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DE AMICITIA  
Transdisciplinary Studies in Friendship

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## DE AMICITIA



FOR  
JERZY AXER AND JAN KIENIEWICZ  
AMICIS AMICI







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DE AMICITIA  
Transdisciplinary Studies in Friendship

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Edited by  
Katarzyna Marciniak and Elżbieta Olechowska



Warsaw 2016

*De amicitia: Transdisciplinary Studies in Friendship*

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And countless AMICI in Poland and abroad

– may this beautiful Latin word reflect our respect and gratitude to our whole ARTES LIBERALES Community.

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Julie J. Kidd

**A Journey of Friendship**





Julie J. Kidd  
President  
The Endeavor Foundation  
1060 Park Avenue  
New York, NY 10128

## A Journey of Friendship

April 7, 2016

What a remarkable and delightful journey it has been to be in partnership with Professors Jerzy Axer and Jan Kieniewicz for almost twenty years! I met Jerzy and Jan in the mid-1990s, and the Foundation began to support their work soon thereafter. Yet, despite the passage of time, the pleasure of working with them has never dimmed. There are a number of grantee institutions with whom we have worked for as long, perhaps even longer, but few have provided the same quality of fun and friendship that has accompanied the Foundation's partnership with Jerzy and Jan.

I first encountered Prof. Jerzy Axer in 1996, at a time when our Foundation was convening a series of conferences on liberal arts curriculum and pedagogy, in order to provide amplification of this mode of education for leaders in Central and Eastern Europe and the former Soviet States, particularly leaders interested in reforming their universities in the post-Soviet context in which they now lived.

Jerzy was one of the first participants in these conferences. Not surprisingly, his quick wit, imagination, energy and enthusiasm soon led to his becoming a leader in this movement for university reform.

I will never forget seeing Jerzy in action for the first time as he led a demonstration seminar at one of the Foundation's conferences in Budapest in 1998. He and a Professor of Astronomy from the University of Warsaw led an interdisciplinary seminar on the theme of "Astronomy and Poetry." The audience, which included students, was at first shocked, then scared, and finally drawn in as Jerzy paced the room and fired questions at the students while eliciting their comments and perspectives. The usual lecture was not part of Jerzy's modus operandi; dialogue was the order of the day. At the end of the seminar, our sights had been lifted and we were all thinking about the relationship of poetry to the stars.

At the time of this seminar, Jerzy was already working on his own vision of a liberal arts program, and in 1998, The Endeavor Foundation made its first contribution in

support of it. As we all know, over the years, those beginnings have developed into the deeply original, effective and far-flung constellation of programs that comprise the *Artes Liberales* galaxy at the University of Warsaw today, emanating from both Jerzy's fertile imagination and his ability to inspire others to be unusually creative as well.

I met Jan Kieniewicz somewhat later than I met Jerzy. Devoted to teaching and researching the politics and life of the Central and Eastern European States, he, like and with Jerzy, aimed to create a university that was devoted to learning and inquiry in the loftiest and most unfettered sense. In meeting these two, I could not help but be inspired by, as Jerzy put it in an early letter to me, "[their] wild and outlandish" plans. After meeting Jan, I was immediately drawn to his warmth and good nature and noticed how his supportive personality and steady hand provide ballast to Jerzy's exuberance and free flow of ideas. Both are highly intelligent and learned individuals but they are also so much more.

On several occasions, I have had the opportunity to visit these programs – programs that are unprecedented in the university at every level. While these programs are intellectually rigorous, original, and visionary, the friendship and respect inspired by both Jerzy and Jan, their care for each and every one of their colleagues, be they faculty, student or staff, is truly a joy to behold. No group could have more fun nor a stronger sense of common purpose than the one I have had the pleasure of encountering in the *Artes Liberales* programs. Jerzy's vivacity and joy are surely contagious, carrying us along on this delightful journey to "places" never imagined or imaginable without these qualities. With Jerzy, I am not at all sure that, "[t]here are more things in heaven and earth than are dreamt of in [his] philosophy."

Likewise, Jan stands out as an individual to whom one gravitates. His intellect and warmth bring into these "places" a substantive consideration of the deepest and most orienting of research projects, projects that probe into and bring forth important new scholarship on questions of identity, history, and politics.

In addition to the pleasure of our collegueship, I am honored and fortunate to call both Jerzy and Jan my friends.

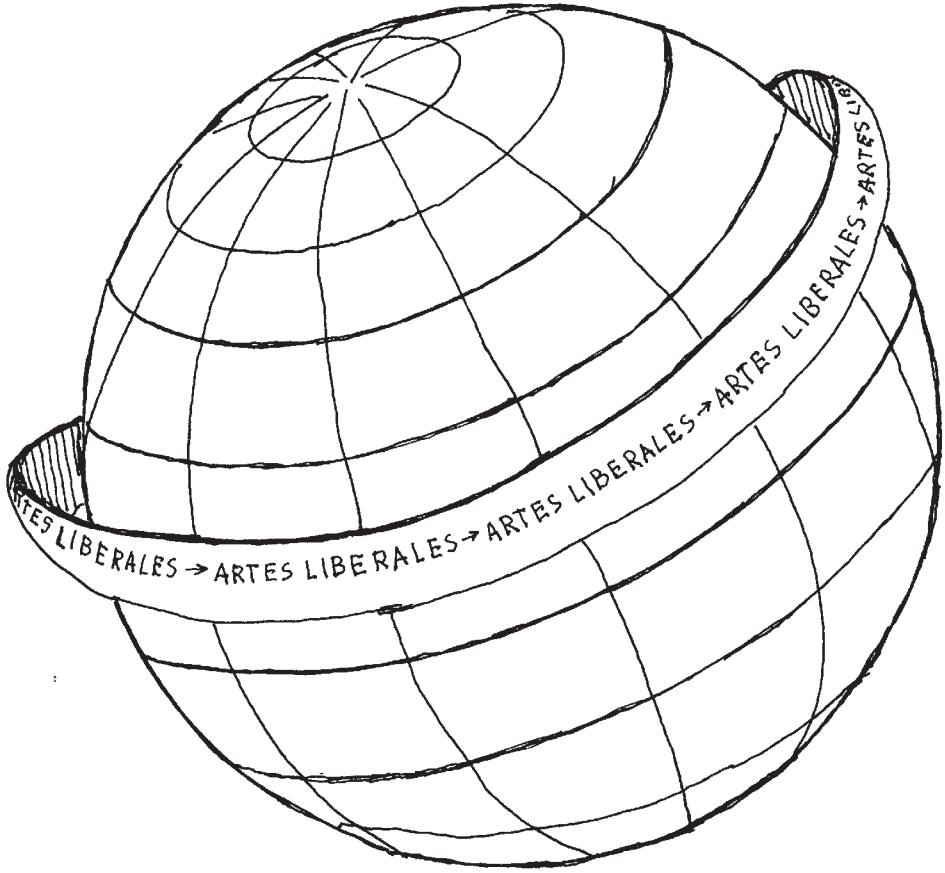
Both Jerzy and Jan are committed to thoughtfulness to others, to helping others succeed, to assisting and supporting their friends and colleagues when life's challenges get in the way, to inclusiveness in decision-making and in the formulation of new ideas and plans, and, very importantly, to laughter and joy in all they do. That is the spirit of friendship; those are the keys to inspiring leadership for change.

As a result, it is with fondness and admiration that I write this short testament. I am happy to have had a part, in some small way, in the creation of this unique, dynamic and influential institution. I could not be more delighted with the fact that the ideals in which I have long believed and which I have striven to help realize in my work as President of The Endeavor Foundation have here been met, made real, and built into this original and inspiring institution as conceived and initiated by these two wonderful people.

Donald W. Harward

**On the Meaning of Friendship**





Donald W. Harward  
President Emeritus Bates College,  
and Honored to be Visiting Member of the Faculty of “Artes Liberales,”  
University of Warsaw, 2014–2015

## On the Meaning of Friendship

April 12, 2016

With profound respect, admiration, and affection, I am honored to acknowledge the magnitude of educational qualities – now firmly established within Poland’s foremost University – of the quarter century achievements of OBTA, and now its most complete and excellent expression of liberal education at all levels in the reality of Artes Liberales.

Artes Liberales and the nexus of related liberal education initiatives that have been nurtured over the 25 years of OBTA’s existence now prosper; they can look forward to a bright future. They are at the very core of what liberal education can mean and promise.

They were designed in the context of a culture and history of Central Europe, but quickly became helpful universal models – offering “structural lessons” for the design of research, the direct connection of graduate to undergraduate study, and the interdisciplinary qualities of curricula. Professors Axer and Kieniewicz argued for the theoretical/conceptual foundations of higher education to be re-examined – just as the pedagogies and structural hierarchy of the practices of higher education were being re-examined – and some jettisoned. They asked whether liberal education could be firmly rooted in a classical concept of freedom – of agency – rather than a platform of justice which could be captured by authority. These accomplishments stimulated others in extended parts of Europe, many looking East – and resonated with so many others – including many of us in the US.

Honoring 25 years of successes should be more prospective than retrospective. To Jerzy and Jan, and to all on the Faculty and the superb staff, what you have accomplished is a prelude to even greater achievements. I am proud to be a colleague and to welcome the possibility of honoring an enduring range of your accomplishments.

And it is with profound respect and admiration that I share several instantiations of our friendship that have made my more than fifteen years of association so personally rewarding

Jan, your steady counsel and thoughtful responses, your warm and unflagging support and encouragement, your powerful insights into the cultural, social, and political history of Central Europe always framed our analyzes in such a rich and promising context. With

eminent grace, you stated most succinctly what was important, and what needed to be retained and acted upon. In a word yours was and remains the wisdom of friendship.

Jerzy, you are a significant part of my professional and personal life. You are both my friend and my “sibling of the head and heart” – as Julie has observed, we “could finish one another’s sentences” – but I would add that “you could do so in multiple languages”!

I treasure the opportunities to sit across the table sketching diagrams that reflect structural options – some of which may then be posted on your office wall – tributes to our discussion. I treasure being counted as a member of the Faculty of “Artes Liberales” – and to teach your wonderful students – even briefly and as a visitor. I treasure the opportunities to join with your superb Faculty colleagues in workshops and conferences. I treasure the occasions when asked to prepare some remarks and have them stimulate further exploration of an idea – and even more so, I treasure the essays you have contributed to volumes and studies which I have edited. Your work is always expressed with originality and energy – and laden with insight!

There are so many tributes to friendship on the professional list, but the personal dimensions of friendship are equally important to me: the lovely meals in the Warsaw garden restaurants – the steak tartar, the local alcoholic drink – discovering a favorite wine; the shared conversations on a park bench in NYC’s Central Park; the “skyping”; the most glorious visit to Maine, and the marvels of even the simplest of animals; and your descriptions of Africa “vacation studies” with all of the “family” of monkey. Selflessly, you and Anna frequently took me to the airport at 4:00 am – with thoughtfulness and attention to my health – and even en route, we were in dialogue, exploring depth of interests with knowing kindness. Friendship is also instantiated in the dedication of those who help you – their willingness to be happily available “24-7,” because they are dedicated to something more significant than their own interests – or even beyond your interest – they honor the ideas and ideals you have cultivated – and they, like me, honor you.

So dear friends, on the occasion of this recognition, know that I would want to be there – in close animated conversation across the table, interrupted only by coffee and good cheer!

I send my warmest and affectionate best to you, to Jan, to Anna, and to our colleagues,  
Don

Maciej Abramowicz

**Family and Friendship:  
Two Literary Pillars of Chivalry**



Maciej Abramowicz

## Family and Friendship: Two Literary Pillars of Chivalry

The rise of the vernacular literature in mediaeval France is inextricably linked to the social processes which appeared there at the turn of the tenth century and soon grew in significance across the whole of Europe. These processes helped shape a new social class – knights. Associated with nobility, knights played an important role in the French society, and they continued to do so until the end of the eighteenth century. Old French literature is therefore not only a seismograph which registered this major social change, but also, if not primarily, an instrument by means of which an ethos of a new type of warrior developed, i.e. one who fought on horseback. Classified today as literary works, they shaped the entire axiology of this class of people and their specific code of conduct imitated in vernacular literatures of other European countries and cultivated as role models. This is best evidenced in the way of life of knights and of the gentry in the late Middle Ages, and, specifically, in the costumes worn during tournaments, in the heraldry, and other attributes of literary protagonists or in meetings at the round table. Even in battles held during the Hundred Years' War they employed fighting techniques described in literature, with rather pathetic results. Arguably, this contributed significantly to the catastrophic defeats of the French heavy cavalry. Although the code of conduct manifested in the literature of the day was mercilessly verified in real life, the axiological system of knighthood was so appealing that it spread far beyond knights to reach representatives of other social groups so long as the descendants of mediaeval knights constituted the élite of the society.

Historians widely agree as to the significance of the literature in establishing and giving direction to the evolution of chivalry. While analysing the professional ethics of mediaeval knights, they make frequent references to literary accounts in order to illustrate its various aspects. However, these references are burdened with a fairly common error of judgment which consists of treating chivalric literature largely as a monolith whereas in fact, mediaeval narratives fall into specific genres. Despite ostensible similarity or even identity of the literary worlds presented, various aspects of chivalric axiology are different depending on the genre of a given literary work.

### *Chanson de geste*: The Family-Centred World

The emergence of knights as a separate estate of the social structure in the Middle Ages coincided with the “privatization” of power in the Carolingian Empire. In the eleventh century local overlords freed themselves, naturally or not, from the dictates of the ever weakening central power. They built their own castles where they settled down with their families and with warriors who constituted their totally independent armies. Their economic existence rested on a freehold estate in land, i.e. an allod, or in a fief, i.e. landed property granted by an overlord. Originally granted to a vassal during his lifetime, fiefs became hereditary, which curbed the powers of the grantor and underlined the autonomy of the local castellan. The hereditary nature of fiefdom increased the role of dynasties which became the core of lay élites of mediaeval monarchies. This, in turn, facilitated the creation of specific inter-family relations based on the bonds of affection. Such bonds are manifested primarily in vertical relations between generations, e.g. father and son, as well as in horizontal relations such as links between brothers, relatives, etc. Thus, the top of the hierarchy of values is taken by family solidarity or shared responsibility for the deeds committed by individual family members.

In French literature, this family-centred world is perhaps best exemplified in the *chanson de geste* or an epic poem, which enjoyed considerable popularity during the Middle Ages. Its subject matter focuses in the main on the war of Christian knights against the Saracens on the frontiers of Charlemagne’s empire and also in the Holy Land, albeit to a lesser degree. Equally important, though less frequently tackled, are feudal wars between the lord and his mutinous vassals or wars between individual families of overlords. While literature by nature grants some privileges to an individual protagonist, and even where such a protagonist embodies features of a specific group of people, there are quite a few examples of *chansons de geste* in which the protagonist is represented by largely indistinguishable members of a single family. *Renaut de Montauban* dating back to the twelfth century is a case in point. The tale tells the story of four sons of Aymon who are equally involved in a conflict with Charlemagne, brought about by one of them. These sons become a type of a collective protagonist, and their names are the only distinguishing feature. Little wonder then that they travel on the back of their magical horse Bayard who expands its size to carry them all.

Noble families become heroes of whole cycles or series of epic poems linked by the main character or depicting the same type of conflict. The Lorraine cycle, for example, is dedicated to the war that ensues between Lorrainers and a family of Bordeaux. Interestingly, there is no specific protagonist that would be the focal point of all the epics of the cycle. But even in the poems where the protagonists are highly individualized, as is the case of Charlemagne or William of Orange who constitute a reference point for the most important cycles linked by the main character, family-related issues remain at the core of the narratives. In fact, the protagonists actually execute their “family policies.” Individual *chansons* become merely parts of a biography of a legendary hero or rather his family. They are fully understood only in the context of the whole legend, something which the mediaeval public knew very well. This is best evidenced in the



omnipresent motif of revenge, an imperative and a driving force in a vast majority of epic poems.<sup>1</sup> Family solidarity is stronger than even the duty of loyalty towards the lord, as exemplified in the aforementioned cycle about mutinous vassals, the structural cohesion of which rests on the nature of the conflict as depicted in individual poems rather than on a single protagonist.

The deeds of the protagonist and the conflicts he is involved with have an immediate effect on the family. The conflict between Charlemagne and Girart de Vienne, the central character of one of the poems, mobilizes all members of Girart's family who take part in the war in defence of the "wrongdoer." However, not all poems depict the deeds of protagonists against the background of family relations; some feature antiheroes. The cycle of poems which concerns treacherous mutinous vassals is, *de facto*, a poetic story of a family of traitors started with Doon de Mayence and illustrated by Ganelon, the most famous traitor in French mediaeval literature, who caused Roland's death. Female characters, although rarely present in the poems, such as the wife of William of Orange, are described as much as objects of erotic desire (*amor*) as examples of matrimonial love (*caritas*) and the guardians of the family.<sup>2</sup>

Family solidarity, an imperative of military aid provided to the knight as its member, is not the only example of interpersonal bonds based on affection which are present in Old French epic poems. There is the spirit of comradeship among knights of the same team who have no family ties. This emotional attachment to a knight from a different family is aptly dubbed *amitié* or friendship in Old French narratives. Arguably, at the core of this affinity lie professional relations and a sense of belonging to the same team of the lord. Nevertheless, affection seems to play a crucial role, which is perhaps best illustrated in the friendship of brave Roland and prudent Olivier. They are central characters of several *chansons*. The social appeal of this relation and its model nature goes far beyond literature itself. There are records confirming that families of knights named their sons Roland and Olivier far earlier than the oldest preserved version of *The Song of Roland*. The origins of their model friendship are described in the *Girart de Vienne* which contains an account of the first meeting of two young warriors representing two sides of the conflict. Roland, a loyal servant of Charlemagne, is pitted against Olivier who is a member of the mutinous clan of Vienne. Their duel, designed to determine the fate of the town under siege and end the war, leaves neither of them victorious. The two swear each other eternal friendship. Thus, the power of friendship neutralizes any hostility that comes from politics and two opposing camps. A hyperbolic manifestation of this friendship is shown in a scene in *The Song of Roland* where Roland receives a blow from Olivier whose vision is dimmed by the blood trickling down his face and instead of striking back "asks of him, in gentle tones and sweet: «To do this thing, my comrade,

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<sup>1</sup> It is believed that *The Song of Roland* is a discursive compensation, a token retaliation for the un-avenged death of Margrave of Brittany at the battle of Roncevaux Pass in the Pyrenees on August 15, 778.

