

## **Project summary**

Not many people realize that Jan Brzechwa was not only a remarkable poet but also a lawyer of international calibre, one of the greatest specialists in copyright law Poland has ever had. What is so surprising is the fact that he got completely forgotten as a great jurist, despite the fact that he even wrote commentary to 1926 Copyright Law and the Law of Obligations. Such commentaries even today are only written by a very narrow elite of lawyers. Nevertheless, even lawyers, who claim to be specialists in intellectual property subject matter do not know that Brzechwa's books they read as kids were written by one of the best practitioners and a true innovator in the field of law.

One may wonder how did it happen that one of the most important figures in Polish history of literature got completely forgotten for what he did in his "second life". Was due to the fact that he worked under a different name: Lesman, rather than Brzechwa? Or perhaps he became so popular as a writer of poems for children and adults alike that no one really cared what else did he do? Or maybe there was another reason related e.g. to his Jewish background? Or maybe some other reason?

The goal of this project is to shed a new light on the "forgotten part" of Brzechwa's life. The objective is to collect all forgotten legal books and articles and analyse them in order to understand better one of the most important artists / lawyers of all time. The research will focus on both unknown aspects of his rich biography as well as on the analysis of his contribution to the science of copyright law in Poland and internationally. The interdisciplinary nature of the project will demand both a command of historical as well as legal methods of research.

The proposed project is of pioneering nature. No one thus far studied the biography of Brzechwa as a lawyer, let alone analysed his contribution to the science of law and his efforts to foster stronger respect for the rights of authors and their heirs. The preliminary research has already revealed many forgotten facts, e.g. that Brzechwa was also an acclaimed copyright lawyer on international level, being country expert on intellectual property in such renowned international organisations as UNESCO or CISAC.

The outcome of the project will be a book devoted to Brzechwa's life as a lawyer and to the analysis of his efforts as a copyright expert to improve Polish and international copyright law. Also, as part of the project some popularization actions have been planned. One of them would be co-organization of 100th anniversary of the oldest Polish collecting society – ZAiKS – which Brzechwa co-founded and chaired for many years as its President.