

## Summary

*Sofija* is a monographic examination of the biography and creative work of Sofija Čiurlionienė-Kymantaitė. Based on phenomenological attention, her life is also approached as a discreetly unveiled and interpreted text. Bridges are built between creative work and life experience, connections are highlighted, but direct analogies are not sought.

Sofija Čiurlionienė-Kymantaitė was one of the first Lithuanian women intellectuals who consciously pursued equality of women and men, who studied humanities at the University of Cracow, and who was an active figure of the Lithuanian press in Vilnius. She had various creative aspirations, wrote poetry, prose, and dramas. She distinguished herself in early Lithuanian literary criticism that can be described as a quest for links between individuality, the Lithuanian spirit, and modernity, and which found reflection in her book *Lietuvoje* (In Lithuania, 1910).

Her meeting with Mikalojus Konstantinas Čiurlionis was crucial. In the monograph the essential aspects of this encounter are revealed through letters, which are seen as important material in general. While teaching Čiurlionis Lithuanian and through emotional suggestion Sofija boosted the Lithuanian spirit of the great artist and his attention

to folklore. Their life together was short: her husband's dramatic death as though drew a dividing line in her life. The author of the monograph delves into those psychological turning points of the loss that had the strongest impact on Sofija's creative work. To some extent they distanced her from her original stimuli and directed her focus towards the seemingly safer aspect of reality: a realistic outlook allowed for a more frugal use of spiritual energy. Turning back to the familiar Samogitian reality and writing in the Samogitian dialect opened new creative opportunities. She fully realised that the path which she had shared and had intended to share with Čiurlionis was blocked for good, and it was only in her late years that she returned to it in the poem *Giria Žalioji* (The Green Forest).

The composition of the monograph rests on the central line of Sofija Čiurlionienė-Kymantaitė's life and is combined with a discussion of her aesthetic concerns and creative work. Her aesthetic views, which are best disclosed in literary criticism, focus on Lithuanian folklore and the native language and culture through positioning them in the contexts of modernity and modern Europe. Her creative work is analysed both by genre and by recurring – thus regular – inner analogies.

To take a deeper look at interpersonal contexts, the author discusses the relationships of Sofija Čiurlionienė-Kymantaitė with her family (Valerija Čiurlionytė), with the Lithuanian literary tradition (Žemaitė), and with language teachers (Jonas Jablonskis), and highlights her educative work and her concern for the culture of the Lithuanian language. Sofija Čiurlionienė-Kymantaitė was not only a social critic, but also one of the most prominent public educators who in some aspects resembled Vydūnas.

The monograph closes with a discussion of Sofijos Čiurlionienės-Kymantaitės personality. It places emphasis on her Family and Home as original forms of human culture matching the essence of the Lithuanian creative forms she was searching for.