

Introduction

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It is with great pleasure that we present to our Dear Readers the fifteenth volume of *Góry – Literatura – Kultura*. Noting its modest jubilee, we wish to dedicate the volume to Professor Jacek Kolbuszewski, the originator and author of the “Góry – Literatura – Kultura” series published by Wydawnictwo Uniwersyteckie. In 2012 the series was transformed into an annual journal — the form of the title was changed, but its sound and semantic content remained the same. Professor Kolbuszewski continues to cooperate actively and devotedly with our periodical as well as with the Polish and international mountain community.

The first volume of *Góry – Literatura – Kultura*, edited by Jacek Kolbuszewski, was published in 1996 and contained a selection of humanistically profiled studies on topics relating to the mountains. In a note conceptualising the formula and theme of the series Kolbuszewski wrote:

The history of the emergence of multiple human attitudes towards the mountains and the related evolution of mountain themes in literature are the subject of this first volume of studies *Góry – Literatura – Kultura*. It comprises articles on such interesting and important issues as the romantic aesthetics of landscape, the history of attempts to create a huge firework on Mount Ślęza in order to make it look like Mount Vesuvius, styles of the romantic experience of being on a high mountain peak, an attempt to interpret Kazimierz Tetmajer’s *Na Skalnym Podhalu* anew, and the literary output of the outstanding mountaineer and painter Mieczysław Szczuka.¹

The thematic spectrum indicated in the note defined research areas which are still explored by authors of the periodical today. The present volume features, for example, studies devoted to volcanoes — in one of them the author refers to the famous shows organised on Vesuvius in the nineteenth century — to links between mountaineers, and literature and art, to the changing styles of responding to the aesthetics of the mountain landscape. The series initiated by Jacek Kolbuszewski — transformed years later into the annual periodical *Góry – Literatura – Kultura* — has contributed significantly to the expansion and integration of researchers exploring mountain-related themes in the broadest sense. Alongside *Wierchy*, it is today one of the most important scholarly periodicals in Poland focusing on the humanistic aspects of the mountains. Authors featured in the periodical come from various important Polish and foreign research centres, including those in Austria, Czechia, Germany, Switzerland and the United States. The

¹ J. Kolbuszewski, *Góry – literatura – kultura*, vol. 1, ed. J. Kolbuszewski, Wrocław 1996, note on the cover flap.

development of the journal, which coincided with a period of growing interest in mountain-related topics, supported by the emergence of new pro-ecological research methodologies and perspectives, became an impulse for the creation, at the Institute of Polish Studies, University of Wrocław, of a Centre for Humanistic Research on Mountains, under the auspices of which regular international conferences on mountain-related matters are organised, as are open lectures and presentations popularising knowledge in this field.

The publication of the fifteenth volume of *Góry – Literatura – Kultura* also coincides with two spectacular events. The first is the Dante Year set for 2021. By giving a symbolic meaning to mountains in his great oeuvre *Divina Commedia*, the poet became the first modern author to use the motif of climbing, thus giving rise to modern approaches to mountain themes in European literature (the topic is explored in the first sketch in this volume, by Jacek Kolbuszewski). The second noteworthy event is the 2020 Olympic Games in Tokyo, which, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, were postponed for a year and began on 23 July 2021. The Olympic cauldron lit during the opening ceremony at the Tokyo stadium was in the shape of the famous volcanic Mount Fuji. It is, therefore, no coincidence that the cover of the present volume features a representation of Dante's famous Mountain of Purgatory and the Japanese volcano symbolising the historic — organised at a difficult pandemic time — Olympic Games, during which a sport climbing competition was held for the first time in the history of the event.

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