<sup>2</sup> See Anna Drzewicka, *Starofrancuska epopeja rycerska*, Warszawa: Państwowy Instytut Wydawniczy, 1979, pp. 76–78.

did you mean? This is Rollanz, who ever held you dear.»<sup>3</sup> Apparently, friendship is more important than the determination to avenge the insult, and in the axiological system of the *chanson de geste* friendship carries a great deal of weight.

This said, there is no doubt that on the axiological scale of importance in this particular genre, important as friendship is, it ranks lower than family interests and emotions attached to them. Little wonder, since epic poems “handle” in the first place the social dimension of human existence. The values they preach are the values of the community, and the main subject matter revolves around the fight for the dissemination of Christianity and justice within the framework of the feudal system. The narrative structure of the narrative poems corresponds to the key theme. They are typically composed in ten-syllable verses put in assonanced stanzas or *laissez* of various length. In terms of literary communication, the *chanson de geste*, or at least its classic structure from the twelfth–thirteenth centuries, is largely improvised and communicated during public events frequented by all types of participants. Thus, epic poems constitute a collective discourse with a message addressed by the community to itself. Such a public presentation serves the purpose of evoking emotions collectively with a view to preserving commonly recognized values. Friendship, for that matter, though important, belongs to the sphere of psychology and refers to relations between individuals. Therefore, its significance in the world created in the epic poems is secondary.

### Chivalric Romance: The Realm of Friendship

But even when deemed secondary in importance, friendship bears witness to the fact that the collective dimension of human existence is not the only dimension of the world of mediaeval knights. This important historical period of *longue durée* is also a period which saw changes in the perception of the individual. Relevant examples can be found in practically all spheres of mediaeval life: in spirituality, religious and social practices, and in economy, to mention but a few. Saint Anselm of Canterbury defines humans as the crown of creation. In the twelfth century appear important works of Christian mystics led by Saint Hildegard of Bingen and Saint Bernard of Clairvaux; hagiographic texts (in Latin and in vernacular languages) are on the rise including the autobiography (Abelard). The theological notion of Purgatory, shaped in the twelfth century, determines a personal dimension of sins which sinners must redeem, and their individual punishment can be commuted through the prayers of their next of kin. Recognising matrimony as sacrament is tantamount to the voluntary consent of the man and the woman to enter into conjugal union.

This pivotal change, slow but irreversible, in mentality also refers to relations in the world of knights, as reflected in the literature of the day, and most notably in the twelfth-century romance (*roman*), a genre of Old French literature. It developed at the

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<sup>3</sup> *The Song of Roland*, Part Two, CXLIX, transl. Charles Kenneth Moncreiff, [www.fullbooks.com/The-Song-of-Roland2.html](http://www.fullbooks.com/The-Song-of-Roland2.html) (consulted July 9, 2015).

House of Plantagenet to meet a historical and political demand somewhat different from that of the *chanson de geste* (building the prestige of a new House of Anjou in opposition to the Capetian dynasty which were then in power). Although epic poems and romances practically coexisted in the same French cultural milieu, both genres can easily be distinguished. The differences are most visible in form: instead of a ten- or twelve-syllable lines in an epic poem, the romance is invariably based on rhyming eight-syllable couplets, and with no division into stanzas. This is indicative of a new manner of composition and communication of the romance. In lieu of epic improvisation the literary text is made out in writing and it is communicated to the public. Naturally, the addresses were limited to the representatives of the chivalric élite gathered in the hall of a castle. They listened to the romance away from any distracting noise as was the case with melodeclamation of an epic in the open.

The chivalric romance is the second major literary genre in Old French narrative literature, and its popularity was on a par with that of the epic poem. Similarly to the *chanson de geste*, French romances were a model and a source of inspiration for other vernacular literatures. Thus, such protagonists as Percival or Tristan became *par excellence* European heroes bearing witness to the popularity of the type of literature that best reflected the social context of the day. Although the social world presented in the plots of *chansons de geste* and romances is similar, and in both cases the exploits of feudal knights are narrated, there are some basic differences between these genres.

Romances do not deal with chivalric deeds during the war but focus on individual battles or more or less daring adventures of mediaeval knights. The underlying aim is not the good of the community, social or religious, but personal happiness, fame, social stability, and economic independence expressed in the ownership of an estate. Such aims are achieved through marriage out of love, i.e. an element of eroticism practically absent in the *chanson de geste*. The omnipresence of this motif allows for the identification of the mediaeval verse narrative with the *roman courtois*, at least during the Early Middle Ages, i.e. in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. However, love and the pursuit of a high social status associated with it is not the only driving force that pushes the protagonists of such romances to act. Sometimes the accomplishment of such aims is but a springboard to pursue perfection and self-cognition evidencing again the perception of the knight as an individual. Naturally, chivalric deeds of the protagonist may have a broader social dimension, as Yvain and Lancelot, heroes of Chrétien de Troyes, illustrate in the act of liberating whole groups of people from oppression. These are, nevertheless, some side effects of the victorious battles for their own happiness to the same extent as material gains (Wilhelm of Orange) or fame (Roland) were the added value of the wars fought with a view to spreading Christianity.

All these aspects are present in the chivalric romances of the second half of the twelfth century also referred to as the Matter of Britain, a thematic cycle revolving around the lives and deeds of King Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table. They are fully manifested

in the works of the most distinguished twelfth-century French poet Chrétien de Troyes, author of five Arthurian romances written probably in the years 1160–1185.<sup>4</sup>

Since the subject matter of the romances focuses on the deeds of individual gallant knights, the protagonists become somewhat isolated from the context of their families. Their challenges and supernatural beings or phenomena they encounter are not infrequent, alienating the heroes from any support offered by the representatives of their families. This can be clearly seen in Chrétien de Troyes' romance entitled *Yvain, the Knight of the Lion*. The title character participates in a court meeting where his cousin Calogrenant describes how he suffered defeat at the hands of an otherworldly mighty knight Esclados. Yvain sets out in the search for Esclados to defeat him, but not so much as to avenge a member of his family but rather to gain fame where a distinguished warrior failed. In fact, his hasty departure the very same night indicates that he wants to be ahead of the other participants of the meeting who set the same goal, although none of them has family ties with Calogrenant.

An emphasis on the individual deed of the knight does not, however, translate into his absolute loneliness. By freeing the knight from family manacles, which impose some constraints on the protagonist rather than ensure support, the romance becomes a tribute paid to friendship. Focusing on an individual character and demonstrating the disappearance of family ties is offset by the bonds among the Knights of the Round Table who function as the royal retinue of King Arthur. Again, Chrétien's *Yvain* offers ample examples. The main protagonist kills the dangerous enemy in a duel, marries his wife, and takes over his estate. One day the travelling court of King Arthur visits Yvain's castle and his friend Gawain, a paragon of chivalric code, talks the new castellan into joining the retinue and participating in chivalric tournaments so as to avoid the ill fame of an indolent knight, the fate of the main character of Chrétien's romance entitled *Erec and Enide*. What is more, the romance offers a hyperbolic example of devotion in the name of friendship. The two sisters who have a dispute over the legacy of the deceased father take two knights of the Round Table to help them resolve the issue at hand. Gawain and Yvain, in full armour and with helmets on their heads, fight a fierce but unresolved battle, and when they finally realize who they are, each tries to accept defeat offering honour, the highest chivalric value, in the name of friendship.

The emphasis placed on friendship, a sense of brotherhood of arms and camaraderie of the knights who serve one lord is indicative of perceiving this social group as an élite distinct from other people in terms of their occupation, lifestyle, and deontological code. Membership in this exclusive club, determined by the proper origin, is sanctioned with a specific rite of passage known as knighting. As a result, members of the group develop a sense of community and an emotional bond aptly dubbed *amitié*. The Round Table, which underlines the equality of the congregating knights, is the most comprehensive model of such a community. Contrary to Charlemagne as described in many *chansons de geste*, King Arthur enjoys equal status as *primus inter pares*.

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<sup>4</sup> Chrétien de Troyes, *Romans*, Paris: La Pochotèque, 1992.

The fundamental significance of friendship in the world of chivalry is also shown in Chrétien's unfinished romance with clear religious overtones, *Percival*. However, by far the best example where friendship is so elevated is the thirteenth-century cycle of five prose narratives known as *The Vulgate Cycle*.<sup>5</sup> The narratives introduce a new religious and mystic programme for the knights symbolized by the Grail and substantially transformed since its first appearance in Chrétien's *Percival*. Since the work of Robert de Boron who continued unfinished *in medias res* Chrétien's romance, the Grail has become a Christian symbol: a vessel which was originally used during the Last Supper and which was later employed by Joseph of Arimathea to catch the last drops of blood from Jesus' body that hung on the cross.<sup>6</sup> The Grail was associated with the spear with which the Roman soldier Longinus pierced the side of Jesus. The spearhead contained a drop of Jesus' blood that never dried out. Thus, this vessel whose original function remains a mystery became the Holy Grail, the object sought (*quête*) by the Knights of the Round Table.

The narrative cycle, deeply embedded in religious allusions, is to some degree a negation of chivalric romances, since it channels chivalric ambitions towards other aims than earthly ones. Nevertheless, the aim is reached in the same way as obtaining earthly benefits, i.e. through combat. Facing dangerous adventures alone is a standard feature of the plot. Despite the common aim of the protagonists, i.e. finding the Holy Grail, and the same starting point, i.e. the court of King Arthur, knights errant part as they set on their journey. Interestingly enough, Percival, one of the more prominent participants of such expeditions contends: "Sirs, if we continue to travel together, we shall not achieve grand victories; I therefore request that we part and that each of us follows his own way."<sup>7</sup> Thus, romantic individuality puts an end to any sense of community. Yvain's fame associated with the Round Table is not attributed to the collective experience but rather to the recognition which each knight enjoys individually.

Despite the categorical imperative of alienation, court and mystic romances abound in examples of true friendship and its tokens offered by the Knights of the Round Table whose paths frequently cross as they wander during their exploits and reach the apogee towards the end of their search for the Holy Grail. Finding it is the highest honour there is, and it can be granted only to a single knight, a genuine incarnation of a new chivalric ideal, someone who combines traditional values of knighthood such as courage, dexterity in using arms, and loyalty with the purity of the body and a paragon of religious devotion. There is a designated place secured at the Round Table for such a knight, and no one else may occupy it. Interestingly enough, and despite clear indications pointing at a single knight, the honour of finding the Holy Grail falls to Sir Galahad who however,

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<sup>5</sup> Key episodes from this monumental series have been translated and edited by Jacques Boulenger, *Les Romans de la Table Ronde*, Paris: Plon-Nourrit, 1922–1923.

<sup>6</sup> Robert de Boron, *Roman de l'Estoire dou Graal*, ed. W.A. Nitze, "Classiques Français du Moyen Age" 57, Paris: Champion, 1927.

<sup>7</sup> Cited after Katarzyna Dybeł, *Samotność w literaturze średniowiecznej Francji. Literatura narracyjna XII-XIII wieku*, Kraków: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego, 2009, p. 27.

at the key moment of his life, is accompanied by two long-standing friends: Sir Percival and Sir Bors the Younger.

There is no doubt that the particular emphasis on the individual protagonist and on the themes developed in the spirit of Cistercian religiousness of the eminent romances of the day does not eliminate the role of the family altogether. However, the role the family plays in these romances is quite peculiar. Family is primarily shown in a religious context. In Chrétien's *Percival*, which popularized the Grail Quest, family is brought to make Percival aware of his sins. A hermit which reveals them happens to be the knight's uncle, on his mother's side, as well as a brother of mysterious Fisher King in whose castle the Grail is demonstrated to Percival for the first time. These family ties constitute a thread which links all episodes of the plot that are difficult to understand. In the romance by Robert de Boron and in *The Vulgate Cycle* the mysterious nature of the Christian symbol and its presence in Arthurian legends is explained through references to family ties with those who are servants to the Holy Grail. These people include Joseph of Arimathea, the first guardian of the Holy Grail, and Galahad, an unblemished and flawless knight, the chosen one who found the most precious relic in the kingdom of King Arthur and left the kingdom with it. In this respect, the family acquires a mystical meaning, away from the earthly or chivalric one.

As regards worldly affairs, the family also plays a certain role, although it is not as important as in the *chansons de geste*. The family is more than just a structure that organizes interpersonal relations and a source of solidarity. It is predominantly a group of armed warriors who constitute the entourage of the knight; it is the army which helps him achieve his aim. Thus, Lancelot's family is shown as a fairly uniform group of warriors fighting to rescue Queen Guinevere who is charged, and with good reason, with adultery. Such a treatment of the family not only weakens its positive axiological weight but, in fact, deprives it of any such power. This is best illustrated where Sir Bors, who is in search of the Holy Grail, moves on to help the abducted damsel rather than his own brother who, as soon as he overcomes the difficulties, tries to kill him for his deed.

*Le Morte d'Artur*, the last part of the Holy Grail cycle, demonstrates how the imperative of family solidarity can play a detrimental role in the harmonious Arthurian world. The romance shows this world following the discovery of the Holy Grail by Sir Galahad and his subsequent disappearance from Logres, King Arthur's realm. Fulfilling the duty towards the family by taking revenge leads to serious disturbances in the chivalric world. It appears clearly in the episode when King Arthur's greatest champion Lancelot accidentally kills Gawain's cousin – Gawain along with his relatives wishes to take revenge on him. The enmity towards the knight makes him egg on King Arthur to destroy Lancelot and his people contrary to the best interests of the king. In a state of chaos that ensues following the disappearance of the Holy Grail from the kingdom, friendship, the second and perhaps more important pillar on which the relations among the knights are built, is destroyed. Friends of yesterday become virulent foes. Negative emotions and enmity are rife, and as a result, the Knights of the Round Table kill each other. A different literary approach to friendship becomes a fact. While in Chrétien's earlier work friendship was the force which pushed Gawain and Yvain to denounce



victory in its name, in *Percival, the Story of the Grail* Yvain is killed by his friend Gawain. When the moral signpost embodied in the Holy Grail is gone, Arthurian Kingdom of Logres becomes annihilated.

### “The Autumn of the Middle Ages”: The Loneliness of a Knight

As already mentioned, there are two distinct dimensions of the chivalric world in the Early Middle Ages: collective and individual. They were manifested and promoted by two distinct literary genres: the epic *chanson de geste* and the chivalric or courtly romance. The differences between them are not only formal in nature, but, first of all, they refer to a different set of values. Epic poems underline family solidarity while friendship ranks at the top of the hierarchy of values presented in the chivalric romances. These differences are not quantitative as regards friendship and family obligations presented in the two genres. These two motifs are in fact clearly contrasted. In the mystic romance both values are somewhat made redundant if they are not directly linked to exemplary religiousness.

The basic principle of culture in the Late Middle Ages, which in the French speaking countries fell in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, was to exploit the themes and motifs developed in the previous centuries. This cultural change corresponded to a new definition of knights and their diminishing role in the society. This period saw new developments in military tactics and techniques. Regular infantry troops were on the rise along with highly effective crossbowmen and archers, let alone a more frequent use of artillery. Knights faced a real threat of losing the status of the lay élite of the society. The situation required immediate action, and it was literature that became the vehicle for the defence of traditional chivalric values. As dictated by the cultural tenets of the day, a return to old narratives took place. Old stories featuring Tristan, Charlemagne, Sir Lancelot, etc., acquired a new shape. However, these adaptations went beyond the linguistic *aggiornamento*. First of all, the basic genre-related differences clearly visible in the twelfth–thirteenth centuries disappeared. Be it initially an epic poem or a versed romance, new versions acquired the form of long prose narratives of a hyper-biographical nature,<sup>8</sup> and the character of a knight became idealized in every dimension. Set high on a pedestal, it was completely isolated from the social context. The chivalric ideal focused on the individual, at the expense of other characters and values manifested in various interactions with others. Thus, family relations were pushed further away to the background than in the chivalric romance. Friendship, so crucial in the chivalric world at the stage of its shaping and later during its more mature stage, lost much of its significance. The loneliness of a knight struggling against all odds became replaced with the loneliness of a motionless statue, a useless testimony to the past glory.

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<sup>8</sup> See Elisabeth Gaucher, *La biographie chevaleresque. Typologie d'un genre (XIII<sup>e</sup>-XV<sup>e</sup> s.)*, Paris: Champion, 1994.





