Aspazija’s poem **“The Daughter of Sun”** (*„Saules meita”*) (1894)

The dramatic poem “The Daughter of Sun” is the first lyric-epic work that was created at the time when Aspazija was beginning her creative work. The poetess wrote it while working as a home-tutor and sent it to the editorial office of the magazine “Austrums” in the early 1990’s. The publishers considered it to be artistically worthless and refused the work. In 1894, just after Aspazija had gained success with the staging of the play “Vaidelote” (“The Vestal”), the publisher of “Austrums” Jēkabs Draviņ-Dravnieks printed the poem in the magazine as well as in the form of a book. Within this dramatic poem the poetess tried to capture the world in a clearer way than in poetry and talk in a more philosophical way about the battle between good and evil and the ability to sacrifice oneself for love or an idea. In “The Daughter of Sun” one can see the early literal impressions that young author had at the time. An echo of the work of Andrejs Pumpurs “Lāčplēsis”, the deities of the national romanticism period, the culture of Ancient Greece and J.V. Goethe’s “Faust” can be felt resounding in the poem. In an artistic sense the dramatic poem doesn’t reach up to the level of her best lyrical poems. Viewed today “The Daughter of Sun” draws in rather with the emotions, in which one can recognize the emerging poetess. The main heroine also shows features of Aspazija’s later heroes. The daughter of sun is the predecessor Liesma from “The Witch” (*„Ragana”*) and Guna from “The Silver Veil” (*„Sudraba šķidrauts”*). In these lines we can hear Aspazija herself, who is just about to spread her wings and take flight:

“My sails are blown by love,

Courage, strength my guide,

In longing burns my heart,

My wings are spread to fly. —”