabela Trzaska-Przybylska, 22) Jan Żółtek, 23) Barbara Żubrowska.

Natalia Poneta Piekarska and Maciej Andrzej Zarębski are the honorary members of the John Paul II Polish Writers Association.

The Jesuits – spiritual guardians of the John Paul II Polish Writers Association

Father Władysław Gryzło SJ became a spiritual guardian of the PWA when it was founded, i.e. in 2006. At the beginning he attended the literary meetings of the poets as a convivial guest. A little later Father Tadeusz Kukułka SJ replaced him as a mentor of the PWA, but shortly afterwards he was called back to join his congregation in Krakow. His replacement was Father Superior Stanisław Czarnecki SJ; at present the spiritual guardian of the Association is Father Jerzy Karpiński SJ.

Secular poets and their spiritual guardians meet, become friends and then have to part when the mentors are transferred to other posts by their religious authorities, but a close connection between the Polish Chicago poets and the Jesuit Society is maintained.

Activities of the John Paul II Polish Writers Association – poetry meetings

Although the location of the Association was the building of the Polish Club Alliance, most meetings took place in the Jesuit Center in Chicago. At the beginning the group consisted only of nine persons, but new members were joining in and were added to the list. They represented various levels of the art of writing. On the one hand, among the members there were experienced writers, but on the other – there were many who were just beginners. The main aim of the Association has been to help all the writers, particularly those that are starting their careers. Evenings of poetry reading, organized by the Association, were getting considerable coverage in local media in Chicago. Many people came to the literary meetings, among them journalists working for the press as well as those working for radio and television, professional writers, people involved in culture and art.

From the beginning the Association supported new writers, providing similar promotion for them regardless of their origin and previous work.

The first poetry volumes were published which brought joy and satisfaction to their authors. Press reviews and interviews in local radio stations were helpful to the writers to reach their readers. Now only a few poets write for their own circles, whereas the members of the PWA write for the whole world making use of the Internet. It is an ambitious challenge, but the number of the readers is growing constantly, and, in fact, no one knows their exact number.

The main force behind the organization has always been Alina Szymczyk, the other authors were only helping her. There were meetings with such writers as, for instance, Krystyna Nowobilaska who spent the best years of her life in Syberia. Each month there are meetings organized for new poets and writers both the local ones from Chicgo, as well as outsiders. (Teresa Kaczorowska, Natalia Piekarska-Poneta).

Not all the members of the PWA are writers and poets and not all the poems meet the requirements for publication, but still the PWA has published and has helped to promote many new names. For some time now the PWA has been organizing workshops conducted by Wladyslaw Panasiuk. Poetry needs patience and time and is not an easy task. Alina Szymczyk, President of the Association, has organized two workshops led by Agnieszka Janik from Wrocław. All this has been done for the

benefit of the writers as writing requires constant education and improvement of its skills.

The Jesuit Center in Chicago regularly hosts such events as Poets' Spring and Poets' Fall which provide occasions for finding true poetic talents. It also has to be mentioned that the PWA has been supported by the local actors, radio announcers and television. Since 2009 the WPA has its own internet site (www.literaci.org) where you can find the catalogue of the achievements of all the members as well as the news about the activities of the Association.

Joint publications of the PWA

The WPA has been publishing literary almanacs since 2006. The first publication of this kind was devoted to the patron of the Association – John Paul II. Every year the Regional Society in Zagnańsk, the publishing house of Maciej Zarębski who is a traveler, a writer and a regionalist, issues one volume of poetry which includes some members of the WPA among its contributors. (see: bibliography). (...).

Key words: Polish literature abroad, Polish poetry, American poetry, 21st century, Chicago, The John Paul II Association of Polish Writers in Chicago, Poland, USA,

Bibliography:

Bibliography (collective books of the PWA):

Janowi Pawłowi II Chicagowscy poeci, Zagnańsk 2006.

Powroty, Zagnańsk 2008

Czy może być inaczej, Zagnańsk 2009.

Spojrzenie, Zagnańsk 2009.

Droga do światła. Almanach patriotyczno-religijny poetów chicagowskich, Zagnańsk – Chicago 2010.

Bez złudzeń. Antologia poetów chicagowskich Zagnańsk – Chicago 2010.

Sursum Corda – w górę serca. Wiersze i proza, Zagnańsk 2012.

Wyznanie emigranta, Zagnańsk 2013 [work in print].

Bibliography (individual books published by members of the PWA):

Bosak Antoni, *Droga do nieba*, Chicago 2006.

Chojnowska-Wokulska Elżbieta, *Chciałabym powiedzieć*, Łomża 2007.

Chojnowska-Wokulska Elżbieta, Chicago 2007.

Chojnowski Andrzej, *Ulica Belmont i nie tylko... moje myśli, moje wołanie...*, Starachowice 2009.

Drażkowska Danuta Maria, *Witraże życia*, Chicago 2010.

Gogiel Leonard, *Ścieżka spod Ostrej Bramy, wiersze*, Chicago 1989.

Kamiński Jan, *Schody do nieba*, Zagnańsk – Chicago 2009.

Kamiński Jan, *Wiersze*, Zagnańsk – Chicago 2010.

Kamiński Jan, *Żółte tulipany*, Zagnańsk – Chicago 2010.

Kliś Janusz, *Księżycowy sen*, Dębica 1978.

Kliś Janusz, *Kamienne znaki*, Dębica 1979.

Kliś Janusz, *Wzmaganie*, Dębica 1980.

Kopeć Janusz, *Tam gdzie trawy mówią pacierze*, Tuchów 1998.

Kopeć Janusz, *Zielnik wspomnień*, Tuchów 2000.

