

SŁAWOMIR SOBIERAJ

DOI 10.31648/pl.4717

<https://orcid.org/0000-0001-6332-692X>

Faculty of Humanities, Siedlce University of Natural Sciences and Humanities

Emilia Sukertowa-Biedrawina as a Populariser of the Poetry of Michał Kajka. A contribution to the reception of the poet

Emilia Sukertowa-Biedrawina jako popularyzatorka twórczości Michała Kajki. Przyczynek do recepcji poety

Słowa kluczowe: Michał Kajka, Emilia Sukertowa-Biedrawina, Mazury, poezja, publicystyka
Key words: Michał Kajka, Emilia Sukertowa-Biedrawina, Masuria, poetry, journalism

She was a tireless social and educational activist, who researched and promoted Masurian culture and devoted her entire long and creative life to the Polishness of Warmia and Masuria and contributed greatly to the promotion of the literature of the region¹. In the interwar years, she published a small collection of legends and tales related to the cultural heritage of the southern areas of the East Prussia, and an ethnographic sketch devoted to the topos of devils in local tales², as well as a synthesis of the literature by Polish authors originating from that area (Sukertowa-Biedrawina 1935). Her notable achievements include numerous sketches of Masurian poets, journalists and publishers of books addressed to the Polish-language population: Jan and Hieronim Malecki, Michał Pogorzelski, Wojciech Kętrzyński, Gustaw Gizewiusz, Jan Karol Sembrzycki and others. She also printed poems by folk writers, including Samuel Lipka and Fritz Kleppa.

However, she put her heart and soul into promoting works by Michał Kajka among readers both in Poland and in Prussian Masuria. This issue, which has not been yet fully described by literature historians, has become an opportunity to discuss a new topic concerning the reception of the writings by the above mentioned

¹ Sukertowa was referred to as the “promoter of the knowledge of Masuria” as early as in 1936 the author of *Na tropach Smętka* [*On the Trail of the Sad Devil*] (see Wańkiewicz 1988: 5).

² These publications were later completely forgotten for many years (Sukertowa 1923; Sukertowa-Biedrawina, 1936). It was only recently that an extended issue of the book on devils, edited by Jerzy M. Łapo, under a slightly modified title (Sukertowa 2011), which was reissued in 2013 and 2016.

author. The aim of the research is to present Emilia Sukertowa-Biedrawina as an editor, commentator and promoter of Kajka's poetry.

Sukertowa-Biedrawina in the 20-year interwar period reminded its previous poems, known from such regional journals as: "Gazeta Ludowa" and "Mazur", which were published at the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century³. In addition to the above mentioned reprints, she published the latest works of the poet from Ogródek – received directly from Kajka by post or via the Polish Consul in Olsztyn – in the publications edited by her, e.g. in "Gazeta Mazurska" (1923–1933)⁴ and "Kalendarz dla Mazurów"⁵ (1924–1938).

The result of this cooperation was, inter alia, the publication of a moving and popular poem *Tęsknota za ojczystą mową* [*Longing for the Mother Tongue*]⁶ and many others, for example: *Na Trzech Króli* [*For the Epiphany*], *Prześliczny maj* [*Beautiful May*] or *Pieśń zimowa* [*Winter Song*], published for the first time. In total, the researcher presented to the readers of the above mentioned Działdowo journal⁷ approximately 20 poems by Kajka⁸.

However, due to low circulation and a low number of subscribers (Szostakowska 1978: 40), the impact of the publication was not high, and did not go far beyond the territory of the one Masurian district situated within Polish borders after 1920, although copies were also distributed not only over the Mława borderland, but also in Łomża and Suwałki area (Szostakowska 1978: 38). Only individual off-prints of some of the articles crossed the border (as well as the abbreviated version of *Krzyżacy* [*The Knights of the Cross*] by Sienkiewicz edited by Sukertowa). The main purpose of the journal – as explained later by its editor – was raising national awareness among the local population and its assimilation with the Polish society (Sukertowa-Biedrawina 1965b: 384–386, 388–389).

³ The information on the first print of such works as *Na cześć ludu mazurskiego (O ludzie mazurskim)* [*Praising the Masurian People (On the Masurian People)*], *Mazury* [*Masuria*] and *Na zakończenie stulecia* [*At the End of the Century*] in "Gazeta Ludowa" in 1896–1900 and *Pieśń na Gody* [*Song for Christmas (Poems)*] and *Głos Zbawcy* [*The Voice of the Saviour*] in "Mazur" in 1907 and 1911 is provided by Janusz Jasiński and Tadeusz Oracki in bibliographical commentaries to the texts published in one of the post-war editions of Kajka's poetry (Kajka 1982: 9, 11, 15, 21, 42).

⁴ Initially a biweekly, a weekly magazine from 1925.

⁵ Published by the (previously: Plebiscite) Association of Evangelical Poles, as stated by the editor, was "legalised in Działdowo as the Association of Friends of Evangelical Masurians". Both publications were printed in Warsaw, reaching first Polish borderland areas (Działdowczyzna), while a part of the edition (mainly of "Kalendarz") was illegally smuggled past the border posts to East Prussia. Since 1932, calendars were printed in Olsztyn (Sukertowa-Biedrawina 1965b: 382–384).

⁶ No author, *Tęsknota za ojczystą mową* [*Longing for the Mother Tongue*] "Kalendarz dla Mazurów" [*The "Calendar for Masurians"*], 1924: 110–111. In the subsequent editions, the poem was printed under a slightly modified title: *Tęskność za ojczystą mową* [*Longing for the Mother Tongue*] (see Kajka 1927: 10–11; 1982: 67–68).

⁷ "Gazeta Mazurska" is a journal "dedicated to the issues of the Evangelical people", actually printed in Działdowo (information under the label "Warszawa – Działdowo") describing, in particular, the activities of local educational establishments and Masurian organisations.

⁸ See details in the Annex at the end of this Article.

On the other hand, “Kalendarz dla Mazurów”⁹ distributed in many “Polish” districts of southern East Prussia, evoked much more response among the readers. In the 1930s, its copies – increased to almost 5 thousand – were distributed to the readers over the border at half price (Szostakowska 1978: 44). Sukertowa published there more than 30 poems of the Masurian bard. *Nota bene*, some of them were re-printed in the last pre-war volume of this “annual book”, already after Karol Małek became the editor (*Mój ojczysty mazurski las* [*My Home Masurian Forest*]: 1931, 1939; *Na Wielkanoc* [*For Easter*] 1930, 1939; *O mazurskich jeziorach* [*About Masurian Lakes*] – 1931, 1939). Michał Kajka expressed his gratitude with a poem – *Na dziesięciolecie Kalendarza – Do Pani Emilii Suke-rtowej-Biedrawiny, redaktorki “Kalendarza”* [*On the Tenth Anniversary of the Calendar – To Mrs Emilia Sukertowa-Biedrawina, the editor of the Calendar*], which proved the spiritual link existing between them, and shared involvement in activities for retaining the Masurian culture (cf. Chojnowski 1992: 36):

Związany węzłem szacunku
 Posyłam cnej Pani w dzięce,
 W mym serdecznym podarunku
 Najszczerzej przyjaźni wieńce.
 A na dowód życzliwości
 Ślę serdeczne pozdrowienia,
 Z mego serca uprzejmości
 Szczerej dziękczynności tchnienia,
 A choć dalekie przestrzenie
 Przegradzają nasze włości,
 Lecz serdeczne pozdrowienie
 Łączy nas węzłem szczerości.
 Niechaj Pani blaskiem świeci
 Zawsze jako perły drogie,
 W sercach ludu zapał wznieci
 I wspólne uczucie błogie [...].

[Bound with the knot of respect
 I am sending to you my gratitude,
 As the gift from my heart,
 The wreaths of my most sincere friendship.
 To prove my appreciation feelings
 I'm sending my warmest greetings,
 From my true heart,
 Sincere thanksgiving breeze,

⁹ Particularly since 1932, when it started to be printed in Olsztyn and the need to smuggle it across the border ceased to exist. Complications related to sending publications edited by her past the border posts are described by the researcher in her book *Dawno a niedawno* [*Long Ago yet Recently*] (Sukertowa-Biedrawina 1965a: 89–91). The information on four thousand distribution points in East Prussia gives some idea about the coverage of “Kalendarz” (Wrzesiński 1963: 333).

