

Summary

In the dissertation, the work of Tomasz Różycki, a poet, prose writer, essayist and translator from Opole, is analysed in the context of peripatetic experience. The scope of the analysis includes works from all stages of the writer's career: from his debut poetry book *Vaterland*, published in 1997, to writings from recent years. Also referenced are Różycki's essays and interviews conducted with him, which document and highlight the peripatetic nature of his output.

In the presented dissertation, peripatetic experience is interpreted as a strict dependence between the process of walking and the intellectual and artistic act. Różycki defines a peripatetic as a person who feels the compulsion to walk during intellectual activity. Circumambulatory peregrinations, reminiscent of the course of thought in the hermeneutic circle, allow the writer to circulate thoughts and inquire into the problems that concern him. Hiking turns out to be a method of cognition and sensual experience, enabling the peripatetic to find truths about themselves, as well as shape their own creative attitude. This experience inherently accompanies attempts to constitute personal and artistic identity because, as Różycki writes, 'The purpose of a journey, of every journey, is to find yourself ...' [„Celem podróży, każdej podróży, jest bowiem odnalezienie siebie [...]"]. Różycki's work can therefore be described, using the words of Ryszard Nycz, as "literature of inner experience."

The dissertation consists of an introduction, six chapters and a conclusion. The introduction defines the purpose of the dissertation, which is to present the author from Opole as "the first peripatetic of Polish poetry", as he is sometimes called. His patron is the French writer Arthur Rimbaud, a wanderer, *flâneur*, a poet often described as "the man with soles of the wind".

The first chapter of the dissertation profiles Tomasz Różycki as a poet, prose writer, essayist and translator. Knowledge of the writer's literary biography seems essential for interpreting the many contexts of his work. It is related to Różycki's peripatetic experience, who works on his subsequent poetry projects by, as he says himself, "strolling back-and-forth". It is also taken into account because of his ancestors, who were resettled in the Opole area from the Eastern Borderlands, as the poet peculiarly inherits their experience and reflects it in his *Vaterland*.

The second chapter of the dissertation discusses Różycki's autobiographical creations. Researchers and critics have repeatedly pointed out that the characters created by the poet from Opole are his literary *porte-parole*. In this part of the work, I focus in particular on presenting

the category of lyrical persona, understood after Anna Nasiłowska and Katarzyna Wszyńska as a kind of mask adopted by the author in communicating with the reader. Różycki's peripatetic self-creations are linked to his biography and family history and prove to be a crucial element of his artistic narrative.

The third chapter is devoted to the cultural contexts of the tradition of walking. Therein, I refer to works on the topic of hiking through the centuries written by Rebecca Solnit, Anne Wallace, and Frédéric Gros. In the context of my dissertation, Gros's publication *A Philosophy of Walking* is particularly relevant. In his book, Gros emphasises the presence in the cultural tradition of philosophers, scientists and thinkers (e.g. Friedrich Nietzsche, Arthur Rimbaud, Henry David Thoreau), who used to ponder during their walking peregrinations, as Różycki does today. The chapter discusses how the term "peripateticism" has functioned in history. Initially, it was associated with the history of philosophy, with Aristotle's Athenian school, Lyceum, where thinkers disputed while strolling along avenues or promenades (*perípatos*). In subsequent centuries, peripatetics were Aristotle's students and continuators, as indicated by dictionary sources, such as those by Michał Amszejewicz and Michał Arct. Nowadays, in addition to the philosophical understanding of the term "peripatetic", this word also means a person whose "thought processes are improved by walking". In this chapter, I also highlight the difference between peripatetic experience and other modes of travelling. I also point to the tradition of "poems created by strolling back-and-forth" ["wiersze wychadzane"] present in Polish literature. I cite poems created using the peripatetic creative method by several authors, including Adam Asnyk, Leopold Staff, Julian Przyboś, Miron Białoszewski, and Czesław Miłosz. Różycki, as I have tried to show in my analysis, turns out to be the heir of these poems, written in a peripatetic way.

The fourth chapter of the dissertation discusses the literary examples of wandering in Różycki's work. The course of peregrinations is related to the creative process of Jung's circumambulation, taking up the same topic from various perspectives under the pattern of the hermeneutic circle. I refer to the works of Jaques Derrida, Roland Barthes, Harold Bloom, and Jarosław Marek Rymkiewicz. Peripatetic experience, as Różycki states, is a "walking way of thinking". The act of taking steps, setting the rhythm and timing, and cyclically covering the same route determine the creative process of the author of *Księga obrotów* [*The Book of Turns*].

The fifth chapter of the dissertation is an interpretive part on peripatetic experience analysed in the context of identity issues. The writer's personality is torn between Opole, his hometown, and Eastern Borderlands lost to his ancestors. The author of *Vaterland* inherits both the family trauma of resettlement and the myths related to Lviv and its environs. The chapter

reveals the identity fluctuations of the peripatetic, who ponders while wandering through the "former German lands" and Eastern Borderlands. In Opole, he walks along the banks of the Oder, roaming the streets and suburbs. The city was presented in Różycki's work as a palimpsest space, full of traces of Polish, German, Silesian and Eastern Borderland history and culture. In turn, wandering around Galicia is associated with finding traces of ancestors who lived in Lviv and its vicinity before the war. By "strolling back-and-forth" in the aforementioned spaces, Różycki reaches truths about himself, his family, as well as the community living in these areas.

The sixth chapter analyses the literary record of peripatetic journeys in the footsteps of literary masters. Różycki undertakes expeditions to areas close to the writers, whose works influenced his imagination. Thus, he visits St. Petersburg known from Joseph Brodsky's essays, Bruno Schulz's Drohobych, Debora Vogel's Lviv, the French estates once inhabited by Joachim Du Bellay, the path "from Duino to Sistiana" followed by Rainer Maria Rilke, as well as Adam Mickiewicz's Lithuania and Switzerland. These peregrinations allow Różycki to establish a literary dialogue with his great predecessors. However, the peripatetic experience sometimes demystifies and demythologises the literary creations contained in the works of his literary masters.

The conclusion summarises the reflections and analyses, and also includes thoughts on *Ręka pszczelarza* [*The Beekeeper's Hand*], Różycki's most recent poetry book, published in 2022.