Kopeć Janusz, *Nienasycenie: fraszki*, Kraków 2001.

Kopeć Janusz, *Kolory czasu*, Kraków 2002.

Kopeć Janusz, *Imperfektum*, Kraków 2003.

Kopeć Janusz, *Haiku*, Kraków 2004.

Kopeć Janusz, *Polonii portret własny*, Kraków 2004.

Kopeć Janusz, *Twarze*, Chicago 2007.

Maciasz-Broda Józef, *Polski Papież*, Chicago 2003.

Musa Henryk Jerzy, *Wiersze z Kaszub*, Zagnańsk – Gdańsk – Lewin Brzeski – Staszów 2005.

Musa Henryk Jerzy, *Wiersze znad Małego Morza*, Banino 2006.

Musa Henryk Jerzy, *Poezja Konarzyn*, Zagnańsk 2006.

Musa Henryk Jerzy, *Mòje Kaszëbë*, Puck 2007.

Musa Henryk Jerzy, *Strofy dla ciebie*, Kielce – Zagnańsk – Lewin Brzeski 2007.

Musa Henryk Jerzy, *od poranka do poranka*, Gdańsk – Zagnańsk 2008.

Obara Władysław Janusz, *Pożegnanie Chicago*, Chicago 2007.

Obara Władysław Janusz, *Świątokrzyskie Termopile*, Starachowice 2008.

Obara Władysław Janusz, *Dobry Bóg raport przyjął i duszę*, Starachowice 2009.

Obara Władysław Janusz, *Birnamski las*, Starachowice 2010.

Obara Władysław Janusz, *Siwakowe granie*, Starachowice 2011.

Obara Władysław Janusz, *Pan Wybicki słuchał i nie wierzył*, Starachowice 2013.

Oliwkiewicz-Alen Elżbieta, *Lotem ptaka*, Chicago 2010.

Oliwkiewicz-Alen Elżbieta, *Gdy poezją głodne będą chaty*, Starachowice 2010.

Panasiuk Władysław, *Pod polskim niebem*, Chicago 1993.

Panasiuk Władysław, *Kolce róży*, Chicago 1993.

Panasiuk Władysław, *Sześć jesieni*, Chicago 1994.

Panasiuk Władysław, *I nie wódź nas na pokuszenie*, Chicago 1996.

- Panasiuk Władysław, *Amerykańskie noce*, Chicago 1997.
 Panasiuk Władysław, *Dwa życia*, Warszawa 2004.
 Panasiuk Władysław, *Piszę więc żyję*, Zagnańsk 2009.
- Piekarska-Poneta Natalia, *Byłam nie tylko na Mikołowskiej*, Rybnik-Nysa-Prudnik 1996.
 Piekarska-Poneta Natalia, *Malutki, Robokop, Plaskaty i Bani*, Nysa 2000.
 Piekarska-Poneta Natalia, *Siedziałam za Katowice*, Racibórz 2005.
 Piekarska-Poneta Natalia, *Perturbacje: wiersze*, Gliwice 2008.
 Piekarska-Poneta Natalia, *Plamy słońca*, Gliwice 2008.
- Purymska Marianna Mili, *Na skrzydłach wiatru*, Zagnańsk-Chicago 2012.
- Redliński Robert Paweł, *Trzy ukłony*, Chicago 2009.
 Redliński Robert Paweł, *Usidlony orzeł*, Chicago 2011.
- Soroborska Marianna Maria, *Nie uciekaj mi życie*, Chicago 2010.
- Szymczyk Alina, *Wiersze*, Kraków 1990.
 Szymczyk Alina, *Do światła i cienia*, Tuchów 1991.
 Szymczyk Alina, *Krzyk drzewa*, Tarnobrzeg 1993.
 Szymczyk Alina, *Lasowiak*, Tarnobrzeg 1995.
 Szymczyk Alina, *Baranów i okolice dawniej i dziś*, Baranów Sandomierski [1995].
 Szymczyk Alina, *Baranowskie jubileusze: 20 lat zespołu „Lasowiaczki”, 10 lat Miejsko-Gminnego Ośrodka Kultury*, Sandomierz 1995.
 Szymczyk Alina, *Baranów i okolice: Echo gminy: Kwartalnik regionalny*, Baranów Sandomierski 1996.
 Szymczyk Alina, *Pieśni Synogarlicy*, Poznań 1996.
 Szymczyk Alina, *Wędrowiec z księgi stworzenia*, Poznań 1998.
 Szymczyk Alina, *Dom wspomnień*, Zagnańsk 2010.
 Szymczyk Alina, *Z pędzącego pociągu życia, From The Rushing Train Of Life*, Starachowice 2011.
- Trzaska Izabela, *Rymy moje rymy*, Starachowice 2009.
- Waluś-Sikoń Anna, *Pociechy w strapieniu*, Nowy Targ 1998.
- Żubrowska Barbara, *Zatęsknisz jeszcze*, Starachowice 2010.

Information about the Author:

Władysław Panasiuk (born 1950), a former sailor and a fisherman, a Polish poet and a literary critic, living in Chicago (Illinois, the USA), a former secretary of the John Paul II Polish Writers Association in the years 2006-2008. He served an incomplete term of office on the board of the PWA. He published the next poetic books in Polish: *Pod polskim niebem* (Chicago 1993), *Kolce róży* (Chicago 1993), *Sześć jesieni* (Chicago 1994), *Amerykańskie noce* (Chicago 1997), *Dwa życia* (Chicago 2004), a novel entitled *I nie wódź nas na pokuszenie* (Chicago 1996) and a prose book *Piszę, więc żyję* (Zagnańsk 2009).