And, although we are so distant
 From each other
 Yet cordial greetings
 Bind us with a knot of sincerity
 Always shine with your light
 As the dearest pearls,
 To arouse passion in people's hearts.
 And a shared feeling of bliss [...]
 (Kajka 1933: 84)¹⁰

The poet really had the reasons to thank the editor, as a few years earlier (in 1927), she led to the publication of the first volume of his poems – *Pieśni Mazurskie* [*Masurian Songs*]¹¹. In the *Foreword*, the author wrote that his poems were intended to be used “ku pożytkowi i ku rozrywce polskiego narodu” [“for the benefit and entertainment of the Polish nation”], to teach the love to the mother tongue and to praise the Creator (Kajka 1927: 3-4). The introductory remarks, maintained in a solemn tone, showed a sense of the Polish ethnic identity, being directed to “braci narodowości polskiej” [“brothers of Polish nationality”]. However, the main motifs of the volume were religious topics (mainly related to Christmas and Passion), and only the initial poems referred to the issue of preserving the mother tongue.

The publication initiated by Sukertowa met with certain problems at the beginning. Her proposal to publish a book of an unknown folk author had not been approved in Warsaw circles supporting the Masurian movement (i.e. the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Interior). In view of the situation, the editor of “Kalendarz”, after having received previously unprinted works by Kajka, decided to pursue the project on her own, which she described several decades later in her memoirs. New texts of the poet – religious songs – were printed in the “reflection” section at the beginning of each issue. Preserved galley proofs were later used for typesetting the volume. Paper was acquired at no costs, and the activist – as she modestly described it – covered a “small amount for printing and binding” and with her private funds (Sukertowa-Biedrawina 1961: 162).

The booklet was 64 pages long and consisted of previously printed proofs – from October 1926 to June 1927 in magazines edited by Sukertowa-Biedrawina – “Gazeta Mazurska” and “Nowiny” (a version of this newspaper, distributed in Lower Silesia and in the southern part of Great Poland)¹². As many as 3,000

¹⁰ Two separate works were published under one general title. The first of them was the above quoted thank you note to *To Mrs Emilii Sukertowa-Biedrawina, the editor of “Calendar”*. The post-war edition of the Masurian poet by Janusz Jasiński and Tadeusz Oracki adopted this form of the title (see Kajka 1982: 213).

¹¹ The volume included 41 poems (including titled sections making several cycles) and the author's preface. Printed in Gothic script (Fraktur). In 2014 a publishing office “Retman” issued a reprint of this book edited by Janusz Jasiński (see Kajka 2014).

¹² Its full title was “Nowiny. Pismo dla ludu ewangelickiego” [“News. A Journal for the Evangelical People”] – as opposed to “Nowiny” by Kazimierz Gliński, continuation of “Nowiny

booklets produced in this way – bearing a fictitious printed inscription: “1927. Nakładem ‘Mazurskiego Przyjaciela Ludu’ w Olsztynie, druk J. Pieniężnej” [“1927. Under the Imprint of ‘Masurian Friend of the People’ in Olsztyn, printed by J. Pieniężna”] were smuggled from Warszawa to the capital city of the Warmia region by Consul Józef Gieburowski in his car, while 500 copies of the legal issue reached the readers in Poland (Sukertowa-Biedrawina 1965b: 396). Kajka had been already quite known in the Masuria region as a poet (and a journalist)¹³, but the initiative of the tireless activist and editor made him a representative and a mentor of the Masurian population, valued on both sides of the border.

In the same year, Sukertowa included two poems (alongside the texts of other authors) in a popular science monograph titled *Mazurzy w Prusach Wschodnich* [*Masurians in East Prussia*], published in Cracow (Sukertowa 1927)¹⁴.

At the same time, she started popularisation of his figure in biographic sketches. In 1928 alone, she devoted three articles to him, two in the national press and one in her “Kalendarz”. One of the September issues of “Kurier Warszawski” featured a sketch titled *Michał Kajka z Ogródka* [*Michał Kajka from Ogródek*] – written on the occasion of the 70th anniversary of the poet’s birth. The author describes him as the “folk poet of the Masurian land”, popular in his area, who loved the mother tongue and the home countryside. She describes his difficult life, his experience of Germanization and opposition to depriving children of the opportunity to use the language of their ancestors. She mentions that the only food for the Masurian spirit – binding them with the Polish culture – is ancient religious books, e.g. *Postylla* by Samuel Dambrowski, and *Kancjonał* by Jerzy Wasiański. She refers to Marcin Gerssa’s “Kalendarz Królewsko-Pruski Ewangelicki” [“Royal-Prussian Evangelical Calendar”] only as to the publication propagating the love of the Prussian nation, unjustly omitting the activity of its editor towards popularization of education among Masurians, maintaining the Polish language and fostering folk culture in the region (cf. Chojnowski 2009: 14–15, 18–19).

In addition, Sukertowa mentions Kajka’s work as a construction worker, who wrote down his first texts with a carpenter’s pencil on a wooden plank, while sitting on the scaffolding. She writes that creativity in this case was inspired by the sense of the Polish national consciousness and harm inflicted by Germanizers, as

Szląskie”. The journal was published in 1924–1933 by the Association of Polish Evangelicals, just like “Gazeta Mazurska”) (cf. Szostakowska 1978: 77–78). Publication address above the journal vignette said “Warszawa – Odolanów”.

¹³ Particularly in his home area. Already in the young years (from his debut in 1884), he sent poems, articles and letters to journals edited by Jan Karol Sembrzycki: “Mazur”, published in Ostróda and “Mazur Wschodniopruski” in Tylża (see Chojnowski 1992: 20–24). Later, at the beginning of the 20th century, he also cooperated with Polish speaking journals in the Szczytno centre (“Mazurski Przyjaciel Ludu” and “Mazur”), where his works were also published.

¹⁴ It included the poems: *Tęsknota za mową ojczystą* [*Longing for the Mother Tongue*] and *Cześć naszej mowie ojczystej* [*Praising Our Mother Tongue*] (cf. Sukertowa 2015: 119–121). See also the discussion on this publication in the synthesis written by Tadeusz Oracki (1976: 134).

well as the desire to spiritually support his people. Kajka was also shown as the author of the poetic volume demonstrating love to his home land and native language. The author ends her text quoting extensive extracts – leaving out only the fifth and the sixth verse – of an anti-Germanic poem: *Tęskność za ojczystą mową* [*Longing for the Mother Tongue*] (although she does not mention the title). She stresses the remarkable artistry, emphasizing the optimism in the message:

Nie traci sędziwy Kajka wiary w przyszłość ludu mazurskiego. Kiedy mijają chwile przygnębień i bólu, świta mu jasność słoneczna. A wtedy wyciąga przed siebie spracowane, drżące dłonie i szepce, pieszcząc się każdym słowem:

“O ojczysta nasza mowo, coś kwitnęła nam przed laty.
Zakwitnijże nam na nowo, jako kwitną w lecie kwiaty,
Zalśnij nama jako zorze, przywróćże nam skarb nasz isty.
Aby w domu i we zborze istniał język nasz ojczysty [...]”.

[Old Kajka does not lose faith in the future of the Masurian people. When the moments of depression and pain pass by, the sun’s brightness dawns on him. And then, he extends his worn-out trembling hands and whispers, caressing each word:

“Oh, our mother tongue, blooming years ago.
Bloom for us again, as flowers in the summer,
Shine to us as daybreak, bring our treasure back to us.
For our native language to be present at home church [...]”.]

(Sukertowa 1928a: 10)

Introducing the readers in the newly reborn state to a folk writer who creates his works outside the borders, under conditions of nationality-based oppression, was to justify the need to seek rights to ethnically Polish areas in East Prussia. This was indirectly linked to the fight for preservation of national symbols, carried out both by Poles and Germans, with the aim of winning the souls Masurian inhabitants of the eastern ends of the Weimar Republic and later the Third Reich (see Wrzesiński 2004: 280–281). Such a regional and at the same time, the national symbol, which Germans tried to remove from the collective consciousness of the borderland population, was the Polish language in everyday life and literature.