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Φόβοι, τρομάρες, μάνητες, κύματα κι ἄ φουσκώσου,  
Δέν ἢμποροῦ μιὰ μπιστικὴ φιλιὰ νὰ ξεριζώσου.

Neither anger, nor fear, nor waves, and swell  
can destroy a friendship more solid than rock.

Vitsentzos Kornaros,  *Erotokritos*, II, vv. 277–278

Vitsentzos Kornaros begins his epic poem Ἐρωτόκριτος [Erotokritos]<sup>1</sup> by announcing its themes; they will be τῶ ἀρμάτω οἱ παραχές (the clang of weapons) and τοῦ Ἐρωτα ἡ ἐμπόρεση (the power of Eros), and all this under the watchful eyes of Fate-Fortune, ruler of the world (καίρος, τύχη, μοῖρα, ριζικό, μελλούμενο). Love (Eros) and war (Ares) take turns at dominating the poem's five books, which are built like the scenes of a five-act play (Eros-Ares-Eros-Ares-Eros).

“The instability of human Fortune, war and love [...], fate or destiny [...], theme of time [...], exile, theme of nature, and the natural world” – these are, according to David Holton,<sup>2</sup> the main threads of the Cretan poem, threads which actually almost belong to the *loci communes* of Renaissance literature. In the prologue to the poem, Kornaros mentions one other thing that inclined him to undertake the work of recounting two young people's love story, namely τῆς φιλιᾶς ἡ χάρη (the charm of friendship).

Thus, there had to be a friend at Rotokritos's<sup>3</sup> side. This role is played by Polydhoros (he who brings many gifts), whom Kornaros presents as Rotokritos' childhood friend; they grew up together and treat each other like brothers (ἀδέρφι). Note that both belong to the same social stratum (Rotokritos as the son of royal advisor Pezostratos is not equal in social standing to his beloved Aretousa, the king's daughter) and are the same age.

<sup>1</sup> Βιτσέντζος Κορνάρος, *Ἐρωτόκριτος*, ἐπ. Στ. Αλεξίου, Αθήνα: ἐκδ. Εστία, 1995.

<sup>2</sup> David Holton, *Romance*, in: David Holton, ed., *Literature and Society in Renaissance Crete*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991, pp. 214–219.

<sup>3</sup> The long form of the main character's name: Erotokritos (Ἐρωτόκριτος – one condemned by Eros, tormented with love), only appears in the poem's title; in the text, he is called Rotokritos (Ρωτόκριτος) or Rokritos (Ρώκριτος).

Madly in love, Rotokritos confides the secret of his love to his friend (at the same time explaining the situation to us, the readers); he also has someone he can ask for advice.

In the poem's first book, Polydhoros plays a similar role as the friends of the heroes in ancient plays. Rotokritos is crazy with love, tormented by Eros like Orestes haunted by the Erinyes, and Polydhoros – like Pylades – remains faithfully at his side. The contrast between the lovesick Rotokritos and the cool and sensible Polydhoros (φρόνιμος) makes us realize the omnipotence of Eros, into whose trap the hapless young man has fallen.

In the friends' first conversation at the beginning of book one, Polydhoros assumes the role of practically a mentor towards Rotokritos, and his sensible warnings and advice for his friend are reminiscent of the advice that fourteenth-century Cretan poet Stefanos Sachlikis gave to the reckless son of his friend, the young Francesco, who wasted his father's estate on drunken revels, whores, and gambling. Though Polydhoros is Rotokritos' peer, his clear-headed assessment of the situation and his awareness of the consequences of his friend's frenzied blind love makes him seem much older and much more experienced. Holton points out that Polydhoros (like Rotokritos' father, the king's trusted advisor) acts in accordance with social convention and tries to persuade his friend to abide by it too.<sup>4</sup> Expecting that Rotokritos' advances would provoke the king's anger against him and his father, and could even put them at risk of banishment or death, Polydhoros advises his friend, in turn, to abandon his dangerous dreams, depart for foreign parts, make himself busy hunting with dogs and falcons, and devote himself to the hard work of learning.

Polydhoros is similar to Pylades in one more respect. When his good advice is ignored and Rotokritos, longing for his beloved and wishing to attract her attention somehow, comes up with some dangerous ideas, Polydhoros – unable to dissuade him and driven by loyalty – helps him put them into practice with no thought for his own safety. In book one he accompanies Rotokritos on his evening escapades to stand under the Princess' window, where Rotokritos in disguise sings wistful serenades accompanying himself on the guitar. When the king wants to meet the unknown artist out of admiration for his skill, the singer refuses to appear before him, the king sends armoured guards to grab him by force. Rotokritos with the faithful Polydhoros at his side offers resistance and fights the guards, killing ten of them, which obviously complicates the young man's situation even further. Polydhoros is therefore all the more horrified by Rotokritos' intention to take part in a great tournament announced by King Iraklis (Heracles), who plans to marry off his daughter and wants to take a look at the prospective candidates. Polydhoros fears that his friend will be the victor and thus reveal himself as the evening troubadour, killer of royal soldiers whose families are still burning with a desire for revenge. He proves his steadfast loyalty a second time: the obstinate Rotokritos enters the tournament and Polydhoros, seeing the futility of his warnings, tries with all his might to prepare him as well as possible for the contest, among other things conceiving a magnificent costume for him.

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<sup>4</sup> Holton, *Romance*, pp. 222–223.

Polydhoros disappears into the background in subsequent books. During Rotokritos' exile he stays behind in Athens to report on palace goings-on in letters to his friend. Rotokritos entrusts his friend to his parents' care (and his parents – to his friend's filial care) and makes him his heir in case he dies in exile (III, vv. 1698–1700). Rotokritos gains the opportunity to repay Polydhoros for his devotion during the war with the forces of King Vladistratos, when as a knight in disguise he saves the life of both King Iraklis and his companion Polydhoros, only to suffer an almost mortal wound in a duel deciding the war's outcome. Polydhoros fails to recognize his friend in the wounded victor, who is changed thanks to a magic potion, but feels *μια κάποια ἀγάπη* (a kind of love) towards him, which makes him visit him frequently, converse with him and, acting on the impression that it is as if he were communing with Rotokritos, kiss him on the lips (V, vv. 113–118). The last time we see Polydhoros in the poem is when, amidst the general joy at the news of the king's daughter's marriage to the hero who saved Athens, he is the only one to cry over Aretousa's "betrayal," sharing his grief and suffering with Rotokritos' father, because there is no news of his friend who is staying, or so he thinks, somewhere on Egridos. He cannot believe for a long time that his friend is right there before him. Ending his analysis of the relationship between Rotokritos and Polydhoros, Holton concludes:

The bond which had developed between them was an instinctive attraction of like-minded souls which had nothing to do with physical appearance. Throughout the poem the relationship of Rotokritos and Polydhoros is one of affection and trust; the opposing forces of reason, restraint and social convention, on the one hand, and uncontrolled passion, on the other, are finally united. It is this relationship above all that fulfils the promised theme of *τῆς φιλιᾶς ἡ χάρη* (the charm of friendship).<sup>5</sup>

However, *φιλιᾶ* in *Erotokritos* is definitely something more than friendship. Right after announcing that one of the poem's themes would be *τῆς φιλιᾶς ἡ χάρη*, Kornaros adds that the story will be about two young people who *μπερδευτήκα ὁμάδι / σὲ μιὰ φιλιὰν ἀμάλαγη, μὲ δίχως ἀσκημάδι* (I, vv. 10–11) – together got entangled in *φιλιὰ ἀμάλαγη* – a pure and sinless feeling. *Φιλιὰ ἀμάλαγη* is repeated three times within three verses, interchangeably with *πόθος* (passion), i.e. one of the terms used to describe Rotokritos' feeling for Aretousa (*πόθος, ἐρωτιά, ἀγάπη*). It is also noteworthy that Kornaros uses the term *ἀγάπη* for what Polydhoros felt towards the heroic stranger in whom he instinctively found similarities to Rotokritos.

Thus, *τῆς φιλιᾶς ἡ χάρη* refers not so much and not only to the relationship of Rotokritos and Polydhoros but, above all, of Rotokritos and Aretousa. This is *φιλιὰ ἀμάλαγη* – selfless devotion to another person; one might say: platonic love. Talking to her nurse Frosini, who is obedient to the king and advises Aretousa to forget about Rotokritos,

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<sup>5</sup> Holton, *Romance*, pp. 223.

Aretousa staunchly defends her feelings (πόθος ἀμάλαγος, φιλιά, ἀγάπη) and is prepared to die a hundred deaths (θανάτους ἑκατό, III vv. 1234, 1445) rather than betray her love:

Φίλος γιὰ φίλον εἶδαμε νὰ πέση, ν' ἀποθάνει,  
κ' ετοῦτα 'ναι τὰ πωρικὰ ὅπου ἡ ἀγάπη κάνει.<sup>6</sup>

For we know that a friend will die for a friend,  
love works this miracle, it is love's fruit.

The term also appears in the mottos (*emblemata amatoria*) of the tournament's participants, all of them caught in Eros' trap in one way or another. And thus, the master of Scлавounia proudly carries the image of an unyielding island whipped by winds and waves, which can not be broken just like μπιστικὴ φιλιά – faithful friendship, here unquestionably in the sense of eternal love (II, vv. 277–278). The mutual devotion of Rotokritos and Polydhoros, similarly to the relationship between Achilles and Patroclus, contains an admixture of ἀγάπη, whereas Rotokritos and Aretousa's feeling is that of φιλιά ἀμάλαγη, which gradually develops into passionate love. What the two feelings have in common is mutual fidelity, completely reciprocated trust, and readiness for sacrifice. Friendship conditions love, while love conditions friendship.

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Τῆς φιλίας ἡ χάρη, developed in such an original way in the poem by Kornaros, dominates in Cretan drama. Every hero has a friend by his side. In the extant comedies *Στάθης* (*Stathis*) by author unknown and *Φορτουνάτος* [Fortounatos]<sup>7</sup> by Markos Andonios Foskolos, it is to their friends that love-struck young Chrysippos and Fortounatos owe a happy ending. Fortounatos' friend Thodoros discovers the truth about his origins, arranges a confrontation between his two fathers – adoptive and biological – and finally persuades the latter to abandon his plan to marry Fortounatos' beloved Petronella in favour of his newly regained son.

If it is true that “a friend in need is a friend indeed,” then *Stathis* can serve as an illustration of this saying. With an obviously didactic aim in mind, the anonymous writer introduces a pair of friends worthy of standing next to the ancient friends Damon and Phintias. An analysis of *Stathis* is made difficult by the poor condition of the preserved text of the play, which though originally no doubt had five acts, has been pared down to three, with some scenes discarded and others brutally abridged, which has disturbed the logical succession of scenes; however, the friendship story has not suffered.

<sup>6</sup> III, vv. 1263–1264.

<sup>7</sup> Μάρκου Αντωνίου Φωσκόλου, *Φορτουνάτος*, κωμωδία, εισαγωγή-λεξιλόγιο Στ. Ξανθουδίδου, Αθήνα-Γιάννινα: εκδ. Δωδώνη, 2004.

The comedy, dated to the turn of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, presents the story of two love-struck couples whose situation at first is additionally complicated by the fact that one friend claims to be the other. Hence, young Chrysippos, whom his adoptive father sent from Zakynthos to Candia to study, loves a girl named Lambrousa, daughter of the learned Dottore, while his friend Pamphilos, pretending to be Chrysippos, becomes secretly betrothed to Fedra, daughter of Stathis, a wealthy Cypriot. Things get dramatically complicated when the wealthy though ageing Dottore receives Stathis' consent to marry Fedra on condition that he marry off his own daughter first. He immediately agrees to Chrysippos marrying Lambrousa, while Fedra confesses to her father in good faith that she is betrothed to... Chrysippos. Accused by Stathis of breach of promise in front of the Doge of Crete, the young man is thrown in a dungeon (without revealing the truth out of concern for his friend) and, according to the judgment, is to marry Fedra as compensation for Stathis. Pamphilos immediately decides to take all the blame and stay in the dungeon in Chrysippos' place. All ends well thanks to another pair (pairs?) of friends. Chrysippos' guardian, Gavrilis the merchant, arrives in Candia. As it turns out, he is a kinsman and old friend of Stathis. Years earlier in the port of Monemvasia, Gavrilis accidentally came upon a Turkified countryman and old friend (Τούρκος μα φίλος μου παλιός). Invited on board of his ship, among some Greek captives he noticed Stathis' servant with a small boy – it was Chrysis, Stathis' little son who had been sold by pirates. Thanks to his friendship with the Turk, Gavrilis managed to buy back the prisoners and then brought up Chrysis, whom he named Chrysippos, like his own son in the hope that one day he would find his father:

[...] ὡσάν παιδί μου ἀνάθρεψα γι' ἀγάπη ἐδική σου...

[...] as a son I raised him, for my love of you...

– he says in the recognition scene. Thus, thanks to bonds of friendship, the Cretan Damon and Phintias win their beloveds, Pamphilos is accepted into Stathis' family with the promise that the father-in-law will provide the bride with a fitting dowry, while Chrysippos receives Lambrousa's dowry as well as the promise of both his fathers' wealth.

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In all the works mentioned above, friendship (φιλία) helped overcome obstacles and even ensured the happy fulfilment of love (ἀγάπη). Friendship and love supplemented each other and were intertwined.

But what would happen if they turned against each other?

A tragic conflict between friendship and love is the theme of the dark tragedy *Βασιλεὺς ὁ Ροδολίνος* (*King Rodholinos*, Venice 1647)<sup>8</sup> by Ioannis Andreas Troilos (?– after 1648),

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<sup>8</sup> *Ροδολίνος. Τραγωδία Ἰωάννη Ἀνδρέα Τρωίλου, πρόλογος Στ. Ἀλεξίου, Αθήνα: ἐπ. Μ. Αποσκίτη, 1987.*

a clerk of the Venetian administration from Rethymnon. The writer freely reworks Torquato Tasso's play *Il Re Torrismondo* (1587), moving the plot from the cold North to the hot South. While the main theme of the dark tragedy by Tasso, an imitator of Sophocles and Seneca, was the unintentionally incestuous relationship between a brother and sister, the Cretan writer completely ignored the thread of an abandoned child and incest, instead adding Trosilos' suicide, thus bringing to the fore the second great theme of Italian tragedy: the conflict between friendship and love.

The story develops largely in the Rodholinos–Aretousa–Trosilos triangle, and is a little reminiscent of the story of Tristan and Isolde. Out of friendship for King of Persia Trosilos, King of Egypt Rodholinos accepted the mission of deceitfully getting Princess Aretousa out of Carthage. Trosilos fell in love with her when he anonymously won a tournament, but King Aretas refused to give him her hand because, in a war between the kingdoms, Trosilos had killed Aretousa's brother. Burning with revenge, Aretas offers Aretousa's hand in marriage to Rodholinos, hoping that such a powerful prospective son-in-law will help him punish the killer, but on the way to Egypt the young couple fall in love. As a result of a storm and a shipwreck, they spend the night alone somewhere on the coast. The terrified Aretousa huddles up to Rodholinos, and he gives in to temptation.

In the dialogue opening the play, the distraught young man plagued by qualms of conscience confesses everything to his faithful elder counsellor Erminos. Does friendship have limits? Rodholinos admits that in his drive to do well by his friend, he abandoned the righteous path and realized too late that it was really his friend who made him do wrong (act I, scene 1, v. 200). Erminos, on the other hand, tries to justify his master's conduct, pointing to Trosilos' blame and to Eros' might which no one has the strength to resist.

Rodholinos characterizes his friendship with Trosilos (φιλιὰ μεγάλη) as if he were quoting Aristotle:

Καὶ μιὰ ψυχὴ σὲ δυὸ κορμιά μπορῶ νὰ πῶ κ' ἐζῶμα...<sup>9</sup>

Like one soul in two bodies, so to speak, has been joined simultaneously...

No wonder, then, that his conscience pricks him on the one hand, while on the other he is in the depths of despair. After all, he can neither live without his beloved Aretousa nor live with her at the cost of betraying his friend. Torn between *φιλία* and *ἀγάπη*, he sees suicide as his only way out. Like in Tasso's play, where the solution is suggested by the old Consigliere who advises Torrismondo to tell his friend that he is in love with Alvida and offer him his sister Rosmonda's hand instead, Rodholinos's counsellor convinces him that Trosilos will renounce his beloved out of friendship with Rodholinos and agree to marry his sister Rodhodhaphni. At this point, however, the plots of the two plays diverge.

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<sup>9</sup> Act I, scene 1, v. 124.



In the Italian version, the catastrophe is brought about by Rosmonda, alleged sister of Torrismondo, who knows she is the nurse's daughter and had replaced the princess upon the king's orders because of a prophecy saying that the daughter would cause the son's death. Rosmonda has long been secretly in love with... her brother. When she learns she is to marry Germondo, she refuses and reveals the truth, which in turn sends Torrismondo on a search for his sister. She turns out to be Alvida, kidnapped by pirates soon after the babies were switched and sold to the childless royal couple of Norway. Though Torrismondo awkwardly tries to get Alvida to marry Germondo, Alvida does not believe she is his sister and, convinced of her lover's infidelity, stabs herself with a dagger and Torrismondo follows her in death. The true cause of the lovers' deaths is not incest but passionate love, which turns out to be stronger than anything else, including social taboos.<sup>10</sup> Their deaths are mourned by the queen mother, Rosmonda, and Germondo.

