Aspazija’s novel **“The Autumn Nightingale”** (*„Rudens lakstīgala”*) (1933)

“The Autumn Nightingale” is Aspazija’s only novel. The poetess started its writing in 1932, but finished only the first part. The novel tells us about the time of the New Current movement in the 1990’s. In the center of the telling are the two young artist’s search for a path in live and their love. Aspazija used an autobiographic material for the basis — the relationship between her and Rainis and memories of the years with the New Current. It is a rich background of cultural heritage that the author depicts with sympathy and enthusiasm. It is easy to recognize Aspazija (the singer Arta Augstkalne) and Rainis (the newspaper’s “Dienas Lapa” editor Jarmuts Asmins) in both protagonists. However the characters from the novel are different from the prototypes, whose personalities are much deeper and more complex. The novel is peculiar and contradictory in terms of judging the story situations. Aspazija gives a broad view on the members of the New Current movement. The novel uses a lot of the biographic material of the people who lived in the same age as her, but not everything matches with the real facts of the era. The depiction by the poetess is colorful yet subjective. In the creation of novel Aspazija used plenty of memories that gained an emotional weight. Even though the memories are being separated by a large interval of time, they are not a reliable source of information, yet certain episodes she depicts quite vivid and precise. The contemporary reader may be less intrigued by the value of Aspazija’s prose, than by the cultural heritage view on the time of the New Current and the youth of both poets. The novel was published in the magazine “Atpūta” in 1933, but has never been printed as a separate edition.