In a spirit of policy and propaganda demonstrating the Polishness of the land situated past the north-east border of Poland, Sukertowa also wrote an article about Kajka to an illustrated travel journal “Ziemia”. The text published here, titled *Michał Kajka z Ogródka. Poeta mazurski* [*Michał Kajka from Ogródek. A Masurian poet*] depicts, first of all, the native land of the writer, i.e. the borderland of Ryn and Lec (Ełk) districts, the beauty of the landscape and the past related to the Polish culture. The author, referring to the work by Wojciech Kętrzyński *O osad-*

nictwie polskiem w Prusach niegdyś krzyżackich [*On Polish Settlement in Former Teutonic Prussia*], convinces the reader about the age-old Polishness of these areas, and points out that the local population in the times of Kajka's childhood did not know the German language at all¹⁵. Concise information about the poet concerns his long life and hard work as a carpenter, as well as the reason to start writing poems, which was to be "the misery of the Polish brothers in the Bismarck era" and removal of the mother tongue from schools (Sukertowa 1928b: 385). In the light of this sketch, Kajka becomes – as the researcher writes with a slight exaggeration – "the anchorage of Polishness" in East Prussia. According to her, numerous publications of works in "Mazur", "Gazeta Olsztyńska" and "Gazeta Mazurska" made him "popular and loved by Warmian and Masurians". A closing statement, written in a religious tone, concerning the faith for a better future of fellow countrymen past the border posts, expressing the hope for "putting an end to their pain" (Sukertowa 1928b: 386) incorporates political implications. Carefully selected photographs, presenting a thoughtful, work-worn man and a well-kept brick country house in Ogródek, supplement the text of the article.

The village where Kajka settled and lived until his death was also presented on the photographs annexed to the article written by the editor of "Kalendarz dla Mazurów" in the fifth annual volume of this publication: besides the portrait of the poet and the image of his house (reprinted from the above mentioned publication in "Ziemia"), the third photograph showed the view on the local lake – Kraksztyn. Also this time, Sukertowa speaks about Kajka with great attention, as of a well-known personality, respected among compatriots for his love for the country and the native language, and for an extraordinary talent for reaching out to the feelings of his readers:

Słowikiem mazurskim nazwać go należy – śpiewa on jak ptak Boży, to, co czuje, prosto z serca, dlatego trafia do serc swych czytelników. Dlatego to w niektórych miejscowościach pieśni religijne Kajki śpiewane są podczas uroczystości kościelnych.

Kajka należy do tych świątłych Mazurów, którzy wiedzą, że Mazur a Polak to wszystko jedno. On kocha mowę ojców i dziadów, on modli się do Boga, ażeby zachował tę mowę [...].

[He should be called the Masurian nightingale – he sings like God's bird, and what he feels is straight from his heart, that is why he reaches the hearts of his readers. This is why, in some villages, religious songs by Kajka are sung during church services.

¹⁵ It is a known fact that although the majority of the population in this area were Polish, bilingualism was present there from the beginnings of 1860s (80% of the total population in the Elk district). Statistical data concerning the demographic nationality structure of Masurian districts were being published already at the beginning of the past century (see Wakar 1918: 61).

Kajka belongs to those open-minded Masurians, who know that a Masurian and a Pole mean the same. He loves the speech of the fathers and grandfathers, he prays to God to preserve this language [...].

(Sukertowa 1928c: 106)

She also calls the poet a “Songster”, arguing that he deserves the love of all those “caressed in the cradle by their mothers with the Polish speech (because Masurian means Polish)” (Sukertowa 1928c: 108). It is an extremely familiar image of a man rising above mediocrity, setting an example to others with his religiousness and involvement in national affairs. Such a cordial attitude of the author of the above quoted words to the poet born in Skomack apparently resulted from the memory and knowledge of his participation in a plebiscite campaign and in circulation of Polish publications in the Ełk district (Sukertowa-Biedrawina 1961: 160). It is worth adding that subsequent pages of the calendar feature four works from the *Pieśni Mazurskie* [*Masurian Songs*] collection, strengthening in readers their faith and love of God and the world. Two songs were particularly appealing to the imagination of the peasant audience, leading their everyday life out in the open: *Po długim śnie zimowym* [*After a Long Winter Sleep*] and *Przyroda uczy chwalić Pana* [*Nature Teaches us to Praise the Lord*]¹⁶.

In the mid-1930s, Sukertowa two more times published articles dedicated exclusively to Kajka. In the first one (*Ukochany wieszcz mazurski Michał Kajka z Ogródka* [*Beloved Masurian Bard Michał Kajka from Ogródek*]) included in “Kalendarz”, she repeated previous general information about the author of the “Longing for the Mother Tongue”, showing, with some exaggeration, his spiritual leadership in the everyday life of Masurians:

Powiedział przed stu laty poeta polski w piosence, którą dziś śpiewają na wszystkich ziemiach polskich, że gdy jeszcze żyją wieszcz, żyje naród tam.

Żyje lud mazurski – jeżeli ma swego wieszca. Kto to jest wieszcz? Ten, który dobrą wieść niesie ludowi swojemu, który mu śpiewa o sławie, o prawdzie, o wierze, o miłości, o wszystkim, co krzepi naród, co mu dodaje otuchy, co mu pozwoli jasnym i promiennym okiem patrzeć w przyszłość.

Takim wieszczem ukochanym jest nasz Michał Kajka z Ogródka.

[A hundred years ago, a Polish poet said in a song, now sung in all Polish lands, that as long as bards still live, the nation also lives there.

The Masurian people are alive – if they have their own bard. Who is this bard? The one who brings good news to his people, who sings to it about glory, truth, faith, love, and about anything that makes the people stronger, reassures, allows the people to look to the bright and brilliant future.

Such a beloved bard is our Michał Kajka from Ogródek.]

(Sukertowa-Biedrawina 1934: 67)

¹⁶ “Kalendarz dla Mazurów” 1928: 109–111.

Another text reached the population of Kujawy and Pomerania. It was printed in the daily press, at the same time in “Dzień Bydgoski” (Sukertowa-Biedrawina 1935a: 6) and “Dzień Pomorski” (Sukertowa-Biedrawina 1935b: 6). The researcher again provided the same information about the poet, slightly modifying her previous statements, also adding a nostalgic tone for the land lost by Poles:

Nad cichym, rozlewnym jeziorem, jednym z tysiąca jezior mazurskich, owianych smętkiem i niewypowiedzianym czarem poezji bólu i tęsknoty za lepszym jutrem — wiezie pracowity żywot siedemdziesięciosiedmioletni poeta ziemi mazurskiej, Michał Kajka. Stara polska wioska Ogródek, w powiecie łeckim, w Prusach Wschodnich, założona w połowie XVI wieku, często bywa odwiedzana przez życliwych i odważnych, których nie odstrasza... okoliczności niesprzyjające... Michał Kajka wyszedł z pod słomianej strzechy; odziedziczone po przodkach ukochanie mowy ojczystej, zwyczajów rodzinnych piastował w duszy swej z bogobojnym rozrzewnieniem. Poeta z bożej łaski prostymi słowy opiewał piękno mazurskiej przyrody, braciom swym, dzieciom i wnukom nakazując miłość ku świętej po przodkach spuściznie. Imię jego zna każdy Polak na Mazurach i Warmii.

[By a quiet, wide lake, one of Masurian thousand lakes, shrouded in the gloom and indescribable charm of poetry, pain and longing for a better tomorrow, a seventy-year old poet of the Masurian land, Michał Kajka is leading his busy life. Ogródek, an old Polish village in the Elk district in East Prussia, founded in mid-16th century, is often visited by those friendly and courageous, who are not deterred by... unfavourable circumstances...

Michał Kajka came from a simple village; with pious tenderness, he cherished his love for the mother tongue and family customs, inherited from the ancestors. The poet by the grace of God used simple words to extol the beauty of the Masurian nature, ordering his brothers, children and grandchildren to love the legacy of the ancestors. His name is known to every Pole in Warmia and Masuria.]

(Sukertowa-Biedrawina 1935a: 6)

Also in this case, a journalistic text was enriched with a sample of the Kajka’s poetry, namely fragments of his poem about the native language (5 verses, including the last one).