Troilos had to develop his plot a little differently; at the same time, he did his best to be as faithful as possible to the original. Thus, Rodhodhaphni opposes her union with Trosilos not because she loves another but because she is against marriage and men in general and in principle, dreaming of living a single life, like the Amazons. She ultimately gives in to the suggestions of the queen, a happy wife and mother. The catastrophe in this case is caused by Aretousa herself, who finally guesses the truth when Rodholinos clumsily tries to persuade her to give her hand to Trosilos, who sends her wedding gifts (including the tournament winner's wreath). Realizing she was intended for another, she feels betrayed by Rodholinos (all the more since he kept her father's death from her) and in despair, unable to live without her beloved, takes poison. Her maid tells the chorus how Rodholinos found her dying, how they professed their love for each other, and how Aretousa, trying to persuade her lover to continue living, herself died, and a moment later Rodholinos pierced himself with his sword, and how, seeing their bodies, Rodhodhaphni fell dead, too. It is only now, alarmed at the cries in the palace, that Trosilos appears, unaware of the situation, convinced that Egypt is under threat of war and ready to stand at his friend's side. He learns the truth from a letter from Rodholinos who confesses that he had failed to stay faithful (*πίστην να φυλάξω*, act V, scene 5, v. 482) to his friend and to the queen, and he only regrets that by dying he loses such a good friend. In an extremely emotional monologue, Trosilos mourns his friend's death, but above all bemoans the fact that Rodholinos had not trusted him, and adds that he would rather that his friend had stabbed him in the heart so that he could descend to Hades oblivious of everything:

Τὴν πίστην μου ἐβλαψες ἐμέν', ὄχι τὴν ἐδική σου,  
κι ὡς ἄπιστό σου μ' ἔκρινες κ' ἔχασες τὴ ζωὴ σου.<sup>11</sup>

Woe is me, you doubted my fidelity, never breaking yours!  
You have me as such a traitor that you have lost your life?!

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<sup>10</sup> This denouement exposed Tasso to accusations of immorality, see Natalino Sapegno, *Disegno storico della letteratura italiana ad uso delle scuole medie superiori*, Firenze: La Nuova Italia, 1948.

<sup>11</sup> Act V, scene 6, vv. 519–520.

Merciless Eros deprived Troilos of love (*ἀγάπη*) and took away friendship (*φιλία*). Troilos feels he is to blame for Aretousa's death and offers his own life for her (unknowingly fulfilling her father's wish that the man of her choice should avenge the death of the heir to the throne on the killer). The thing that ultimately affects Troilos' decision is faithful friendship – just like Rodholinos could not live without Aretousa, Troilos cannot live without Rodholinos:

Φίλε μου ἡγαπημένε μου, πιστέ μου Ροδολίνο,  
ποτέ στὸν Ἄδη δὶγῶς μου νὰ στέκεις δὲ σ' ἀφήνω!<sup>12</sup>

My dearest friend, my faithful Rodholinos,  
you shall not descend to Hades alone, I will follow thee in deed!

Piercing himself with his sword, Troilos pays with his own life for the deaths of his friend and his beloved, and that gives him the right to ask the dead to welcome him kindly and allow him to stay with them forever to share love (*ἀγάπη*) and companionship (*συντροφιά*).

Tasso's dark tragedy ended with a pessimistic lyrical song about the futility of human life and the pointlessness of expectations and dreams. Troilos' play concludes with a song by the chorus, maintained in a similar tone, on the theme introduced in the prologue by *Μελλούμενο* (Fate, Destiny) about the impossibility of experiencing happiness in life, deceptive hope, and the omnipotence of death. Its theme is in a way announced by the lines of old Erminos ending the last act:

Ἴντα μᾶς ξίζου οἱ θησαυροί, τί πλιὸ οἱ φιλιές φελοῦσι,  
ἂν οἱ ζωές τελειώνουσι κ' οἱ βασιλεῖς χαλοῦσι,  
κι ὁ πόθος πέφτει ἀψήφιστος, κ' ἡ νιότη, κομπωμένη,  
ἔντα θαρρεῖ εἰς Παράδεισο νὰ μπεῖ, στὸν Ἄδη μένει.  
Ἐλπίδαν ἀνθρώπος λοιπὸ δὲν πρέπει νὰ φυλάσσει  
σὲ πρᾶμ' ἀποῦ μπορεῖ ὁ καιρὸς νὰ ρίχτει καὶ ν' ἀλλάσσει.<sup>13</sup>

Riches are naught, treasures too, and friendships are for nothing,  
if life comes to an end and states collapse.  
Love is just a shadow, and youth deludes itself,  
thinking paradise lies ahead but descending into Hades.  
May no man pin his hopes on any of the things  
which time can topple and which fate controls.

However, Troilos seems to soften the mood of hopelessness and the sense of doom that is characteristic of Tasso's tragedy. Where love (*ἀγάπη*) and friendship (*φιλία*) – two sides of what essentially is the same feeling – ultimately triumph through a harmonious

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<sup>12</sup> Act V, scene 6, vv. 573–574.

<sup>13</sup> Act V, scene 8, vv. 623–628.

relationship in Kornaros' poem, in Troilos' tragedy their disastrous conflict, which split apart friends and lovers in life, ultimately ends with a tender reconciliation... in the next world.

Translated by Joanna Dutkiewicz



Tadeusz Bujnicki

**The Friendships of Sienkiewicz:  
On the Margins of the Author's Letters  
to Mścisław Godlewski  
and Karol Potkański**



Tadeusz Bujnicki

## The Friendships of Sienkiewicz: On the Margins of the Author's Letters to Młcisław Godlewski and Karol Potkański\*

In articulating her theories on the genre, Stefania Skwarczyńska foregrounds its utilitarian values. "The letter," she writes, "is the author's arena for expressing his encounters with life, in the measures delineated by the quality of his interests and his relationship to the addressee," but she adds that it also reproduces "the author's subjective reality" and can (or even should) be considered from an aesthetic perspective.<sup>1</sup> This scope of the genre becomes meaningful especially when the letter is addressed to a person with whom the author shares a particularly close and emotional connection. Above all else, the prime example of such feelings is the epistolary expression of friendship. The letters of Henryk Sienkiewicz are, in this area, a particularly fruitful object of analysis.

Contemporary testimonies often indicate the writer's introverted tendencies, a certain isolation during social occasions, a taciturn nature broken only at intimate gatherings and in the company of those to whom he was especially close.<sup>2</sup> To some extent, these personality traits are also revealed in his letters, although his correspondence also provides proof that he found it easier to express himself through the written word than through direct interpersonal contact.

In the multi-volume collection of Sienkiewicz's correspondence, which includes over 3,000 items, a significant part is taken by collections of letters to people to whom the writer was emotionally close. Family aside, it would be apt to indicate here the letters which showcase long-lasting bonds of friendship. Among those which serve as evidence of legitimate and sustained friendships the following should be listed first: letters to Konrad Dobrski (37 items between 1864 and 1871), letters to Młcisław Godlewski (231 items between 1878 and 1904), letters to Stanisław Witkiewicz (38 items between

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<sup>1</sup> Stefania Skwarczyńska, *Teoria listu*, Białystok: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu w Białymstoku, 2006, p. 51.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Baronowa XYZ, *Towarzystwo warszawskie*, vol. II, W drukarni „Czasu” F. Kulczyckiego i sp. pod zarządem Józefa Łakocińskiego: Kraków, 1887, pp. 133–145; Czesław Jankowski, "Ze wspomnień osobistych o Sienkiewiczu," in: Kazimierz Czachowski, *Henryk Sienkiewicz. Obraz twórczości*, Warszawa: Gebethner i Wolff, 1931, pp. 16–18.

1880 and 1903), and letters to Karol Potkański (91 letters between 1893 and 1907). My decision to chose his correspondence with Godlewski and Potkański was informed both by the similarities and (more frequently) differences between the addressees, and by the differing “images” of friendship suggested by the two collections. Interestingly, there are marked similarities in Sienkiewicz’s relations to Witkiewicz and Potkański; in some aspects, the letters written to the Cracovian historian Potkański were a transference of Sienkiewicz’s earlier emotional bonds and, despite certain reservations, of the world-view shared with Witkiewicz.

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The friendships of Sienkiewicz could certainly be the subject matter for a separate book. The writer’s correspondence alone provides enough material for a considerable dissertation. On the other hand, it is true that the term “friendship” has often been overused in writing about Sienkiewicz. It was applied to many different kinds of closeness and levels of acquaintance. The word “friendship” and its derivatives often appeared in the author’s texts as a matter of convention (e.g. in complimentary closings and the like). Neither can a familiar address (i.e. one which uses only the first name) be seen as definitive proof of friendship. Of course, these two features are certainly indicators of its presence in letters to Mściśław Godlewski and Stanisław Witkiewicz. However, a continued use of the respectful “Sir” in correspondence with Karol Potkański should not be seen as evidence that a genuinely friendly relation was absent; this is made amply clear by these letters’ contents.

The focus on these two corpuses of Sienkiewicz’s letters (written to Godlewski and Potkański) is far from accidental. To be sure, they serve as proof of friendship, however, these friendships were of a unique sort. Both the declarations overtly made in these letters, as well as the degree of intimacy in their phrasing, serve as fundamental evidence of this fact. This is not to say that it is merely the emotions and ideas contained in the letters that constitute their exceptional nature. Significant, too, is the knowledge which they impart, a consideration of the author’s utilitarian goals in writing them, as well as the intellectual levels on which these friendships functioned.

It is important to remember that the absence of replies turns these letters into a form of hidden dialogue, of which one half needs to be reconstructed. Imagining accurately the extent to which they were exceptional is not easy, not least due to the conventions and stereotypes that surrounded letter writing at the time, and which could indeed force the writing of the letters into existence. On the other hand, convention could be broken under the influence of strong emotional engagement, whether positive or negative. This would be why, in correspondence with his friends, Sienkiewicz revealed more of his moods, phobias, and aggressions.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> It would appear that in these letters, Sienkiewicz sheds his “mask” more easily, though in his letters to Potkański, he, assuming the role of a mentor, creates an image of someone with a “tough” personality



This outline does not pretend to exhaust the topic; on the contrary, it engages only with certain aspects of Sienkiewicz's emotional bonds with these two friends, who were distinctly different from each other in many aspects: personality traits, views, professions, and finally – and not at all unimportantly – age. Sienkiewicz was linked to Mściśław Godlewski by studies at the Szkoła Główna [Main School],<sup>4</sup> their work as journalists and editors, and finally their social relationship, while the bond with Karol Potkański – a historian native of Kraków and almost fifteen years his junior, connected to the *Młoda Polska* milieu, a sceptic and a decadent, with wide intellectual horizons not only in the area of history but also in many other artistic and academic fields – was mainly fostered by their meetings in Kraków. Potkański's personality was, therefore, no small challenge for his interlocutor. Therefore also the juxtaposition of these two friendships opens up unexpected possibilities for interpretation. The first question that presents itself is why the writer chose as friends people who, seemingly, ought to be entirely alien to him in their personalities and ideas.

For similar reasons, this circle of friends should be graced by yet another addressee: Stanisław Witkiewicz. Sienkiewicz's surviving correspondence with him, though much more modest in volume, is exceptionally important.<sup>5</sup> Heavily steeped in emotion, at times even aggressive, it reveals the internal contradictions in Sienkiewicz's stance and, to an extent, forms a background for his letters to Godlewski and Potkański.<sup>6</sup> As the relationship between Sienkiewicz and Witkiewicz has already been thoroughly described by Julian Krzyżanowski and Zdzisław Piasecki, there is no reason to repeat the exercise here.<sup>7</sup> Of course, it is also true that the correspondence between Sienkiewicz and Godlewski and Potkański has attracted interpretative attention of Edward Kiernicki, the author of the foreword and commentary to the collected letters of Sienkiewicz to Mściśław Godlewski, and of Henryk Barycz, who presented in a monographic outline the personality of Karol Potkański.<sup>8</sup>

The research task undertaken in this article is an attempt at recognising the idiosyncratic criteria which marked Sienkiewicz's friendships as well as their comparison

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capable of successfully breaking through his own weaknesses and limitations. On Sienkiewicz's "masks" see e.g. Jolanta Sztachelska, *Czar i zaklęcie Sienkiewicza*, Białystok: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu w Białymstoku, 2003, ch. "Nagie twarze i maski (Listy Henryka Sienkiewicza do Jadwigi Janczewskiej)," pp. 68–83.

<sup>4</sup> Szkoła Główna – higher education institute in Warsaw (1862–1869). Played an important role in the development of Polish positivism. In 1869 it was converted into the Russian University of Warsaw.

<sup>5</sup> Henryk Sienkiewicz, *Listy*, vol. V, part 2, ed. Maria Bokszczanin, Warszawa: PIW, 2009. Letters to Stanisław Witkiewicz, pp. 218–334.

<sup>6</sup> It is important to highlight that Potkański and Witkiewicz were also very close friends and shared a great deal of ideological similarities.

<sup>7</sup> Julian Krzyżanowski, "Sienkiewicz i Witkiewicz (karta z dziejów niezwykłej przyjaźni)," in: eusdem, *Pokłosie Sienkiewiczowskie*, Warszawa: PIW, 1973, pp. 445–472; Zdzisław Piasecki, *Stanisław Witkiewicz w kręgu ludzi i spraw sobie bliskich*, Uniwersytet Opolski: Opole, 1999, pp. 71–144.

<sup>8</sup> Cf. Edward Kiernicki's introduction to Henryk Sienkiewicz, *Listy do Mściśława Godlewskiego (1878–1904)*, ed. E. Kiernicki, Wrocław et al.: Zakład im. Ossolińskich, 1956, pp. 5–27; Henryk Barycz, "Wizerunek uczonego z epoki Młodej Polski: szlakami życia Karola Potkańskiego," in: eusdem, *Na przełomie dwóch stuleci. Z dziejów polskiej humanistyki w dobie Młodej Polski*, Wrocław et al.: Zakład im. Ossolińskich, 1977, pp. 68–169.

and correlation, where possible, to the writer's own character traits. While such a study would not cover the totality of the material, a thorough engagement with the issues raised by the writer's correspondence merits a deeper analysis, one better supported by archival research.

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One of the largest collections of Sienkiewicz's correspondence, the letters written over the course of 27 years (between 1878 and 1904) to Mściśław Godlewski, deserves special attention. This is not only because it contains a richness of material on the writer's biography and creative work, but also because it documents a friendship that was far from easy, one which included many conflicts and tensions.<sup>9</sup> As Kiernicki conclusively shows, these letters are only a part of a much longer-lasting correspondence, one which must have begun several years before the first conserved letter.<sup>10</sup> We also do not know when the two became more closely acquainted. Godlewski, who was the same age as Sienkiewicz, began his law studies at the Szkoła Główna three years before him, in 1863, therefore the possibility for their contact as students was limited. The later years, however, are more certain, including their ties to the moderately positivist journal *Niwa* [Cornfield] which both of them began publishing in 1872.<sup>11</sup> Proof of the strength of their relationship can be found above all in their joint purchase (with Julian Ochorowicz<sup>12</sup>) of *Niwa* in 1874, and their influence on the journal's turn in a new ideological direction. However, the journal's neoconservatist leanings were decidedly Godlewski's doing, who, after Ochorowicz's move to Lviv and Sienkiewicz's departure for America, independently shaped its traditionalist slant, which by the by caused quite a strong reaction from the author of *Szkice węglem* [Charcoal Sketches], whose political views became increasingly radicalized during his stay in the United States. Already in his first known letter to Godlewski, he delineates significant differences in their views. As an aside to his refusal to permit the managing company of *Niwa* to dissolve, Sienkiewicz stated: "If it were possible by this measure to *de-gentrify Niwa* a little then maybe I would do it..." and later, even more harshly: "I do not consent to your scheming aims."<sup>13</sup> Other

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<sup>9</sup> As Kiernicki wrote in his introduction to Sienkiewicz, *Listy do Mściśława Godlewskiego*, p. 10: "Appraising rather critically, in the pages of their correspondence, his [Godlewski's – T.B.] functionality as an editor and financial overseer of publishing, Sienkiewicz saw in him above all else a 'good lad' and a friend who, though he might be quarrelled with, is indispensable, for instance, in financial matters."

<sup>10</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 7–8.

<sup>11</sup> Godlewski's début was the article "Marzenie" [A Dream] (*Niwa* 17, 1872), in which he made clear his anti-Romantic views, while Sienkiewicz wrote a review of Tadeusz Korzon's *Kurs historii wieków średnich* [History of the Middle Ages], *Niwa* 21–22 (1872).

<sup>12</sup> Julian Ochorowicz (1850–1917) – positivist philosopher, psychologist. Lecturer at the University of Lviv and the Institut Général Psychologique in Paris.