The name of Kajka is mentioned several times in discussions on Polish literature in East Prussia, which the author of *Legendy Mazurskie* [*Masurian Legends*] announced in regional and nationwide journals (e.g. Sukertowa-Biedrawina 1932: 8–9). It also appears in the publication titled *Zarys piśmiennictwa polskiego na Mazurach Pruskich* [*The Outline of Polish Literature in Prussian Masuria*] (Działdowo 1935, brochure edition), in which she used the knowledge derived from the correspondence with the writer, in the chapter devoted to the period after the First World War¹⁷.

¹⁷ This is mentioned by Małgorzata Szostakowska (1978: 82-83) in the biography of Sukertowa-Biedrawina.

In addition, she presented the figure of the songster from Ogródek in anti-German articles, such as in the text (in the Warsaw daily “Polska”), devoted to plebiscite activists, which included also the poet. However, she demonstrates, above all, his spiritual leadership of the oppressed people:

Przeżył plebiscyt współpracownik nie mniej oddany sprawie, świetny pieśniarz mazurski mieszkający we wsi Ogródek – Michał Kajka. Przetrwał on okropne czasy plebiscytu, patrzył na trumny zasłużonych towarzyszy, na rozboje, grabież, barbarzyństwo Prusaków. Sądzone mu było słowem polskim, pieśnią polską krzepić ducha wśród ziomków. W najcięższych chwilach ucisku nie upadł na duchu, wzywał matki mazurskie do nauczania dziatwy, polskich modlitw i pieśni pragnął, ażeby młodzież “pokochawszy język ojców podług jego poematów”, zawróciła z drogi germanizmu,

Proste niekunsztowne utwory wierszowane Kajki malujące ból i cierpienie duszy mazurskiej, lub śmiało krytykujące zachłanność pruską utrafiły do serc ziomków – uczy się ich młodzież, deklamuje na zebraniach.

Siedemdziesięcioletni pieśniarz z Ogródka w powiecie łeckim, zjednał sobie szacunek i serca licznych braci, którzy się doń o radę i zdanie zwracali. W ciężkich chwilach zwątpienia dodaje im otuchy ten siwowłosy starzec, który niejedną przetrwał burzę.

[An associate not less devoted to the case, a great Masurian songster living in the village of Ogródek – Michał Kajka survived the plebiscite. He survived horrible times of the plebiscite, viewed the coffins of his distinguished companions, and at plundering, robberies and barbarity of the Prussians. His fate was to strengthen the spirit of his compatriots with the Polish word, the Polish song. In the worst moments of oppression, he did not lose heart, he called upon Masurian mothers to teach Polish prayers and songs to their children; he wanted young people to return from the path of Germanism “upon falling in love with their fathers’ language through his poems”.

Simple uncomplicated verses of Kajka, describing the pain and suffering of the Masurian soul, or boldly criticising Prussian greed reached the hearts of compatriots – young people learn them and recite at the meetings.

The seventy-year songster from Ogródek in the Lec district, won over the respect and hearts of numerous brothers, who turned to him for advice and opinion. This grey-haired old man, who has survived many storms, raises their spirits.]

(Sukertowa-Biedrawina 1930a: 3)

Once again, Biedrawina, practising political journalism, quotes Kajka’s poetry (presenting two lines of a well-known piece) and gives readers in Poland at least a partial idea of his creative potential. It is worth noting that the text with the same content, under the same title, was published at the same time in “Rzeczpospolita” (Sukertowa-Biedrawina 1930b: 3), while its abbreviated version – without the excerpt from the poem – was also printed in a Catholic magazine “Pielgrzym”

published in Peplin. The magazine, informative in its nature, played a significant role in the fight against Germanization in Pomerania and its neighbouring areas (see Sukertowa-Biedrawina 1930c: 3).

Publications about Kajka – even those repeating widespread stereotypical statements – published on the pages of various journals, reached a broad spectrum of Polish intelligence, mainly of the Christian-national views. The Warsaw journals, and especially “Rzeczpospolita”, played a particular opinion-forming role. Thanks to Sukertowa, Kajka became a recognizable person in literary and cultural circles.

When Wańkowicz travelled by car and kayak around Masuria in 1935, he treated Kajka and his works with high esteem, regretting that their meeting was not very successful, as it was impossible for him to hold a long conversation with the poet. However, the report from his visit to Ogródek, making one of the final chapters of the book *Na tropach Smętka* [*On the Trail of the Sad Devil*] (Wańkowicz 1988: 327–333) – accompanied by photos of Kajka and his wife, also described a shocking scene involving the German-speaking granddaughter of the poet which moved the readers. This reportage novel, published for the first time in 1936, became a great bestseller in the Polish literature of late 1930s. Nine consecutive editions were published before the outbreak of the war. Additionally, its first print in 1935–1936 in the “Kurier Poranny” newspaper and later reprints of selected fragments contributed to the great response among the readers. The chapter about “Dumac” was also published in “Pion” (under the title of *Kajka*) three months before the publication of the book (Wańkowicz 1936: 4–5). Furthermore, it should be noted that an early version of the description of the Masurian journey with the motif of Kajka in the background, was printed in “Gazeta Kielecka” as the *Kraj za ścianą. Reportaż z Mazur Pruskich* [*The Country behind the Wall. A Reportage from Prussian Masuria*]. Kajka himself does not appear here, and the author speaks only to his wife. This is only an outline of the scenes and problems described in more details in a book version. The fact of Germanization of the youngest generation appears in the narrative in a barely signalled manner (Wańkowicz 1935: 2).

I believe that the book by Wańkowicz was strongly influenced by the editor of “Kalendarz dla Mazurów”. When the writer was preparing to start his Masurian trip, he contacted Sukertowa-Biedrawina, his acquaintance since the years of their youth (because he was a good friend of her brother) and made use of her knowledge of the region and instructions¹⁸. Also, the visit in Ogródek was probably inspired

¹⁸ The researcher describes it in her memories from the meeting, written down after 30 years: “In the summer of 1934 or 1935, I met Wańkowicz in the street. He was friendly, beaming with joy. He was happy seeing me: he was planning a trip to East Prussia and asked for the help of all persons having any information or materials related to Masuria and Warmia... Melchior asked me to dinner to “Stepek”. We talked for about four hours. He was writing and noting down. I admired his way of systematic and diligent collection of materials.” (Sukertowa-Biedrawina 1965a: 224).

by that meeting. Later, when Wańkowicz was working on the final shape of his bestselling book, he met Sukertowa and her husband two more times, which resulted in using photos taken in the Masurian Museum in Działdowo (Sukertowa-Biedrawina 1965a: 224–225). Two additional illustrations linked to Kajka (besides the portraits of the poet and his wife), showing a reproduction of the *Pieśni Mazurskie* cover of 1927 and the manuscript of a short poem, are probably the effect of this visit.

It is worth noting that the description of operations conducted by the Polish movement in Prussian Masovia, included in *Na tropach Smętka*, gave rise to the controversy and allegations of carelessness in using information that could harm the local population (see Ziółkowska 1989: 29–33). Already in 1947, Leon Sobociński wrote about the harm done to Masurians with this publication (Sobociński 1947: 205), and a quarter of a century later, Paweł Sowa presented the fate of the Augustyn Kiwicki, described in the book by his name, who was displaced from East Prussia two years before the war. Sowa also commented on the cognitive value of the report, stressing that the depiction of the above-mentioned activist as an intimidated Masurian who renounced his Polishness, was not accurate (Sowa 1974: 133–134).

Sukertowa-Biedrawina in her memories from the volume *Dawno a niedawno* [*Long Ago yet Recently*] wrote that prior to the printing of his bestseller in 1936, Wańkowicz did not listen to her advice concerning removal of fragments from the chapter *W dżungli* [*In the Jungle*] (devoted to the Kiwickis' family). In addition, after several years, she admitted that *Na tropach Smętka* included “numerous inaccuracies and historical errors”¹⁹, which in her opinion should have been removed in the post-war editions (cf. Szydłowska 2004: 315–316). She had a grudge against Wańkowicz for defaming Kajka by providing false information (in the foreword to the 1958 edition of the reportage) that the poet's son was an activist in the Nazi party (Sukertowa-Biedrawina 1965a: 224, 315–316).