<sup>13</sup> Henryk Sienkiewicz, *Listy*, vol. I, part 2, ed. Maria Bokszczanin, Warszawa: PIW, 1977, p. 6 (letter dated September 1878). All quotations from letters to Godlewski will be marked L. I, 2, followed by page number, in the main body of the text.

letters of the time also revealed the discord between the two friends; these were both ideological and aesthetic, especially as the latter pertained to Sienkiewicz's own works. The writer felt obliged to explain his premises.<sup>14</sup> These letters, then, can be treated as expressions of Sienkiewicz's views at the time. It is worth adding here that this was a time when the author was seriously considering a permanent affiliation with the radical, anticlerical group *Nowiny* [News].<sup>15</sup>

Godlewski, trying to find the so-called middle ground between the two camps, was nonetheless more inclined towards the milieu of the landed aristocracy, which gained, due to him, a decisive influence on the journal and its ideological slant. He was not only a conservative, but also a proponent of pro-Austrian conciliation, belonging, as Kiernicki has shown, to the *Stowarzyszenie Realistów Polskich* [Association of Polish Realists].<sup>16</sup>

This is surely why Sienkiewicz's letters to Godlewski written in that period were polemical to a significant degree, emphasising their disagreement over the journal's direction, of which Sienkiewicz wrote in his first *Niwa* opinion piece, "Mieszaniny Literacko-Artystyczne" [Literary and Artistic Potpourri]:

Nie zdaje mi się, aby wóz społeczny leciał tak u nas na złamanie karku po pochyłości radykalizmu, żeby aż trzeba było dyrdać za nim i krzycząc: tprrrr! podkładać pod koła dokumenta wymagane tylko u Kanoniczek.

It does not seem to me that the social bandwagon is so carelessly rushing down the slopes of radicalism that we would need to hobble along after it, and, yelling "halt!," try to stop it by throwing under its wheels documents and dogmas required only by the Hospitaler Sisters.<sup>17</sup>

This note of discord resurfaced later, while they were joint editors of *Słowo* [The Word] but there the issues were rather of an interpersonal and financial nature. The letters show that Godlewski often acted as Sienkiewicz's financial backer. On the whole, however, even their differing ideological views sometimes cancelled each other out, and sometimes were consciously pushed aside. Only occasionally did Sienkiewicz explode in negative appraisals of his editorial colleagues and of the tone pervading the journalistic

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<sup>14</sup> Cf. the extensive commentary to the play *Na jedną kartę* [On a Single Card], L. I, 2, pp. 9–15 (letters dated Nov. 16 and Dec., 1878), or, later, to *Niewola tatarska* [Tartar Captivity], L. I, 2, p. 34 (letter dated Sept. 1, 1880).

<sup>15</sup> For more on this topic, see Tadeusz Bujnicki, "Sienkiewicz przekracza granice. O 'przełomie' w życiu i twórczości pisarza," in: eisdem, *Sześć szkiców o Zagłobie i inne studia sienkiewiczowskie*, Warszawa: DiG, 2014, pp. 107–124.

<sup>16</sup> Kiernicki, introduction to Sienkiewicz, *Listy do Mściława Godlewskiego*, p. 12.

<sup>17</sup> Henryk Sienkiewicz (Litwos), "Mieszaniny literacko-artystyczne," *Niwa* 16 (1879), cited in Henryk Sienkiewicz, *Dzieła*, vol. 50, Warszawa: PIW, 1950, p. 3. The editor (Godlewski) argues with the author, who according to Godlewski "takes information only from journals which have an unfavourable opinion of us," while *Niwa* aimed for "healthy progress."

establishment as a whole.<sup>18</sup> He did not write about Godlewski often in these contexts. He recognized his friend's goodness of character ("[...] I never doubted either your good intentions or your kindly heart and the friendship you have for me"; "[...] your letter further solidified my conviction of your kind-heartedness"<sup>19</sup>). He did not, however, have a very high opinion of his friend's intellect. "Ciś [i.e., Mieczysław] Godlewski has calf's eyes and calf's small selfishness, which he has elevated to the level of a general principle," he wrote, tongue-in-cheek, to Witkiewicz.<sup>20</sup> Nevertheless, even after many years, he reaffirmed the enduring nature of their bond:

Poza tym wszystkim zawsze, Mój Drogi, możesz liczyć na moją życzliwość i przyjaźń. Ostatecznie łączą nas długie lata koleżeństwa i przyjaźni wypróbowanej. *Słowo* jest też pismem najbliższym moim instynktom, nerwom, upodobaniom i przekonaniom – równie jak i jego czytelnicy są mi bliżsi niż filistrowie miejscy.

All this aside, Dear Friend, you may always count on my friendship and goodwill. When all is said and done, we are linked by many years of being colleagues and by a tried and tested friendship. *Słowo* is also the journal closest to my instincts, nerves, preferences, and persuasions – just as its readers are closer to me than philistine townspeople.<sup>21</sup>

In his later letters, Sienkiewicz tones down and brushes aside ideological topics of conversation. What absorbs him in this bond of friendship belongs rather to personal and professional domains. As regards private life, Godlewski played an important role as confidant in issues pertaining to Sienkiewicz's first and second marriages. In one of the earlier letters can be found this confession: "I have become tired of life without a tomorrow."<sup>22</sup>

The role of the Godlewski couple in encouraging Sienkiewicz's relationship with Maria Szetkiewiczówna was significant. Meanwhile, in the second courtship, Godlewski became a trusted confidant who carried out tasks on his behalf. In his unusually emotional letters, the writer presented various, often very intimate, details of this failed relationship.

Many complexities can also be found in the more professional letters, which treated mostly of the publication of Sienkiewicz's work in *Słowo* and other newspapers. When it came to this, the relations between the author and the paper of which he was the erstwhile editor were not of the best sort. He directed therefore to both the editor at the time and to the general public letters full of irony and complaint. He writes of

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<sup>18</sup> These appraisals can be found primarily in the passionate letters to Stanisław Witkiewicz (esp. letters from January 1882; March 12, 1882; and June 13, 1882; see Henryk Sienkiewicz, *Listy*, vol. V, part 2, ed. Maria Boksztanin, Warszawa: PIW, pp. 308–311, 318, 325).

<sup>19</sup> L. I, 2, pp. 18, 20 (letters dated Dec. 14 and 23, 1878).

<sup>20</sup> Henryk Sienkiewicz, *Listy*, vol. V, part 3, ed. Maria Boksztanin, Warszawa: PIW, p. 318 (letter dated March 12, 1882).

<sup>21</sup> L. I, 2, p. 231 (letter dated Sept. 9, 1895).

<sup>22</sup> L. I, 2, p. 29 (letter dated Sept. 20, 1879).

misunderstandings with publishers (the Wrotonowskis) and the lack of consideration “which I have always been shown by *Słowo*.”<sup>23</sup> And for these reasons, Sienkiewicz broke up with the journal several times, by which Godlewski must have been affected. Here, in a passionate letter, in a vocabulary and emotional tone reminiscent of Julian Horain and Stanisław Witkiewicz, Sienkiewicz writes:

Przyrzekam Ci najuroczyściej, że z chwilą oddania rękopismu powieści, do której jestem jeszcze zobowiązany, zerwę wszelkie stosunki z redakcją *Słowa* i we wszystkich pismach publicznie to ogłoszę. Nie chcę być traktowany jak pies i za Waszą nierzetelność, za Wasze niedbalstwo oczyma świecić. [...] Za ten zawód, za zarzuty niesłowności, które tu słyszę, za to, żeście mnie na kpa wystawili, jak Bóg na niebie tak się Wam wywdzięczę. Ja zaś mam jedno pragnienie w życiu tj. zerwać z tym *polnische Wirtschaft* jak najprędzej... Z wdzięcznością H. Sienkiewicz.

I promise you most officially that from the very moment that I hand in the manuscript of the novel, which I am still obliged to do, I will cut all ties with the editors of *Słowo* and I will announce this publicly in all the journals. I do not wish to be treated like a dog and take the fall for your lack of rigour, for your carelessness [...]. For this disappointment, for these charges of unreliability, which I here have heard, for your having made a fool of me, for this I will compensate you through God in Heaven. As concerns me, I have only one wish in my entire life, namely to break with this *polnische Wirtschaft*, and as quickly as may be done... With gratitude, H. Sienkiewicz.<sup>24</sup>

Yet, the final break never came. Sienkiewicz was still, though less frequently, publishing in *Słowo*, which, as we can suppose, had something to do with Godlewski's influence. The author was well aware of his instability, confessing in one of his letters: “I am sombre as the grave, raging, tired, nervous, despair is gnawing at me.”<sup>25</sup>

Aside from such serious letters, comic ones also appear, caricaturing and poking fun at common acquaintances. Mocking profiles of Antałek (Antoni Zaleski) recur, as in this anecdote:

Co w tym Antałku zawsze istotnie ceniłem to ten patriotyzm i tę gotowość do poświęcenia osobistych względów na ołtarzu dobra publicznego. Przyjechała oto jakaś Amerykanka – on sobie w tej chwili myśli: “Pójdę – wypadnie się dobierać. Nuż ona się zgodzi – skompromituję Polaków. Niech lepiej idzie kto inny” [...].

What I have always truly valued in this Antałek is that patriotism of his and his willingness to sacrifice personal considerations at the altar of the common good. Say, an American woman has recently arrived, and here he thinks: “If

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<sup>23</sup> L. I, 2, p. 93 (letter dated Nov. 17, 1889).

<sup>24</sup> L. I, 2, pp. 84–85 (letter dated July 9, 1889).

<sup>25</sup> L. I, 2, p. 88 (letter dated Oct. 29, 1889).

I should go – it would be expected to pair off. Should she accept – I would shame all of Poland with my inadequacy. Better let someone else go [...].”<sup>26</sup>

Likewise Sienkiewicz makes jibes at the clergy’s love of hunting (he terms these priests, in Biblical paraphrase, “great hunters before the Lord”<sup>27</sup>), or mean-spirited remarks about the gluttony of old Sobotkiewicz.<sup>28</sup> About the critics of his *Bez dogmatu* [Without Dogma] he remarks that they “bark at the corners.”<sup>29</sup>

Self-ironizing remarks also appear, as well as reproductions of absurd and amusing situations. About his planned meeting with the sultan of Zanzibar he writes:

Zgodziłem się na to, bo to ciekawe. Dużo sobie zapewne powiemy, zwłaszcza że Jego Zanzibarska Mość posiada (wprawdzie w wysokim stopniu) jeden tylko język, mianowicie ki-suahili, którym ja operuję z pewną trudnością, umiejęć dotychczas tylko jedno słowo: yambo – dzień dobry.

I agreed to it, because it should be interesting. I’m sure we shall have an awful lot to say to each other, especially as His Zanzibarian Highness has command of only one tongue (albeit to a very high degree): namely, ki-Swahili, which I find great difficulty with, knowing at the moment only one word: *yambo*, that is, “good day.”<sup>30</sup>

Such examples are numerous in letters to Godlewski, and it is above all else these that shape the intimate tone of their exchanges. Nevertheless, quantitatively speaking, business correspondence dominates concerned with printing, reimbursement, managing parcels and the like.

A separate place ought to be given to letters about the dissolution of Sienkiewicz’s second marriage, and the appeals to Rome which the Wołodkiewicz couple made in requesting divorce (there are a total of 14 letters on the subject, written between March 4 and July 9, 1894). Among letters concerning this situation written to different addressees, those written to Godlewski seem most significant and reveal to the greatest depth the author’s depressive mental state.

As we can see, the letters to Godlewski reveal many issues, moods, appraisals, and pretensions, but are also proof of trust and goodwill towards their recipient. At the same time, they are a sort of biographical “newsletter”; next to depictions of the everyday, we can see the germs of the ideological conflict revealed in *The Trilogy*, as well as the author’s aesthetic preferences and appraisals of social norms and ethics. The letters to Godlewski create therefore an image of Sienkiewicz’s personality, one which was without

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<sup>26</sup> L. I, 2, p. 100 (letter dated Jan. 11, 1890).

<sup>27</sup> L. I, 2, p. 156 (letter dated March 2, 1891).

<sup>28</sup> L. I, 2, p. 116 (letter dated June 18, 1890).

<sup>29</sup> L. I, 2, p. 117 (ibidem).

<sup>30</sup> L. I, 2, p. 153 (letter dated Feb. 17, 1891).

a doubt neurasthenic, prone to intense mood swings and hypochondria caused by real and imagined illness alike.

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While the friendship between Sienkiewicz and Godlewski is not too difficult to decipher, a more serious puzzle is presented by the bonds which joined the author with Karol Potkański. This was certainly a relationship born of choice and not circumstance. They were divided by many factors: their age difference (which also amounted to a generational difference), the varying directions they took in their aesthetics and world-views, even their lifestyle choices. Finally, also Potkański's economic situation, which was made much worse by a financial crisis. These differences could be multiplied many times over. Despite them, however, the bond between the two was unusually strong emotionally. In his exhaustive study of Potkański, Henryk Barycz writes: "The year 1890 – when Sienkiewicz was finishing *Without Dogma* – sees the two in full brotherliness and incessant contact."<sup>31</sup> But, importantly, he adds:

It would be a mistake to suppose that the closeness between the two fostered an atmosphere of uncritical admiration by Potkański for *The Trilogy's* author. From time to time, deeply rooted differences of opinion and critical stance are made manifest.<sup>32</sup>

Without knowledge of Potkański's letters to Sienkiewicz, the subject matter of these conflicts can be reconstructed only hypothetically. They were most clearly delineated in matters concerning the aesthetic sphere, as in their differing appraisals of Kazimierz Przerwa-Tetmajer's poetry. There is, however, much common ground as well. They were undoubtedly akin in their approach to history, though Potkański's more professionally rigorous approach was sometimes in conflict with the literary image presented by Sienkiewicz in his historical novels. And so the author excused himself, for instance, for not respecting the current state of research on the period in his *Krzyżacy* [Teutonic Knights]:

Tak się zwykle dzieje, że nowe prace obalają przekonania lat dawnych – ale bywa też i tak, że po nowych następują jeszcze nowsze – więc czy powieść ma uwzględniać ostatnie wyniki, czy dawną tradycję – doprawdy sam nie wiem.

It is usually the case that new works falsify the beliefs of older ages – but it also occurs that after these new works, newer ones appear – so whether my

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<sup>31</sup> Barycz, *Na przełomie dwóch stuleci*, p. 106.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 111.



story should respect the latest outcomes, or established tradition, I truly do not know myself.<sup>33</sup>

In his letters to Potkański it is clear that Sienkiewicz was more uninhibited than in those he wrote to Godlewski. There are more touches of irony, self-deprecation, and scepticism, a larger distance from conservative tendencies. In conversation with this friend, he did not hide his distaste for the Galician milieu, with which, despite these reservations, he maintained close relations:

Co do mnie, w Krakowie znajdę parę osób, z którymi potrafię żyć, ale bardzo on mi się nie uśmiecha z powodu swojej dusznej, pańsko-klerykałnej atmosfery – Źle jest, jeśli w jakiej społeczności jest więcej Kościoła niż Chrystusa i więcej obserwacji niżli chrześcijaństwa, a w Krakowie tak jest, tego rodzaju pieczęć wyciśnięta została na umysłach, na kulturze, na sztuce, słowem na całym życiu. Dodawszy do tego, że tamtejsza „demokracja” jest nieoskrobana hołotą spod ciemnej gwiazdy, dochodzę do wniosku, że ośrodek taki nie jest zbyt ponętny, zwłaszcza na stałe zamieszkanie. Przeniesiemy się jednak na przyszły rok ze względu na Henia. Zresztą, mówiąc o zamiarach dalszych nie chciałbym by i on szukał chleba i bytu w Galicji.

As far as I am concerned, in Kraków I could find a few people alongside whom I could live, but the city does not seem happy to me due to its stuffy, lordly-clerical atmosphere – It does not bode well if in a society there is more Church than Christ, and more ritual observation than Christianity, and in Kraków this is so, and this has indelibly stamped its minds, its culture, its art, in a word, all its life. Added to this that its “democracy” is an uncouth rabble of no good fortune, I can decide that this sort of environment is none too enticing to me, especially not as a place of permanent residence. We will move however in the coming year for Henio’s sake. By the by, speaking of future plans, neither would I want him to seek his bread and well-being in Galicia.<sup>34</sup>

In such formulations can be observed an antipathy towards stereotypes, well-worn stylistic clichés, hypocrisy. In other letters are also outlined elements of anti-clericalism,<sup>35</sup> a rather free citation of the Bible,<sup>36</sup> and an ironizing, perhaps even mocking, stance to-

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<sup>33</sup> Henryk Sienkiewicz, *Listy*, vol. III, part 3, ed. Maria Bokszczyńska, Warszawa: PIW, 2007, pp. 103–104 (letter dated Dec. 7, 1897). All quotations from letters to Potkański will be marked L. III, 3, page number, in the main body of the text.

<sup>34</sup> L. III, 3, p. 113 (letter dated April 9, 1998).

<sup>35</sup> In a large paragraph depicting the state of affairs in the Vatican (according to Julian Klaczko, though corroborating his views) he writes: “Klaczko has a lot to say about matters in Rome, and from what he says it seems that Izwołski conducts now marriages, grants divorces, creates dogmas, highlights Polish intrigues, presents the flourishing state of the Church in Russia etc. In a word his influence is such, that if he wished to pass a decree that for instance St. Francis or St. Thomas Aquinas were heretics, he could certainly do so” (L. III, 3, p. 25, letter dated Aug. 6, 1895).

<sup>36</sup> E.g. in the self-deprecating “confession”: “[...] though I am made in the Lord’s image and likeness, I saw on the 26th day that the work of mine that is intended for *Kraj* [Our Homeland] is not good enough for a dog to read, and so I crossed it out from top to bottom” (L. III, 3, p. 51).



wards established holiness and convention. Sienkiewicz's idiosyncratic sense of humour is also made manifest, for instance in his summary of the views of Julian Klaczko:<sup>37</sup>

[...] mówi z największym pesymizmem o Polakach, Polsce, Rzymie, świętych Pańskich i trzech osobach Trójcy, czyli o wszystkim, co w gruncie rzeczy kocha.

[...] he speaks with the greatest pessimism of Poles, Poland, Rome, the Lord's Saints and the persons of the Holy Trinity, so in sum about everything which he at heart loves.<sup>38</sup>

While in letters to Godlewski, the author sometimes masks his true feelings for the sake of adapting to their common surroundings, which led, at the opposite extreme, to explosions of anger and mockery, in his correspondence with Potkański, there are hardly any such masking tendencies. Sienkiewicz directs his aggression rather at an object of their common distaste: the particularities of the Galician milieu and its backwardness. And so, as an aside to Stanisław Tarnowski's<sup>39</sup> opinion of Stanisław Przybyszewski (whom Sienkiewicz also does not view favourably, though he respects Przybyszewski's right to use his scholarship to save his health), he writes: "As they always do everything there in a Galician, and particularly a Cracovian, way."<sup>40</sup>

Another facet to Sienkiewicz's interest in his younger friend could be indicated. This is the issue of observation, a study of a "nature" that was sensitive, sceptical, prone to many passions, some of them professional and some of a more dilettantish nature. It is not coincidental that Potkański is seen as a prototype for the characters of Leon Płoszowski (the protagonist of *Without Dogma*) and perhaps even Petronius. Who knows, besides, whether Sienkiewicz did not find in Potkański hidden traits of his own personality (in a letter to Maria Radziejowska he would confess that, "too much of Petronius sits in me").<sup>41</sup> But if this was so, then this was a part of the author's personality which he kept hidden from his conservative and aristocratic surroundings.

Most touching nonetheless is Sienkiewicz's deep care for his friend's health. In the letters are repeated various attempts at forcing Potkański to undertake different cures, and fight for his health. In a militant style, Sienkiewicz writes:

Chodzi o Pańskie zdrowie. [...] ze zdrowiem wzmaga się męstwo. Ja wiem i rozumiem ile jest warte życie [...]. Powinno się ginąć stojąc. Kto się nie broni, ten się poddaje, a kto strzela sobie w ucho, ten przechodzi granicę. Do obrony jednak trzeba siły, a siła jest w zdrowiu – więc pierwszą rzeczą jest batalia o zdrowie.

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<sup>37</sup> Julian Klaczko (1825–1906) – historian of art and literature, columnist.

<sup>38</sup> L. III, 3, p. 52 (letter dated Aug. 8, 1896).

<sup>39</sup> Stanisław Tarnowski (1837–1917) – literary critic and historian. Professor and Rector of the Jagiellonian University.

<sup>40</sup> L. III, 3, p. 177 (letter dated Nov. 27, 1900).

<sup>41</sup> H. Sienkiewicz, *Listy*, vol. III, part 3, p. 305 (letter to Maria Radziejowska, dated July 8, 1903).

It is after all, Sir, a matter of your health. [...] with health, manliness grows. I know and understand how much life is worth [...]. One should die standing. Who does not defend himself, surrenders himself, and he who shoots himself in the ear crosses the boundary. For defence, nonetheless, one needs strength, and strength is in health – the first thing, then, is the battle for health.<sup>42</sup>

In this context also appear relentless attempts at material support, offers of loans, the supposed inheritance of the author's father-in-law Szetkiewicz ("a boon in the measure of Zagłoba," writes Barycz<sup>43</sup>), or even a proposition of sharing half of his wealth ("half of that which I have at my disposal, is, Sir, at your disposal"<sup>44</sup>).

His attempts at helping his friend to achieve professional stability were also expressions of this aim, for while Potkański was certainly an exceptional historian, he was in conflict with traditional knowledge and the university environment. Such attempts included trying to secure employment for him at the Parisian branch of the Akademia Umiejętności [Academy of Learning], cajoling him into completing his doctorate thesis, and his time at the Jagiellonian University. In all these matters Sienkiewicz was incredibly active, coming face to face not only with the intractability of the Galician milieu, but also with Potkański's own ambitions.

From the detailed and important study of Potkański penned by Henryk Barycz it appears that this relationship was full of surprises. The greatest among these is that it was Potkański whom Sienkiewicz charged with the pedagogical care of his son. Him, and not any one of the conservative mentors of Kraków, and especially not Edward Janczewski.<sup>45</sup> It is true that he ceaselessly butted into this pedagogical care, trying continually to give it new directions. This nevertheless does not change the fact that as Henio matured and studied, it was Potkański who was his chief supervisor.

Comparing the letters written to these two friends, so differently situated in the network of people close to the author, definite differences in the two relationships appear almost at once. The singularity of the (grand and longitudinal) correspondence directed towards Godlewski lies first and foremost in the fact that this journalistic colleague was to a significant extent "exploited" by Sienkiewicz, both as an editor of *Niwa* and *Słowo*, as well as in financial matters and as an aide in other affairs. There is a multitude of such requests in Sienkiewicz's letters. Their realization introduces factors of impatience, even antipathy and rage. Surges of such emotions are readily apparent especially in the earlier phase of their correspondence. On the other hand, Godlewski and his wife played a very important role in Sienkiewicz's personal life; at first, they were key agents in his vying for the hand of Maria Szetkiewiczówna (which Sienkiewicz keeps in mind throughout the years), then, later, they gave him the opportunity to confess his emotions and air his disappointments after the failed marriage to Marynuszka.

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<sup>42</sup> L. III, 3, pp. 99–100 (letter dated Nov. 10, 1897).

<sup>43</sup> Barycz, *Na przełomie dwóch stuleci*, p. 136.

<sup>44</sup> L. III, 3, p. 71 (letter dated May 27, 1897).

<sup>45</sup> Edward Janczewski (1846–1918) – botanist, professor of the Jagiellonian University.

His relations to Potkański were to a much greater extent selfless. It could be said that entrusting him with the guardianship of his son was a certain form of self-interest, however, relations between Potkański and Henio were not strictly of the teacher-student variety. They, too, were linked by a strong emotional bond, which allowed the guardian to intercede on his charge's behalf in the face of his father's excessive severity. When it came to it, Sienkiewicz himself tried to help Potkański with his difficult material situation, influencing his medical care and encouraging behaviours conducive to his friend's good health.

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A reading of these letters is a good introduction to the manner in which Sienkiewicz's inner world was shaped by those close to him. They show at once how important this world of friendship was for the author's psychic well-being, both when he could count on the material help and support of his friends, as well as when he was the source of this aid upon seeing them in difficulty. As the cornerstones of friendship he saw above all else honesty and openness. "Relations which are based around delicacy in such matters are good," he wrote to Potkański, "but even better and nobler are the ones which rely on openness."<sup>46</sup>

Translated by Aniela Czajewska

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<sup>46</sup> L. III, 3, p. 71 (letter dated May 27, 1897).



Simon Burton

**The Metaphysics of Divine and Human  
Friendship: A Fifteenth-Century  
Perspective**



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## The Metaphysics of Divine and Human Friendship: A Fifteenth-Century Perspective

Most scholars place the watershed between the Middle Ages and the Renaissance in the fifteenth century. However, Charles Lohr has argued persuasively that the roots of Renaissance metaphysics, and thus of the Renaissance worldview itself, are to be found as early as the fourteenth century, in the thought of Ramon Lull, the visionary Catalan philosopher, theologian, and missionary. He finds in Lull the beginnings of a new, dynamic conception of being, supplanting the static, hierarchical view of Aristotelian scholasticism.<sup>1</sup> For Lull this became expressed in the context of a fertile Trinitarian metaphysics centred on a cascading system of absolute, relative, and correlative divine principles. Together these reflect the inner dynamics of God's own Triune being and are the ground of its multiplication through every ontological level. Through the correlatives especially, which Lohr characterizes as "substantial and intrinsic principles of action," the Aristotelian dialectic of act and potency becomes transformed into a Trinitarian relationship of transcendent activity, passivity, and mediating union.<sup>2</sup>

One of the most important inheritors of what Robert Pring-Mill aptly termed Lull's "Trinitarian World-Picture,"<sup>3</sup> and indeed one of the most important transmitters of it to the early modern period, was his fellow Catalan Ramon de Sebonde.<sup>4</sup> Born in Gerona around 1385, he taught philosophy and theology at the University of Toulouse and served a number of times as its rector. His most famous work, which he began writing in 1434 towards the end of his life, was his *Liber Creaturarum*, which became known as the *Theologia Naturalis*. In this, a pioneering work in natural theology, he argued for the essential harmony of the Two Books – the Book of God's Word and the Book of God's world. Indeed, his quest to give all the truths of the faith demonstrative certainty independently of Scripture later earned the condemnation of the papacy, with the pro-

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<sup>1</sup> Charles Lohr, "Metaphysics," in: Charles Schmitt and Quentin Skinner, eds., *Cambridge History of Renaissance Philosophy*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003, pp. 537–544.

<sup>2</sup> Lohr, "Metaphysics," p. 543.

<sup>3</sup> See Robert Pring-Mill, *The Trinitarian World Picture of Ramon Lull*, "Romanistisches Jahrbuch" 7 (1955–1956), pp. 229–256.

<sup>4</sup> Sebonde's debt to Lull is discussed extensively in Jean-Henri Probst, *Le Lullisme de Raymond de Sebonde*, Toulouse: Librairie de l'Université, 1912.

logue of the *Theologia Naturalis* being placed on the Index of forbidden books in 1559.<sup>5</sup> Despite this, Sebonde's natural theology proved enduringly popular, going through a number of editions between the late fifteenth and seventeenth centuries. While today he is best known from Michel de Montaigne's celebrated *Apologie de Raimond Sebond*, he also exerted a positive influence on such important figures as Nicholas of Cusa, Jacques Lefèvre d'Étaples, Charles de Bovelles, Hugo Grotius, Jan Amos Comenius, and Richard Baxter.<sup>6</sup>

Sebonde's thought is deserving of a fuller contextual study. In this chapter, however, I wish to focus on his fascinating treatment of friendship. For Sebonde's own appropriation of Lull's Trinitarian metaphysics, and his re-contextualization of this in a markedly anthropocentric worldview, gives rise to important reflection on both the metaphysical and spiritual dimensions of friendship – discussed below under the rubric of friendship and cosmic order and friendship, freedom, and union. Indeed, Sebonde's conception of friendship as the bond of the universe allows him to elaborate an important and, at times, provocative account of the connection between the divine, human, and non-human creation. Without compromising the dignity and distinctiveness of humans as created in the image of God, this presses towards an appreciation of the mutual dependence of the whole of creation which is striking in its originality and beauty.

### Friendship and Cosmic Order

Fundamental to Sebonde's entire project of natural theology, including his innovative treatment of friendship, is what can best be called the "human perspective." This emerges in his fundamental axiom that that which is most certain, evident, and manifest to man is simply that which is proved by man himself.<sup>7</sup> Drawing on Aristotle's famous definition of metaphysics as the science of "being *qua* being," Sebonde describes his own discipline of natural theology as an "art of affirming or denying all things, but only as they pertain to man inasmuch as he is man."<sup>8</sup> In this sense, as we shall see, his natural theology represents a kind of anthropocentric, and also Christocentric, metaphysics.<sup>9</sup> At the same time, Sebonde sought to ground his systematic exposition of natural theology on demonstrative reason, demonstrating an intimate connection between it and the

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<sup>5</sup> Isaac Vázquez Janeiro, "Theology in Fifteenth-Century Spain," in: Giulio D'Onofrio and Matthew O'Connell, eds., *History of Theology III: The Renaissance*, Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1998, pp. 257–258, 265–266.

<sup>6</sup> For Sebonde's editions and his French influence see Joseph Victor, *The Revival of Lullism at Paris, 1499–1516*, "Renaissance Quarterly" 28.4 (1975), pp. 504–534. For his influence on Jan Amos Comenius and Richard Baxter see Simon Kuchlbauer, *Johann Amos Comenius' Antisozinianische Schriften: Entwurf eines integrativen Konzepts von Aufklärung*, Dresden: Thelem, 2011, pp. 222–252, and Simon J.G. Burton, *The Hallowing of Logic: The Trinitarian Method of Richard Baxter's Methodus Theologiae*, Leiden: Brill, 2012, pp. 83–88.

<sup>7</sup> Ramon de Sebonde, *Theologia Naturalis*, Venetiis: apud Franciscum Ziletum, 1581, c. 1, pp. 1r–v.

<sup>8</sup> Sebonde, *Theologia Naturalis*, c. 65, p. 55v.

<sup>9</sup> Janeiro, "Theology in Fifteenth-Century Spain," pp. 265–266.



foundational discipline of logic, universally understood in the Middle Ages as the “art of arts” and “science of sciences.”<sup>10</sup>

Yet although Sebonde’s natural theology is defined along Aristotelian lines, with an eye towards both logic and metaphysics, it develops, from the beginning, according to a definite Augustinian trajectory. For Sebonde, as much as for the Bishop of Hippo, man lives outside of himself, separated from himself by the greatest distance possible. As Augustine elaborated in his *Confessions*, the way to find true knowledge of himself, and thus ultimately of God, was to turn within.<sup>11</sup> In this sense Sebonde shares in, and is indeed an early pioneer of, that introspective, subjective turn, which in some quarters is seen as representing the very essence of the Renaissance itself.<sup>12</sup> However, significantly, this new subjectivity is still encompassed within an objective horizon. Like Augustine himself he regards the route inwards as founded on the route upwards. The job of natural theology is therefore to construct a ladder of creatures so that man can ascend to himself, and then to God.<sup>13</sup> In this respect his own *Theologia Naturalis* bears comparison with Bonaventure’s *Itinerarium Mentis ad Deum*. Indeed, in seeking to unify the subjective and objective poles of human knowledge it clearly betrays an important debt to the Franciscan tradition.<sup>14</sup>

The rungs of this ontological ascent form the basic structure of Sebonde’s *Theologia Naturalis* and the immediate context for his account of friendship. At the beginning of his work he identifies four basic degrees: being, life, sensation, and intelligence. However, reflecting a Franciscan focus on individuality, he resolves each of these degrees into an infinity of levels.<sup>15</sup> Sebonde is emphatic that all of these degrees of being can be found eminently in God himself. Drawing on Anselm of Canterbury’s “perfect being theology,” he argues that God possesses all the pure perfections – those things which it is better to have than not to have – to an infinite degree. God therefore has being,

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<sup>10</sup> Sebonde, *Theologia Naturalis*, c. 37, 65, pp. 29v–30r, 55r–v. This famous definition is found in the opening words of Peter of Spain’s *Summulae Logicales*, the main textbook of logic up to the sixteenth century.

<sup>11</sup> Sebonde, *Theologia Naturalis*, c. 1, pp. 1v–2r; cf. Augustine of Hippo, *The Confessions of St. Augustine*, transl. Albert Outler, Mineola, N.Y.: Dover Publications, 2002, X.6.8–27.38.

<sup>12</sup> See, for example, Ernst Cassirer, Paul Kristeller, and John Randall, eds., *The Renaissance Philosophy of Man: Selections in Translation*, Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1948, and Karsten Harries, *Infinity and Perspective*, Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2001.

<sup>13</sup> Sebonde, *Theologia Naturalis*, c. 1, p. 1r; cf. Augustine, *Confessions*, X.6.8–27.38.

<sup>14</sup> It is important to understand that the characteristic Franciscan focus on the individual, given metaphysical expression in Scotus’ celebrated account of “haecceity,” was elaborated within a Platonic understanding of the objective order of the universe. For the Platonic character of Scotism see Maarten Hoenen, “Scotus and the Scotist School: The Tradition of Scotist Thought in the Medieval and Early Modern Period,” in: Egbert Bos, ed., *John Duns Scotus (1265/6–1308): Renewal of Philosophy: Acts of the Third Symposium Organised by the Dutch Society for Medieval Philosophy Medium Aevum (May 23 and 24, 1996)*, Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1998, pp. 197–210.

<sup>15</sup> Sebonde, *Theologia Naturalis*, c. 1, pp. 2r–4v.

living, feeling, and understanding eternally and without measure. Indeed, in God to live, to understand, and to sense are all the same as to be.<sup>16</sup>

Within the pages of the *Theologia Naturalis* Sebonde seeks to capture the relationship of God and creatures by means of a number of Platonic analogies. The first is that of the world-tree, whereby the being of God is compared to the root and the being of the world in its infinite degrees to the trunk and branches stemming from this root. For Sebonde this comparison clearly goes well beyond a metaphor. He is therefore emphatic that God himself is the hidden being of his creatures.<sup>17</sup> At the same time he is very careful to guard his thought from any accusations of pantheism. He argues that all created being flows from God as its only source, yet is not the same as his being. Echoing Thomas Aquinas' celebrated "metaphysics of Exodus," he points out that God alone is his own being – his essence is simply to exist – while all other being is derived and participating.<sup>18</sup>

Significantly, Sebonde chose to express this relationship using another important Platonic image – that of the idea in the mind of the artificer. According to him everything can be said to have a twofold being: its own being and that which it has in the mind of God. While the former is grounded on the latter, the two must always be carefully demarcated.<sup>19</sup> Ultimately, this dialectic of finite and infinite being becomes expressed by Sebonde according to a final Neo-Platonic pattern, that of the "metaphysics of light."<sup>20</sup> For him, as for Aquinas, Bonaventure, Dante, and a host of other mediaeval theologians, all being is to be understood as both a ray and reflection of God's own being. The divine essence is therefore a "universal mirror" in which all things are and are understood.<sup>21</sup> Moreover, this Neo-Platonic pattern of emanation and return itself grounds Sebonde's method of ascent and descent. In this, like the fractal patterns of modern mathematics, in which each part precisely mirrors the whole but on a diminishing scale, the being of the world manifests God and the being of God manifests the world. At the heart of Sebonde's natural theology is therefore a vital reciprocity between the Creator and the created.