After the war, Wańkowicz responded to the accusations of carelessness in referring to the actual names of Masurian activists, without feeling guilty about it (Wańkowicz 1988: 7–11). One of the researchers also stood up in his defence, repeating the decision of the special committee called upon to settle the case that the writer “has shown maximum responsibility” (Kurzyzna 1972: 30–31).

* * *

The researcher of the history and folk culture of Masuria corresponded with the folk songster for several last years of his life²⁰. She cherished the memory of him and took care of the publication of his works. However, they did not manage

¹⁹ Most probably, Sukertowa-Biedrawina was upset, among other things, at a distorted name of the poet's village, as Wańkowicz wrote about Ogródki instead of Ogródek.

²⁰ Unfortunately, the letters of the poet to the researcher have not been preserved; they were burned during the Warsaw Uprising (Chojnowski 1992: 35, cf. Oleksiński 1972: 165–166).

to meet in person, since his planned visit to Warsaw in 1930 did not take place because of the fear of persecution against his family. Despite the distance, they were bound by cordial friendship (Sukertowa-Biedrawina 1965a: 224–225) and mutual respect.

Sukertowa, as an enthusiast of Michał Kajka's works, also had strong influence on interpretation of the writer's legacy. In her statements, she usually emphasized his struggle for Polishness, steadfast national attitude, paying less attention to the religious message in its poems. This led to the consolidation of the stereotype of the folk poet, even a bard, but without taking account of the specific nature of its foundation, the soil upon which it has grown, i.e. Masurian Evangelicism²¹. However, the merits of Biedrawina consisting in creating the conditions for the broad reception of Kajka's works cannot be underestimated. Janusz Jasiński and Tadeusz Oracki argue that, next to Władysław Gębik, Emilia Sukertowa-Biedrawina made the greatest contribution to the popularisation of Michał Kajka in Polish society. These were pioneering activities.

The above-mentioned merits include, first of all, promotion of Kajka in the Polish national press during the interwar period (although her later merits are also important). In the twenty-year period between the wars, she was the first to write about Kajka in "Gazeta Mazurska" in 1925. The writer was later presented by Paweł Sowa in the brochure "Warmia i Mazury" ["Warmia and Masuria"] (1927) and Karol Ludwik Koniński in the monograph *Pisarze ludowi [Folk Writers]* (1938)²². Inclusion of Kajka in Wańkowicz's publication, as mentioned above, was also prompted by her inspiration.

After the Second World War, Sukertowa-Biedrawina continued her previous activities: included his poems in "Kalendarz dla Mazurów" (1947; 1948), published a number of sketches and occasional articles on the poet in the regional press, including "Głos Olsztyński", "Warmia i Mazury" (see Sukertowa-Biedrawina 1946b; 1948a,c,d,e; 1952a,b; 1954; 1956; 1958a,b,c,d,e) and nationwide publications²³, for example, in "Odra" (Sukertowa-Biedrawina 1948b: 1).

²¹ This way of interpreting the works of the "Masurian Nightingale" was accepted for many years, and it remained unchanged until 1980s, with the studies of Janusz Jasiński, Tadeusz Oracki and Erwin Kruk. This issue is examined in more details by Zbigniew Chojnowski in the previously mentioned monograph (Chojnowski 1992: 6–9).

²² Kajka was only mentioned by authors of other interwar studies concerning the Masuria region (see Giertych 1933: 216; Grabowski 1935: 15; Barke and Jaroszyk 1925: 52).

²³ As results from the information provided in the bibliography of Sukertowa's work prepared by her monographer (Szostakowska 1978: 185–228) and the bibliography concerning Kajka's works and their reception, included in a collective volume *Literatura pozytywizmu i Młodej Polski [Literature of Positivism and Young Poland]* (Vol 16, Z. Szweykowski and J. Maciejewski (eds), Warszawa 1982: 421–424), the author of *Karty z dziejów Mazur [Pages in Masurian History]* published after the war 15 separate publications related solely to the works, life and posthumous fate of the legacy of this outstanding Masurian poet. The bibliography of Emilia Sukertowa-Biedrawina's works published by the Provincial Library in Olsztyn includes a full list of those texts, together with a more detailed description (see Chojnacki, Wajsbrot 1977: 44, 52–54, 58, 60, 63, 65, 71). In addition, it is

She also ensured that Kajka's legacy should be acquired and secured (i.e. she made sure that it was taken in deposit from the Provincial Culture Department in Białystok), mainly the manuscripts of the previously unpublished poems and letters, by the Masurian Institute managed by her²⁴, later the Research Station of the Western Institute in Poznań²⁵.

In addition, she commemorated Kajka in the volume of prose *Mazurskie dole i niedole* [Masurian Fortunes and Misfortunes] published just after the war. Beside pre-war stories and historical-ethnographic essays (cf. Szydłowska 2013: 162, 359; see also Chłosta 1997: 73) included here, she also added a contemporary reportagelike sketch *Na mazurskiej ziemi* [On Masurian Land] (Sukertowa-Biedrawina 1947: 64–70) – with its title derived from the songster's poem entitled *Mazury* [Masuria]²⁶. It also included two references to the poet. The narrator, at the very beginning of the story, quotes the words of a guide addressed to foreign dignitaries during their visit in Ełk: “Niedaleko stąd, we wsi Ogródek znajduje się mogiła wieszczka Mazurów, Michała Kajki, budziela polskości w czasach najcięższych, dobie najintensywniejszego ucisku. Nie doczekał się Polski...” [“Not far away from here, in the village of Ogródek, you can see the tomb of the Masurian bard, Michał Kajka, the waker of Polishness in the most difficult times, the period of the greatest oppression. He did not live to see Poland...”] (Sukertowa-Biedrawina 1947: 64). Several pages later, she observes that a slightly modified popular poem by Kajka, starting with the words “O ojczyzna nasza mowo, coś kwitnęła nam przed laty, zakwitnęłaś nam na nowo, jako kwitną w lecie kwiaty” [“Oh, our mother tongue, blooming years ago. Bloom for us again, as flowers in the summer”] can be seen on the walls of the Masurian People's University (in Rudziska Pasymskie) (Sukertowa-Biedrawina 1947: 69).

Sukertowa-Biedrawina wrote about Michał Kajka's fate with a certain historical distance in her memoirs published in the volume *Karty z dziejów Mazur* [Pages

important to keep in mind the chapters devoted to Kajka in memoirs and in the book on the fighters for Polish Masuria (Sukertowa-Biedrawina 1946a: 13–14).

²⁴ See the information in the writer's memoirs (Sukertowa-Biedrawina 1965a: 324–325): “Spuścizna Kajki w Olsztynie zawiera nie tylko mnóstwo rękopisów, nie drukowanych utworów, sporo książek i czasopism, które były własnością poety [...] Jest tam również kilka listów rzucających nieco światło na warunki w jakich żył i pracował »dumak z Ogródka« oraz na stosunki miejscowe. Niektóre z tych listów zamieszczone zostały w tomiku: Michał Kajka – »Zebrałem snop plonu«, opracowanym przez Janusza Jasińskiego i Tadeusza Orackiego”. [“Kajka's legacy in Olsztyn not only includes numerous manuscripts, unpublished pieces, many books and journals owned by the poet [...] There are also some letters shedding light on the conditions in which ‘the philosopher from Ogródek’ lived and worked and on the local relations. Some of those letters were published in the volume “Michał Kajka – *I harvested a sheaf of crop*, edited by Janusz Jasiński and Tadeusz Oracki”.

²⁵ From 1948. In 1953, the Masurian Institute, as the Research Station, was transferred to the Polish Historical Society in Olsztyn (Chłosta-Zielonka 2010: 29–30).

²⁶ This is an excerpt from the beginning of the poem “Na mazurskiej ziemi / Jezior zgoła nie zliczy. Błaskiem z dala odbijają, bardzo pięknie wyglądają” [“On the Masurian land / You can't count the lakes. Their light is reflected from far away, they look very beautiful”] (Kajka 1982: 10).

from *Masurian History*] (1961) and in *Dawno a niedawno* [*Long Ago yet Recently*] (1965). Her reflections were largely devoted to the reception of the poet's works after World War II. A chapter of this latter book, entitled *Kajkowa dola* [*Kajka's Fate*], also included biographical information obtained in discussions with his family: children and grandchildren (Sukertowa-Biedrawina 1965a: 311–313). These were her last, and it could be said, farewell statements taking up Kajka-related topics.

The achievements of this Masurian culture researcher, promoting for decades the works of Michał Kajka, are extremely rich. She found numerous successors. But it is her contribution that is the most significant in this respect. In the interwar period, she introduced this folk writer into the circle of Polish poets recognisable in the literary world. This happened as a result of her articles in high-circulation nationwide publications, such as: "Kurier Warszawski", "Rzeczpospolita" or "Ilustrowany Kurier Codzienny". The book edition of *Pieśni Mazurskie* also played a significant role. In 1938, a poem by Kajka, along with a biography of its author, was included into the monograph by Ludwik Karol Koniński, *Pisarze ludowi* [*Folk Writers*], and this was undoubtedly possible due to the book written by Emilia Sukertowa-Biedrawina *Zarys piśmiennictwa polskiego na Mazurach Pruskich* [*The Outline of Polish Literature in Prussian Masuria*], to which the above-mentioned researcher referred (Koniński 1938: 355–357).

The contribution of Sukertowa-Biedrawina to popularisation of Kajka's poetry among the Evangelical population in Masuria, as well as in the southern part of Great Poland (through "Nowiny", where in 1925–1930 the same poems were printed as in "Gazeta Mazurska") and in other regions of Poland, as it has been demonstrated in the paper, was significant. This unquestionably had an impact not only on broader reception of his works, but also helped, already in the interwar period, to create a special image of that regional artist, whose religiousness, love of the homeland and the mother tongue evoked a supra-local response, assuring a place in the collective consciousness of Poles for the poet.

Annex

Works by Michał Kajka published by Emilia Sukertowa-Biedrawina in „Gazeta Mazurska” and „Kalendarz dla Mazurów” in 1924–1938:

1) *Tęsknota za ojczystą mową* [*Longing for the Mother Tongue*] [another title: *Tęskność za ojczystą mową*] – „KdM” 1924: 110–111 [with no information about the author], „KdM” 1937: 55 [without the title before the poem, containing here only verses 1, 2, 4 and 7; in the calendar's table of content another title: *Ojczysta nasza mowa* [*Our Mother Tongue*]];

2) *Do ludu mazurskiego* [*To the Masurian People*] – „KdM” 1924: 110 [no information about the author, the poem attributed to Kajka by contemporary researchers, see e.g. Jerzy Oleksiński, *Bard ziemi mazurskiej* [*The Bard of the Masurian Land*], Warszawa 1972: 182];

- 3) *Pobudka do żniwa* [*Wake-Up Call for Harvest*] – „KdM” 1925: 108;
- 4) *Na czasie* [*On Time*] [another title: *Podobieństwo* [*Similarity*]] – „GM” 1925, No. 8 and No. 17;
- 5) *Pieśń wieczorna* [*Evening Song*] – „GM” 1925, No. 18 and „KdM” 1934: 68;
- 6) *Cześć naszej mowie ojczystej* [*Glory to Our Mother Tongue*] [another title: *Treny mazurskie* [*Masurian Trenodies*]] – „KdM” 1926: 108–109;
- 7) *Prześliczny maj* [*Beautiful May*] [another title: *Prześliczny maju* [*To the Beautiful May*]] – „KdM” 1926: 109;
- 8) *O ludzie mazurskim* [*On the Masurian People*] [another title: *Na cześć ludu mazurskiego* [*Praising the Masurian People*]] – „GM” 1926, No. 3;
- 9) *Zachęta do szanowania mowy ojczystej* [*Encouragement to Respect the Mother Tongue*] – „GM” 1926, No. 36 [another title: *Pobudka do szanowania mowy ojczystej* [*Reasons to Respect Mother Tongue*]];
- 10) *Głos Zbawcy* [*The Voice of the Saviour*] – „GM” 1926, No. 37;
- 11) *Prośba do Boga o zachowanie mowy ojczystej* [*Asking God to Preserve the Mother Tongue*] – „GM” 1926, No. 38;
- 12) *Poemata* [*Poems*] [another title: *Pieśń na Gody* [*Song for Christmas*]] – „GM” 1926, No. 44;
- 13) *Baranek Wielkanocny w Starym Testamencie – a Baranek Boży, który gładzi grzechy świata* [*The Eastern Lamb in the Old Testament – and the Lamb of God who Takes Away the Sins of the World*] – „KdM” 1927: 108–109;
- 14) *Na Trzech Króli* [*For the Epiphany*] – „GM” 1927, No. 2;
- 15) *Pieśń zimowa* [*Winter Song*] – „GM” 1927, No. 3;
- 16) *Na zakończenie stulecia* [*For the End of the Century*] – „GM” 1927, No. 3;
- 17) *O ziemi obiecanej* [*On the Promised Land*] – „GM” 1927, No. 18;
- 18) *Lato* [*Summer*] – „GM” 1927, No. 21;
- 19) *Susza* [*Drought*] – „GM” 1927, No. 24;
- 20) *Do braci Mazurów* [*To Masurian Brothers*] – „GM” 1927, No. 36;
- 21) *Po długim śnie zimowym* [*After a Long Winter Sleep*] – „KdM” 1928: 109;
- 22) *O męce Pańskiej* [*On the Passion of the Lord*] – „KdM” 1928: 110;
- 23) *O zmartwychwstaniu Pańskim* [*On the Resurrection of the Lord*] – „KdM” 1928: 110;
- 24) *Przyroda uczy chwalić Pana* [*Nature Teaches us to Praise the Lord*] – „KdM” 1928: 110–111;
- 25) *Walczmy razem na Mazurach* [*Let’s Fight Together in Masuria*] – „GM” 1928, No. 45 [another title: *Walczmy razem o nasz byt* [*Let’s Fight Together for Our Existence*]] – „KdM” 1930: 109–110;
- 26) *Środki opatrności* [*Means of Providence*] – „GM” 1928, No. 47;
- 27) *Domek rodzinny* [*Family House*] – „KdM” 1929: 108;
- 28) *Zima* [*Winter*] – „GM” 1929, No. 7;
- 29) *Na Wielkanoc* [*For Easter*] – „KdM” 1930: 107;
- 30) *Na Świątki* [*For Pentecost*] – „KdM” 1930: 107–108, „GM” 1930, No. 23;

- 31) *Na Niedzielę Umarłych* [*For the Sunday of the Dead*] – „KdM” 1930: 108;
 32) *Na Adwent* [*For Advent*] – „KdM” 1930: 109;
 33) *Dumka* [*Dumka Song*] – „KdM” 1930: 111;
 34) *Sierota* [*Orphan*] – „KdM” 1930: 111–113;
 35) *Jak Tomek oszukał stolarza* [*How Tom Deceived the Carpenter*] – „KdM” 1930: 113;
 36) *Miej słońce w sercu* [*Have Sun in Your Heart*] – „GM” 1930, No. 12;
 37) *Dola nasza, dola* [*Fate, Our Fate*] – „GM” 1930, No. 15;
 38) *Bitwa pod Grunwaldem* [*The Battle of Grunwald*] – „GM” 1930, Nos 27 and 28 (supplement “Nasz Świat”);
 39) *Pieśń noworoczna* [*New Year Song*] – „KdM” 1931: 64;
 40) *Pieśni wigilijne* [*Christmas Eve Songs*] – „KdM” 1931: 90;
 41) *Śmierć krzyżowa* [*Crucifixion*] – „KdM” 1931: 90–91;
 42) *O mazurskich jeziorach* [*On Masurian Lakes*] – „KdM” 1931: 94;
 43) *Mój ojczysty mazurski las* [*My Home Masurian Forest*] – „KdM” 1931: 94;
 44) *Jakie panują stosunki na Mazurach* [*What are the Relations in Masuria*] – „KdM” 1931: 95;
 45) *Kto czyni straszdyła, ten sam wpada w te sidła* [*Whoever Tries to Scare, Falls into the Trap Himself*] – „KdM” 1931: 95;
 46) *O teraźniejszych modach* [*On Modern Fashions*] – „KdM” 1931: 96–97;
 47) *O żydowskim koniu* [*On Jewish Horse*] – „KdM” 1931: 97–98;
 48) *Mazury* [*Masuria*] – „KdM” 1932: 68; “KdM” 1934: 68 [another title: *Na mazurskiej ziemi... [On Masurian Land]*];
 49) *Na dziesięciolecie Kalendarza – Do Pani Emillii Sukertowej-Biedrawiny, redaktorki „Kalendarza”* [*On the Tenth Anniversary of the Calendar – To Mrs Emilia Sukertowa-Biedrawina, the editor of the Calendar*] – „KdM” 1933: 84;
 50) *Do braci rodaków* [*To Compatriot Brothers*] – „KdM” 1933: 84–85;
 51) *Teraźniejsze czasy* [*Modern Times*] – „KdM” 1936: 74–75;
 52) *Piosnka na czas postny* [*Song for the Lent Time*] – „KdM” 1937: 72.