Importantly, as Jean-Henri Probst insightfully realized, this reciprocity became expressed according to a Trinitarian pattern grounded in Lull's divine correlatives.<sup>22</sup> For Sebonde, God is the efficient, exemplary, and final cause of all things. As such his Power, Wisdom, and Love – the principles of efficiency, exemplarity, and finality – become

<sup>16</sup> Sebonde, *Theologia Naturalis*, c. 7–10, 14, pp. 9r–10v, 13v–14r. For more on Anselm's perfect being theology see Thomas Morris, *Our Idea of God: An Introduction to Philosophical Theology*, Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1991.

<sup>17</sup> Sebonde, *Theologia Naturalis*, c. 16, p. 16r.

<sup>18</sup> Sebonde, *Theologia Naturalis*, c. 12, 15, pp. 11r–12r, 14r–v; cf. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, 1a q. 2.3; 3.4. For discussion of Aquinas' metaphysics of Exodus see Denys Turner, *Faith, Reason and the Existence of God*, New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004, pp. 43–45.

<sup>19</sup> Sebonde, *Theologia Naturalis*, c. 14, pp. 13v–14r.

<sup>20</sup> For a brief but illuminating discussion of the metaphysics of light see Christian Moevs, *The Metaphysics of Dante's Comedy*, New York: Oxford University Press, 2005, pp. 17–21.

<sup>21</sup> Sebonde, *Theologia Naturalis*, c. 17, 24, 30, pp. 18r, 21v–22r, 26v.

<sup>22</sup> Probst, *Lullisme*, pp. 48–50.

dynamically impressed on every single being. Indeed, like Lull, Sebonde recognized an intimate connection between the creation of all things out of nothing by God's Power, Wisdom, and Love and the internal production of the persons of the Trinity.<sup>23</sup> In this God's delight in the society of his own nature becomes the ground for his delight in the society of all creatures.<sup>24</sup> At the same time the relational web of action and passion which connects all creatures together can itself be seen to mirror the transcendent activity and passivity of God's own Trinitarian nature.<sup>25</sup>

Now at last we are in a position to understand the underlying structure of Sebonde's account of friendship and its central importance in his metaphysical scheme. For him, God is the unifying principle of all things and the ground in which all their infinite diversity and multiplicity coheres. As he elegantly expresses this:

All things therefore tend one to another, as we see by experience, that one sustains another and all things mutually help each other, and the lower things ordinarly serve the greater and superior. In this they make one order, one friendship, and one unity.<sup>26</sup>

For Sebonde this metaphysical friendship and affinity can be seen on the one hand in the way that the elements are taken up into first herbs and plants, then animals and finally man, and on the other hand in the influence reaching down to earth through the heavenly spheres. As we shall see further below, it is ultimately grounded on the order and friendship of the divine being itself. Following Richard of St. Victor, Sebonde chose to express this divine friendship according to Augustine's famous triad of the lover, the beloved, and the love that binds them together.<sup>27</sup> This implies that the friendship and love which unifies all creatures is therefore simply a reflection of that higher friendship and that higher society of the Trinity.

Yet we must not forget the human perspective. Drawing on the ancient doctrine of the microcosm, Sebonde is insistent that of all creatures it is man alone who comprises in himself every degree of being. What God is in infinite actuality, humans can be said to be in infinite potentiality.<sup>28</sup> Humanity is therefore the bond of the universe and the nexus between the finite and infinite – a doctrine which finds its highest fulfilment in the Incarnation.<sup>29</sup> The priority of the human in Sebonde's thought is therefore ontological as much as epistemological, and is, in fact, epistemological because ontological. Indeed,

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<sup>23</sup> Sebonde, *Theologia Naturalis*, c. 46, p. 34r.

<sup>24</sup> Sebonde, *Theologia Naturalis*, c. 47, p. 35r.

<sup>25</sup> While Sebonde daringly ascribes both activity and passivity to God's Triune nature he also insists that God himself is infinite and pure act (*Theologia Naturalis*, c. 6, pp. 8v–9r).

<sup>26</sup> Sebonde, *Theologia Naturalis*, c. 4, p. 7r.

<sup>27</sup> Sebonde, *Theologia Naturalis*, c. 130, pp. 107v–108r; cf. Richard of St. Victor, *On the Trinity: English Translation and Commentary*, transl. Ruben Angelici, Eugene, OR: Cascade, 2011, III.1–25.

<sup>28</sup> Sebonde, *Theologia Naturalis*, c. 6, pp. 8v–9r.

<sup>29</sup> Sebonde, *Theologia Naturalis*, c. 74, pp. 61v–62r.

Sebonde is clear that all other natures were created for the sake of human nature and in order to serve humans, the divine image-bearers.<sup>30</sup>

For him the world is to be understood most profoundly in its character as gift from God to man. Everything in the universe is therefore ordained for the good of humans. At the same time there is an important, albeit subordinate, sense in which humanity can be seen as God's gift to the universe. As he explains, since humans alone know the purpose of all creation they complete the lack found in the other creatures. It is in humanity alone that other creatures find their unity, their purpose, and their order – and one must ultimately say their friendship. Humans are meant to love and care for the creation and in so doing to vicariously express the love of God for all that he has made. This is why the fall of humans proved so damaging and disorienting to the rest of creation. In creating and redeeming humanity God therefore intends that the whole universe should be one body, one city, and one kingdom with man as its head and king.<sup>31</sup>

### Friendship, Freedom, and Union

For Sebonde friendship is therefore inextricably bound to the self-giving of God, both in the inward community of his Trinitarian nature and in its outward expression in the creation of the world. In order to come to a fuller understanding of friendship and its gift-like character, we must therefore probe this relationship more deeply. Drawing on his Anselmic perfect being theology Sebonde argued that God must possess a joy than which a greater cannot be thought. For him it was self-evident that such was not able to be without the society of another of the greatest similarity, in which fellowship true love lies. It is therefore necessary that God produces another from his own substance which he loves just as himself and by which he is loved to the greatest degree possible.<sup>32</sup> Indeed, as described above, simply from observing the universe and the reciprocity which exists between all things we can see that “it is the highest nobility to give.” It follows that God's very nature is to give, and that for him to give is to be and to be is to give.<sup>33</sup>

It is clear from the very dynamic of giving that there can be no gift without a recipient. It is therefore necessary that in God there must be a giver and a recipient. Due to the divine simplicity giver and recipient must be identical, and yet because giving cannot be collapsed into receiving they must also be completely distinct. Following a longstanding Augustinian and scholastic tradition, Sebonde identified two modes of self-giving in God: that of the divine intellect and that of the divine will. According to the first mode, God understands his own being and by doing so produces a perfect image of himself, which is the Son eternally begotten of the Father. Drawing on the metaphysics of light Sebonde compared this to the sun imparting its whole light and substance into its ray. Yet since the Son is an intellectual nature distinct from the Father he is also to

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<sup>30</sup> Sebonde, *Theologia Naturalis*, c. 80, p. 64r.

<sup>31</sup> Sebonde, *Theologia Naturalis*, c. 96, pp. 77r–80r. Note the pagination goes wrong at this point.

<sup>32</sup> Sebonde, *Theologia Naturalis*, c. 49, pp. 36v–37r.

<sup>33</sup> Sebonde, *Theologia Naturalis*, c. 50, pp. 37r–38r.

be identified as a different person. According to the second mode, Sebonde argues that the relationship of Father and Son cannot be perfect without a free and spontaneous movement of will binding them together. This movement of divine will is called love and represents the mutual gift of Father to Son and Son to Father. It is distinct from both the Father and the Son and is the Holy Spirit, the third divine person. Again the relation can be compared to that of light and heat emanating from a single sun. Yet such a comparison is also potentially misleading, since it misses the fundamentally personal character of the relationship of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.<sup>34</sup>

Above we described how the reciprocal character of the divine being, as reflected also in humans, created in the image of God, provided the ontological template for Sebonde's account of friendship. Now we may begin to see how even this dynamic pattern is inadequate for describing friendship when divorced from the mystery of personhood, whether divine or human. At the heart of this is the mystery of freedom itself and it is here that Sebonde's natural theology departs most decisively from the emanationism of pagan Neo-Platonism. While early Christian philosophers and theologians drew deeply on Platonic metaphysics in their accounts of both the Trinity and creation, they also began to infuse into it a new, profoundly biblical, understanding of freedom and love. This is already apparent in the thought of Pseudo-Dionysius in what Kevin Corrigan and Michael Harrington identify as his combining of transcendence and "hyperessential vulnerability."<sup>35</sup> In the High Middle Ages it became realized, above all, in John Duns Scotus, who in many ways sought to combine a Dionysian understanding of the Trinity with his own radical metaphysics of freedom.<sup>36</sup> In this we significantly find Sebonde following him to the letter.

According to the standard Aristotelian "statistical" account of modality, upheld also by Aquinas, freedom was grounded in the ability to make choices at different moments of time.<sup>37</sup> It was also ultimately rooted in the intellectual nature of the soul. While Aquinas' account of free choice involved a complex, feedback loop of intellect and will, it was the intellect that had the final say in any decision.<sup>38</sup> Scotus changed this in two ways. Firstly, he located freedom in the will itself and its indeterminate character,

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<sup>34</sup> Sebonde, *Theologia Naturalis*, c. 51–2, pp. 38r–40v.

<sup>35</sup> Pseudo-Dionysius, "The Divine Names," 4.13, in: Paul Rorem, ed., *Pseudo-Dionysius: The Complete Works*, transl. Colm Luibheid, Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 1987, p. 82; cf. Kevin Corrigan and Michael Harrington, "Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite," *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/pseudo-dionysius-areopagite> (consulted July 22, 2015).

<sup>36</sup> The formal distinction which Scotus used to characterize the Trinity and the human soul was derived, in part, from Pseudo-Dionysius' notion of "unitive containment" (John Duns Scotus, *Ordinatio*, 2 d. 16, n. 17–22). For a daring exploration of the relation between Scotus' Trinitarian theology and his metaphysics of freedom see Michael Sylwanowicz, *Contingent Causality and the Foundations of Duns Scotus' Metaphysics*, Leiden: Brill, 1996, pp. 130–146.

<sup>37</sup> For the classic discussion of this see Simo Knuuttila, "Time and Modality in Scholasticism," in: Simo Knuuttila, ed., *Reforging the Great Chain of Being: Studies in the History of Modal Theories*, Dordrecht: Reidel, 1981, pp. 163–258.

<sup>38</sup> Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, 1a q. 82.4; cf. Eleonore Stump, *Aquinas*, London: Routledge, 2003, pp. 277–306.

mirroring the infinite freedom of God's own nature.<sup>39</sup> Secondly, he broke decisively with Aristotle's modal theory. Since freedom consisted in an intrinsic power towards opposites, it followed that every moment was contingent, such that it could always *be* different, and not only that it could always have *been* different. For Aristotle only the future was open, while the present was bound in ironclad necessity. By contrast, for Scotus the present shared the openness of the future and only the past was necessary.<sup>40</sup>

The fourteenth-century breakthrough in modal metaphysics has been much discussed, but its connection with Trinitarian theology has not been widely appreciated. For one of the key areas in which Scotus applied his new, synchronic account of freedom was in his description of the intra-Trinitarian processions. In particular, Scotus argued that the generation of the Son as an act of the divine intellect was entirely necessary. However, the spiration of the Holy Spirit as an act of the divine will was, in compatibilist fashion, both necessary and free at the same time. In this way the eternal, absolutely necessary nature of God became articulated in a new and daring account of the freedom of Triune self-giving.<sup>41</sup> Significantly, we find Sebonde making precisely the same claims. In distinguishing the generation of the Son and spiration of the Holy Spirit he points out that the intellectual production in the divine being is natural and necessary while the volitional production is free.<sup>42</sup> Like Scotus, he views this as the crucial distinction in the Trinity, constituting the incommunicable properties by which the different persons may be distinguished in relationship. In fact, without this distinction between necessary and free it is difficult to see how Sebonde could articulate his account of activity and passivity in the self-giving of God to himself.<sup>43</sup>

The impact of Scotus' metaphysics of freedom on Sebonde's account of the relation between God and his creation is no less pronounced than in his discussion of the Trinity. While Sebonde is perhaps closer to Aquinas and the older Platonic tradition in seeming to teach a kind of necessity of creation grounded in the self-diffusive goodness of God, he is at one with Scotus in arguing for its radical contingency. Every moment the universe threatens to slip into the nothingness from which it came and it is only the continual sustaining of God that prevents this from happening. Indeed, in the dynamic of God the giver and man the recipient we find an important dialectic of necessity and freedom. For humans, like all creatures, receive the gift of existence necessarily. Yet God gives this gift in utter freedom. Indeed, it is for his own sake alone and his delight in producing creatures similar to himself that he eternally wills to create. For this reason, Sebonde says, man is greatly obliged to God "as though to his greatest and most intimate friend."<sup>44</sup>

If the friendship between humanity and God is grounded in necessity, and the obligation of created to Creator, it yet finds its ultimate expression in the freedom of

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<sup>39</sup> John Duns Scotus, *Duns Scotus on the Will and Morality*, transl. Allan Wolter, ed. William Frank, Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 1997, pp. 136–142.

<sup>40</sup> Knuuttila, "Time and Modality," pp. 195–258.

<sup>41</sup> Sylwanowicz, *Contingent Causality*, pp. 195–210.

<sup>42</sup> Sebonde, *Theologia Naturalis*, c. 51, p. 39r.

<sup>43</sup> Sebonde, *Theologia Naturalis*, c. 54, pp. 42r–44r.

<sup>44</sup> Sebonde, *Theologia Naturalis*, c. 107, pp. 92r–v.



love, mirroring the self-giving love of God himself. For Sebonde is clear that God has given humans the gift of freedom so that they may choose to gratefully love him or to reject him. Moreover, so great is this gift that he has dignified it, and its choices, with immortality.<sup>45</sup> It is for this reason that Sebonde can claim that only humans are necessarily and naturally obliged to love God, for only they can recognize and freely respond to the magnitude of his self-giving. In this way it also encompasses the response of all his creatures so that humans become the representatives before God of all creatures.<sup>46</sup>

True friendship, that friendship which characterizes the relation of divine and human persons, is in essence nothing but the free movement of love. In this it goes beyond and completes, even as it also finds its expression in, that dynamic web of affinities binding all things together in God. For Sebonde, like Scotus, it is in the faculty of free choice, and not intellect *per se*, that humanity most closely mirrors God. Certainly, man receives a being which is more beautiful than that of other creatures since all other creatures receive their being on account of him. Yet it is man's possession of free choice which distinguishes him from all other creatures and which constitutes him as their king and emperor. Sebonde even compares the other faculties of man to the horse which free will rides. By contrast, "free will carries nothing but is the seat of the Creator." In fact while all other things are joined to God through free choice, free choice alone is "immediately and without medium conjoined with God." The greatest dignity of man is that he has been chosen to be a "perpetual and immortal habitation of God."<sup>47</sup>

Anticipating a prominent theme of the Renaissance, expressed most famously by Pico della Mirandola in his *Oration on the Dignity of Man*, Sebonde claims that it is through man's freedom above all that he comes, by degrees, to God himself. Following Scotus he argues that free choice is even elevated above knowledge since it is through his free will, and not his intellect alone, that man becomes similar to God.<sup>48</sup> Like Lull, Sebonde effectively conflates love and will.<sup>49</sup> For both, and here they once again follow a broader Franciscan trajectory, it is love which converts man totally to God and to his will. Ultimately it is this union of wills which makes man "one divine being with God." It is this which makes him a friend of God. In fact, Sebonde holds that the love of God is our first good, our first light, and our first justice. It is the "first true friendship," from which arises all other true friendships.<sup>50</sup>

Echoing an important Augustinian theme, Sebonde argues that it is only through love of God that humans can transcend that wrongful self-love which is the root of all sin and break through to true love of self and others, including the animal creation.<sup>51</sup> True friendship, as we have seen, is constituted in self-giving. It is therefore, first of all, a giving of oneself wholly and totally to God. For Sebonde, self, or more precisely the

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<sup>45</sup> Sebonde, *Theologia Naturalis*, c. 92, pp. 73v–75r.

<sup>46</sup> Sebonde, *Theologia Naturalis*, c. 96, pp. 77r–80r.

<sup>47</sup> Sebonde, *Theologia Naturalis*, c. 103, pp. 84r–85v.

<sup>48</sup> Sebonde, *Theologia Naturalis*, c. 103, p. 86r; cf. Scotus, *Reportatio*, 4 d. 49 q. 2.

<sup>49</sup> Probst, *Lullisme*, pp. 41–47.

<sup>50</sup> Sebonde, *Theologia Naturalis*, c. 141, pp. 119r–121v.