Bibliography

Source texts

- Kajka Michał (1927), *Pieśni mazurskie* [*Masurian Songs*], Olsztyn.
 Kajka Michał (1933), *Do Pani Emillii Sukertowej-Biedrawiny, redaktorki „Kalendarza”, „Kalendarz dla Mazurów”* [*To Mrs Emilia Sukertowa-Biedrawina, the editor of the Calendar*]: 84.
 Sukertowa Emilia (1927), *Mazurzy w Prusach Wschodnich* [*Masurians in East Prussia*], Kraków.
 Sukertowa Emilia (1928a), *Michał Kajka z Ogródka* [*Michał Kajka from Ogródek*], „Kurier Warszawski”, No. 270: 10, evening issue.
 Sukertowa Emilia (1928b), *Michał Kajka z Ogródka. Poeta mazurski* [*Michał Kajka from Ogródek. A Masurian Poet*], “Ziemia”, No. 24.

- Sukertowa Emilia [no author] (1928c), *Poeta mazurski Michał Kajka z Ogródka w powiecie łeckim* [*Masurian Poet Michał Kajka from Ogródek in the Lec District*], „Kalendarz dla Mazurów”: 106–108.
- Sukertowa-Biedrawina Emilia (1930a), *Przywódcy duchowi Mazurów Pruskich. Bogumił Labusz – Bogumił Linka – Michał Kajka* [*Spiritual Leaders of Prussian Masurians. Bogumił Labusz – Bogumił Linka – Michał Kajka*], „Polska”, No. 190.
- Sukertowa-Biedrawina Emilia (1930b), *Przywódcy duchowi Mazurów Pruskich. Bogumił Labusz – Bogumił Linka – Michał Kajka* [*Spiritual Leaders of Prussian Masurians. Bogumił Labusz – Bogumił Linka – Michał Kajka*], „Rzeczpospolita”, No. 190.
- Sukertowa-Biedrawina Emilia (1930c), *Trzej przywódcy duchowi Mazurów Pruskich* [*Three Spiritual Leaders of Prussian Masurians*], „Pielgrzym”, No. 87.
- Sukertowa-Biedrawina Emilia (1932), *Polskie piśmiennictwo na Mazowszu Pruskim* [*Polish Literature in Prussian Masovia*], „Kurier Literacko-Naukowy” (supplement to “Ilustrowany Kurier Codzienny” No. 155), No. 23.
- Sukertowa-Biedrawina Emilia [no author] (1934), *Ukochany wieszcz mazurski, Michał Kajka z Ogródka* [*Beloved Masurian Bard, Michał Kajka from Ogródek*], „Kalendarz dla Mazurów”: 67.
- Sukertowa-Biedrawina Emilia (1935a), *Michał Kajka z Ogródka. Poeta mazurski* [*Michał Kajka from Ogródek. A Masurian Poet*], „Dzień Bydgoski”, No. 127.
- Sukertowa-Biedrawina Emilia (1935b), *Michał Kajka z Ogródka. Poeta mazurski* [*Michał Kajka from Ogródek. A Masurian Poet*], „Dzień Pomorski” 1935, No. 127.
- Sukertowa-Biedrawina Emilia (1935c), *Zarys piśmiennictwa polskiego na Mazurach Pruskich* [*The Outline of Polish Literature in Prussian Masuria*], Działdowo.
- Sukertowa-Biedrawina Emilia (1946a), *Michał Kajka*, In: Emilia Sukertowa-Biedrawina, *Bojownicy mazurscy* [*Masurian Fighters*], Olsztyn: 13–14.
- Sukertowa-Biedrawina Emilia (1946b), *Michał Kajka wieszcz ludu mazurskiego* [*Michał Kajka, the Bard of the Masurian People*], „Wiadomości Mazurskie”, No. 95: 2.
- Sukertowa-Biedrawina Emilia (1947), *Na mazurskiej ziemi* [*On Masurian Land*], In: Emilia Sukertowa-Biedrawina, *Mazurskie dole i niedole* [*Masurian Fortunes and Misfortunes*], Warszawa.
- Sukertowa-Biedrawina Emilia (1948a), *Michał Kajka. W 90-tą rocznicę urodzin pieśniarza mazurskiego* [*Michał Kajka. On the 90th Anniversary of the Masurian Sonster's Birth*], „Życie Olsztyńskie”, No. 266: 3; No. 267: 3.
- Sukertowa-Biedrawina Emilia (1948b), *Spod ciesielskiego ołówka* [*Written with a Carpenter's Pencil*], „Odra”, No. 48.
- Sukertowa-Biedrawina Emilia (1948c), *Spuścizna po Michale Kajce znalazła się w Instytucie Mazurskim* [*Michał Kajka's Legacy in the Masurian Institute*], „Życie Białostockie”, No. 158.
- Sukertowa-Biedrawina Emilia (1948d), *W Ogródku u Kajków. Odwiedzamy siedzibę i mogiłę poety ludu mazurskiego* [*In Ogródek at the Kajkas. Visiting the Home and the Grave of the Masurian People's Poet*], „Życie Olsztyńskie”, No. 222: 3.
- Sukertowa-Biedrawina Emilia (1948e), *Ze spuścizny po Michale Kajce ludowym poecie mazurskim* [*From the Legacy of Michał Kajka, a folk Masurian poet*], „Życie Olsztyńskie”, No. 170: 3.
- Sukertowa-Biedrawina Emilia (1952a), *Michał Kajka wieszcz ludu mazursko-warmińskiego* [*Michał Kajka, the Bard of the Warmian and Masurian People*], „Głos Olsztyński” 1952, No. 232, supplement „Świat i My”, No. 40: 1.

- Sukertowa-Biedrawina Emilia (1952b), *Ostatnie dni Michała Kajki poety i działacza mazurskiego* [*Last Days of Michał Kajka, a Masurian poet and activist*], „Strażnica Ewangelicka”, No. 10.
- Sukertowa-Biedrawina Emilia [E. S. B.] (1954), *Michał Kajka z Ogródka* [*Michał Kajka from Ogródek*], „Kalendarz dla Warmii i Mazur”: 123–126.
- Sukertowa-Biedrawina Emilia (1956), *Kajkowa krzywda* [*Injustice to Kajka*], „Warmia i Mazury”, No. 10: 2.
- Sukertowa-Biedrawina Emilia (1958a), *Jak to Michałkowi ptaki po polsku śpiewały i gadały. Z okazji 100-lecia urodzin Michała Kajki* [*How Birds Sang and Talked to Little Michał in Polish. On the Centenary of Michał Kajka's Birth*], „Głos Olsztyński”, No. 230, supplement „Archipelag” No. 23.
- Sukertowa-Biedrawina Emilia (1958b), *List do „Archipelagu” w sprawie wystawy pamiątek po Michale Kajce* [*A Letter to „Archipelag” on the Exhibition of Michał Kajka's Memorabilia*], „Głos Olsztyński”, No. 242, supplement „Archipelag” No. 25.
- Sukertowa-Biedrawina Emilia (1958c), *Moje wspomnienia o Michale Kajce* [*My Memories of Michał Kajka*], „Warmia i Mazury”, No. 6: 7–9.
- Sukertowa-Biedrawina Emilia [B. W.] (1958d), *Rok Kajkowski* [*The Year of Kajka*], „Komunikaty Mazursko-Warmińskie”, No. 4: 437–438.
- Sukertowa-Biedrawina Emilia (1958e), *W stulecie urodzin Michała Kajki* [*On the Ventenary of Michał Kajka's Birth*], „Kalendarz Ewangelicki”: 274–282.
- Sukertowa Emilia (2015), *Mazurzy w Prusach Wschodnich* [*Masurians in East Prussia*], introduction and edition by Piotr Bystrzycki, Dąbrówno.

References

- Barke Hugon, Jaroszyk Kazimierz (1931), *Walka o Mazowsze Pruskie* [*Fight for Prussian Masovia*], Poznań.
- Chłosta Jan (1997), *Warmia i Mazury w literaturze polskiej i niemieckiej w latach 1945–1995* [*Warmia and Masuria in Polish and German Literature in 1945–1995*], Olsztyn.
- Chłosta-Zielonka Joanna (2010), *Życie literackie Warmii i Mazur w latach 1945–1989* [*Literary Life of Warmia and Masuria in 1945–1989*], Olsztyn.
- Chojnacki Władysław, Wajsbrota Tamara (1977), *Twórczość Emilii Sukertowej-Biedrawiny. Bibliografia* [*Works of Emilia Sukertowa-Biedrawina. Bibliography*], Olsztyn.
- Chojnowski Zbigniew (1992), *Michał Kajka. Poeta mazurski* [*Michał Kajka. A Masurian Poet*], Olsztyn.
- Chojnowski Zbigniew (2009), *Od uznania do niechęci. Marcin Gerss (Giersz) w niektórych opiniach* [*From Recognition to Aversion. Marcin Gerss (Giersz) in some Opinions*], In: *Marcin Giersz (Gerss). Człowiek z pogranicza* [*Marcin Giersz (Gerss). A Man from the Borderland*], Zbigniew Chojnowski (ed), Gołdap.
- Giertych Jędrzej (1933), *Za północnym kordonem* [*Past the North Border Posts*], Warszawa.
- Grabowski Jan (1935), *Mazowsze Pruskie* [*Prussian Masovia*], Warszawa.
- Kajka Michał (1982), *Z duchowej mej niwy...* [*From My Spiritual Field...*], Jasiński, Tadeusz Oracki (eds), Olsztyn.
- Kajka Michał (2014), *Pieśni mazurskie* [*Masurian Songs*], introduction and edition by Janusz Jasiński, Ogródek.
- Oleksiński Jerzy (1972), *Bard ziemi mazurskiej* [*The Bard of the Masurian Land*], Warszawa.

- Koniński Karol Ludwik (1938), *Pisarze ludowi. Wybór pism i studium o literaturze ludowej* [*Folk Writes. Selected Texts and Studies on Folk Literature*], foreword by Franciszek Bujak, Lwów, Vol. 2.
- Oracki Tadeusz (1976), *Rozmówiłbym kamień... Z dziejów literatury ludowej oraz piśmiennictwa regionalnego Warmii i Mazur w XIX i XX wieku* [*I Would Talk to the Stone... From the History of Folk Literature and Regional Writing of Warmia and Masuria in the 19th and 20th Centuries*], Warszawa.
- Sobociński Leon (1947), *Na gruzach Smętki* [*On the Debris of the Sad Devil*], Warszawa.
- Sowa Paweł (1974), *Po obu stronach kordonu* [*On Both Sides of the Border Post*], Olsztyn.
- Sukertowa Emilia (1923), *Legends mazurskie* [*Masurian Legends*], Olsztyn – Warszawa.
- Sukertowa-Biedrawina Emilia (1936), *Diabeł na Mazurach w bajkach i podaniach* [*Devil in Masuria in Fables and Tales*], Działdowo.
- Sukertowa-Biedrawina Emilia (1961), *Moje wspomnienia o Michale Kajce* [*My Memories of Michał Kajka*], In: Emilia Sukertowa-Biedrawina, *Karty z dziejów Mazur (wybór pism)* [*Pages from the History of Masuria (Selected Texts)*], Olsztyn.
- Sukertowa-Biedrawina Emilia (1965a), *Dawno a niedawno. Wspomnienia* [*Long Ago yet Recently. Memoirs*], Olsztyn.
- Sukertowa-Biedrawina Emilia (1965b), *Kulisy wydawnicze „Gazety Mazurskiej” i „Kalendarza dla Mazurów”* [*Inside Story of Publishing „Gazeta Mazurska” and „Kalendarz dla Mazurów”*], „Komunikaty Mazursko-Warmińskie”, No. 3.
- Sukertowa-Biedrawina E. (2011), *Diabeł na Mazurach w baśniach i podaniach* [*Devil in Masuria in Fables and Tales*], Dąbrówno.
- Szostakowska Małgorzata (1978), *Emilia Sukertowa-Biedrawina 1887–1970. Zarys biograficzny* [*Emilia Sukertowa-Biedrawina 1887–1970. Biographical Sketch*], Olsztyn.
- Szydłowska Joanna (2004), *Prusy Wschodnie w reportażach dwudziestolecia międzywojennego (Jędrzej Giertych, Melchior Wańkowicz)* [*East Prussia in the Reportages of the Interwar Period (Jędrzej Giertych, Melchior Wańkowicz)*], In: *Reportaż w dwudziestoleciu międzywojennym* [*The Reportage in the Interwar Period*], Magdalena Piechota, Krzysztof Stępnik (eds), Lublin: 313–330.
- Szydłowska Joanna (2013), *Narracje pojaltańskiego Okcydentu. Literatura polska wobec pogranicza na przykładzie Warmii i Mazur* [*Narrations of the Post-Yalta Occident. Polish Literature Towards the Borderland, as exemplified by Warmia and Masuria*], Olsztyn.
- Wakar Włodzimierz (1918), *Rozwój terytorjalny narodowości polskiej* [*Territorial Development of Polish Nationality*], Part. 1: *Statystyka narodowościowa dzielnicy pruskiej i austriackiej* [*Nationality Statistics of the Prussian and Austrian District*], Kielce.
- Wańkowicz Melchior (1935), *Kraj za ścianą. Reportaż z Mazur Pruskich* [*The Country behind the Wall. A Reportage from Prussian Masuria*], „Gazeta Kielecka”, No. 353, „Dodatek Świąteczny”.
- Wańkowicz Melchior (1936), *Kajka*, „Pion”, No. 7: 4–5.
- Wańkowicz Melchior (1988), *Na tropach Smętki* [*On the Trail of the Sad Devil*], Warszawa.
- Wrzesiński Wojciech (1963), *Ruch polski na Warmii, Mazurach i Powiślu w latach 1920–1939* [*The Polish Movement in Warmia, Masuria and Powiśle in 1920–1939*], Poznań.
- Wrzesiński Wojciech (2004), *Procesy asymilacyjne i akulturacyjne na obszarach pogranicza polsko-niemieckiego w okresie międzywojennym* [*Assimilation and Acculturation Processes at the Edges of Polish-German Borderland in the Interwar Period*],

In: Wojciech Wrzesiński, *Między Królewcem, Warszawą, Berlinem a Londynem. Studia i szkice z dziejów XX wieku* [*Between Królewiec, Warszawa, Berlin and London. Studies and Sketches in the 20th Century History*], Toruń.

Ziółkowska Aleksandra (1989), *Na tropach Wańkowicza* [*On the Trail of Wańkowicz*], Warszawa.

Summary

The aim of this article is to show Emilia Sukertowa-Biedrawina's enormous contribution to the popularization of Michał Kajka's poetry among Polish readers both in the country and beyond the northern border. The mentioned researcher is presented as the editor of the volume of poems by this Masurian poet and as an editor in the publishing houses where she published his works. The journalism of Sukertowa-Biedrawina, devoted to the biography and creativity of Kajka, is also meticulously listed and discussed. This article proves that, as an author of numerous works on Masurian culture, she contributed to the creation of the special image of this regional artist, who was characterized as religious and patriotic as early as in the interwar period.