<sup>51</sup> Sebonde, *Theologia Naturalis*, c. 141, pp. 119r–121v.

prioritising of self over others, is what eclipses friendship. True friendship arises when we stop loving things, and demanding their love, for our own fulfilment and need, and start loving them for the sake of God. Indeed, paradoxically, and here we touch the heart of the Christian mystery, it is only in loving all things for the sake of God that we can truly begin to love them for their own sakes. As Jesus Christ himself said, it is only in dying to ourselves that we can truly begin to live.<sup>52</sup>

At first sight this negation of self might seem to be a denial of what makes us truly human. Yet Sebonde, and with him the entire Christian tradition, would claim that this is illusory. In fact the planting of the seed of self-denial issues forth in a multiplication of joy, the eternal fruit of love. For the highest form of freedom, the way in which humans most fully resemble their Creator, is to do the will of God, as both Aquinas and Scotus realized.<sup>53</sup> As Dante expressed this, in one of the most beautiful lines of the *Commedia*: “E ‘n la sua volontade è nostra pace.”<sup>54</sup> For Sebonde, humans were created for this joy of knowing God and it is in this, anticipated on earth and realized in heaven, that we find the “highest cognition of divine friendship.” Moreover, it is this friendship which overflows into friendship with other humans and with the whole of creation. Having stripped away selfishness through divine grace, humans are freed to rejoice in the joy of others. In no longer needing anything but the love of God they are liberated to truly love everything in creation.<sup>55</sup> This love, this joy, this self-giving is the very essence of friendship.

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<sup>52</sup> Cf. John 12:24–25.

<sup>53</sup> See, for example, Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, 1a2ae q. 5.4 and Scotus, *Will and Morality*, pp. 293–295.

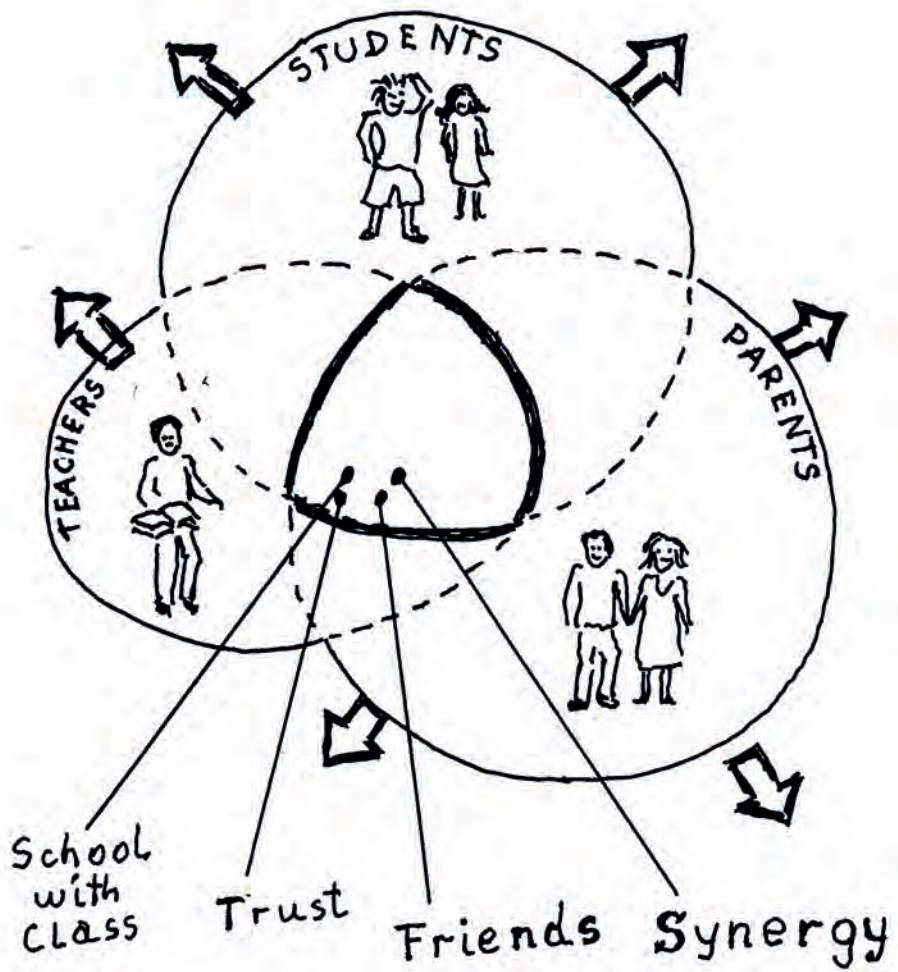
<sup>54</sup> Dante Alighieri, *Paradiso*, III l. 85 (“And in his will is our peace,” transl. Robert Hollander and Jean Hollander, in: Dante, *Paradiso*, New York: Anchor, 2008, ad loc.).

<sup>55</sup> Sebonde, *Theologia Naturalis*, c. 156, pp. 134r–135r.



Grażyna Czetwertyńska

**On Collaboration, Trust,  
and Friendship in Teacher Groups,  
or Good Relations among Teachers  
and Their Impact on the Work  
of an Educational Institution**



## On Collaboration, Trust, and Friendship in Teacher Groups, or Good Relations among Teachers and Their Impact on the Work of an Educational Institution

The issue of the relations between teachers who work together and teach the same groups of students is closely tied to the problem of trust, and is often raised in the context of the importance of social capital in education. Good relations, maintaining and developing them, and even building ties of friendship in teacher teams increases the team members' mutual trust, helps reduce work load and stress, decreases frequency of burnout, and is conducive to welcoming even difficult tasks. Teacher teams that work well together cope more easily with crisis situations, plan their work better, positively respond to change, and are more inclined to experiment and to pursue reforms. A high level of trust, liking one another and, finally, friendship among teachers lead to a quality teamwork culture which facilitates assessment of work results, exchange of friendly criticism, and valuable feedback. All this affects the quality of the educational offering and learning atmosphere.

When several teachers instruct and bring up the same young person, when a group of teachers influence a student's development by overseeing his or her work, this is a joint task and they can perform it well only by working together. Without collaboration, good education is difficult to achieve even if an educational institution has many excellent teachers. Of course teaching requires those who practice it to have independence, freedom, autonomy of decision, the ability to think creatively and make choices, nevertheless it is not a good vocation for individualists. Elements that should be especially valued in a teaching team include the teachers' readiness to share their ideas and knowledge with their colleagues, willingness to work together and learn from one another, sometimes even inclination to agree to a compromise for the good of the students. Presenting positive experiences, inviting one another to classes to gather tips or good advice – should be normal practice in a teacher team.

However, to truly benefit from other teachers' advice and guidance, team members have to really trust one another. It is always worthwhile to show what is best about our teaching repertoire, to help others, but also to confidently share problems and weaknesses. On the other hand, we should also gratefully accept an even minor assistance, listen carefully to friendly suggestions, if mutual trust leads us to believe that they actually are friendly. Then, we have a chance to hear an inspiring idea, identify an obstacle or

any weaker elements in our ideas. Sometimes an ordinary, amiable conversation can be an opportunity to rethink our work methods. Even if teachers find the ultimate solution by themselves, talking about it and being able to define the problem, present it to someone we trust, makes it much easier to deal with. On the other hand, if trust is lacking in professional relations, there is no chance for such conversation to take place, due to our concern about maintaining the position we enjoy and our fear of displaying weakness. In the teaching community, people are quite often afraid that revealing one's weaknesses shows a lack of professionalism. A lack of trust, and not just organizational or financial issues, can be a serious barrier to team teaching.

Teachers who are able to create the right conditions for teamwork, building good relations, getting to know one another, and even liking one another and becoming friends, create an opportunity to talk to one another openly. They learn from one another, inspire one another, spread enthusiasm, share the joy of success and sometimes the bitterness of failure. Studies conducted at schools show that the more personal contacts there are between teachers, the more often the teachers perceive relations in their community as being based on trust.<sup>1</sup> There is a relatively large body of literature on how learning outcomes are affected by the atmosphere at schools and the relations between teachers and students, and also among students themselves, especially in the context of bullying. The indirect impact of these relations is often highlighted as well, including their role in improving the atmosphere at school, improving teachers' sense of wellbeing, enhancing their work motivation and their attitude to reform.<sup>2</sup>

Relations within a teacher team, collaboration among the members, or rather its impact on teaching effectiveness continues to be an interesting issue requiring more in-depth research. In my own studies of the strategies adopted in the *Szkoła z klasą* [School with Class],<sup>3</sup> an NGO-project, whose aim was to trigger changes in the work culture of the participating schools, the necessity for teachers to work together was assumed as the foundation of all activity. The project's organizers underlined that the tasks proposed to the schools should not be carried out by individual teachers but by teams. They assured the participants that professional development was fastest when teachers worked in a team that openly discussed its work. Good teaching aids, teaching consultants, extra courses, conferences, and workshops are extremely important, but swapping experiences

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. Nieke M. Moolenaar, Alan J. Daly, Peter J.C. Slegers, "Exploring Patterns of Interpersonal Relationships among Teachers: A Social Network Theory Perspective," in: Theo Wubbels, Jan van Tartwijk, Perry den Brok, and Jack Levy, eds., *Interpersonal Relationships in Education*, in the series "Advances in Learning Environments," Rotterdam: Sense Publishers (forthcoming), available at: [http://www.academia.edu/448571/Exploring\\_patterns\\_of\\_interpersonal\\_relationships\\_among\\_teachers\\_A\\_social\\_network\\_theory\\_perspective](http://www.academia.edu/448571/Exploring_patterns_of_interpersonal_relationships_among_teachers_A_social_network_theory_perspective) (consulted July 15, 2015).

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Rebecca J. Collie, Jennifer D. Shapka, and Nancy E. Perry, "School Climate and Social-Emotional Learning: Predicting Teacher Stress, Job Satisfaction, and Teaching Efficacy," *Journal of Educational Psychology* 104.4 (2012), p. 1189.

<sup>3</sup> *Akcja społeczna „Szkoła z klasą” jako strategia zmiany szkoły polskiej. Plany, oczekiwania, reakcje* [The School with Class NGO-Project as a Strategy for Changing Polish Schools. Plans, Expectations, Response]. Grant KBNN107 008 31/1667, conducted in 2006–2009 at the Institute for Interdisciplinary Studies "Artes Liberales" (today's Faculty of "Artes Liberales"). The project included about 8,000 participating schools from all over Poland; an in-depth study was conducted on 400 of them.

with your colleagues is still more important. The task instructions given to the schools stated that teachers who wanted to improve their teaching effectiveness had to be able to assess their own work and the reality of their work environment quickly and accurately and then adjust their teaching methods accordingly. Mention was made of the need for group thinking within the teacher teams and for learning from one's mistakes. The organizers wanted teachers collaborating on a daily basis to get parents and students involved in this joint endeavour as well. The aim was to make the school a common concern shared by all.

The *School with Class* project aimed at launching a nationwide movement to improve schools and make changes leading to growth of social capital.<sup>4</sup> In this case, social capital may be defined as social trust.<sup>5</sup> Teachers reviewing the work of their colleagues, giving and then receiving friendly criticism, had to show trust. The teachers found this task extremely hard. Though the issue of teaching as a team is constantly listed among the tasks of schools,<sup>6</sup> not enough attention is being paid to creating the proper conditions for a permanent and in-depth collaboration between teachers. During the project, correspondence from the participating teachers often included complaints about the difficulties of having to do the work in teams. Teachers wrote to the organizers asking that the tasks be individualized, that they themselves be allowed to opt out of the team, that a mediator be provided to deal with disputes and conflicts, especially when collaboration involved more than one school. They were sometimes discouraged and angered by their fellow teachers' unprofessional actions. They had difficulties honestly evaluating each other's work.

Considering just how hard was the task given the participants by the organizers, forcing them in a sense to exchange opinions, explain their own ideas to other teachers, and defend their rationale in a professional discussion, surprisingly many teachers did a very good job. In their daily work, teachers do not have too many opportunities to share their professional ideas, as their contacts with fellow teachers are rare, brief, and sporadic. More often, they learn from their own mistakes and seldom share the secrets of their work method.<sup>7</sup> This kind of professional "defensiveness," protecting the secrets behind the closed door of the classroom, hampers professional self-improvement. Conservatism and routine, defending proven and therefore "good" and "easy" strategies, cannot be upheld, when experiences are openly shared. In this kind of situation, also changes and improvements to the curriculum designed to increase its effectiveness come about more

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<sup>4</sup> Grażyna Czetwertyńska, *Akcja społeczna „Szkoła z klasą” jako strategia zmiany szkoły polskiej. Plany, oczekiwania, reakcje*, Warszawa: Bookmark, 2013, p. 59.

<sup>5</sup> Dimitrina Mihaylova, *Social Capital in Central and Eastern Europe. A Critical Assessment and Literature Review*, Budapest: Center for Policy Studies, Central European University, 2004.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. The Minister of National Education's directive dated August 27, 2012 concerning the core curricula for pre-school education and general education in different types of schools (*Dziennik Ustaw/Journal of Laws* 2012, item 977).

<sup>7</sup> Cf. Steven Brint, *Schools and Societies*, Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2006, pp. 236–237.

quickly than when they occur through legislation alone. Dutch researchers suggested much greater benefits than improved curricula:

Interpersonal relationships among teachers may shape a context in which trust can grow by providing a blueprint for future interactions, forming mutual expectations, and outlining the norms and values of a community.<sup>8</sup>

Asked about the *School with Class* project a few years after their participation ended, teachers mentioned real changes and positive effects of organizing teams at their school. On the other hand, little remained of the contacts established via e-mail with other schools. Expecting that incidental contacts would lead to the development of a more lasting collaboration within a network of cooperating schools, the organizers seem to have gone too far, but other benefits like attempts at dialogue between teachers, discussions about their work, exchanges of ideas and opinions, certainly did take place. Conducting my study, I managed to find a small group of teacher communities that continued the relationships established within the project, keeping up friendly contacts and even friendships, and considering this particular effect to have been for them the most important outcome of the whole project.

People concerned about the shortage of social capital suggest that schools should place a direct emphasis on trust, because building and maintaining trust in relations between teachers and students are of paramount importance. They propose that schools highlight good models from literature and history.<sup>9</sup> They point to the benefits of a growing capital of trust.<sup>10</sup> Education for trust can be seen as an important goal of educational reform. However, this element is poorly represented in the consecutive legislative reforms of education; with one possible exception: an attempt, not always successful, to introduce – next to external supervision – assessments of quality largely based on self-diagnosis and self-monitoring.<sup>11</sup> But neither patterns from literature, nor changes in the law can replace a genuine model for teachers and a good, friendly atmosphere among teachers that students will instantly perceive and appreciate. Both research and everyday observations indicate that it is a powerful and important factor in the teaching process.

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<sup>8</sup> Moolenaar, Daly, Slegers, “Exploring Patterns...” p. 96.

<sup>9</sup> Piotr Sztompka, *Zaufanie. Fundament społeczeństwa*, Kraków: Wydawnictwo Znak, 2007, pp. 298–299.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 300.

<sup>11</sup> For example a programme for improving the effectiveness of the system of teacher supervision and assessment of schools' quality of work carried out by Ośrodek Rozwoju Edukacji [Centre for the Development of Education] in a partnership with the Jagiellonian University and Era Ewaluacji [The Age of Assessment] (a private evaluation company).

Andrzej Elżanowski

**On the Evolution of Friendship**





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## On the Evolution of Friendship

A significant progress has been achieved over the last decades in our understanding the evolutionary origins of our own human behaviour and mentality including such a complex motivational system as moral agency. Friendship may match moral agency in complexity and both of these sociopsychological faculties present similar problems when it comes to tracing their evolutionary origins. One problem is the lack of widely accepted definitions of complex sociopsychological faculties because of their very subjectivity and their objective variation within *Homo sapiens*. Human sociopsychological faculties show a great (probably exceptional) individual and group variation resulting in a broad spectrum of adult conditions that at one end may approach the faculties of best developed chimpanzees, as it is the case with moral development.<sup>1</sup>

Human friendships vary between idealistic *Tugendfreundschaft* and practical *Nutzfreundschaft*<sup>2</sup> and so vary the popular concepts of friendship, which are informative as they reveal how friendship is actually practiced in a society. For example, North Americans emphasize companionships and emotional support whereas West Africans expect practical assistance and advocate caution towards friends.<sup>3</sup> On the other hand, the essentialist, anthropocentric belief in a unitary, idealized “human nature” obscures the stepwise evolutionary assembly of human faculties such as friendship and sustains the anachronistic dichotomous subdivision of the subjective world into humans and “animals” while in fact such faculties as empathy and reflective self-consciousness

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<sup>1</sup> John C. Gibbs, *Moral Development and Reality: Beyond the Theories of Kohlberg and Hoffman*, Boston: Pearson Allyn & Bacon, 2010.

<sup>2</sup> Frank Rexroth and Johannes F.K. Schmidt, “Freundschaft und Verwandtschaft: Zur Theorie zweier Beziehungssysteme,” in: Johannes F.K. Schmidt, Martine Guichard, Peter Schuster, Fritz Trillmich, eds., *Freundschaft und Verwandtschaft: Zur Unterscheidung und Verflechtung zweier Beziehungssysteme*, Konstanz: UVK Verlagsgesellschaft, 2007, pp. 7–13.

<sup>3</sup> Glenn Adam and Victoria C. Plaut, “The Cultural Grounding of Personal Relationship: Friendship in North American and West African Worlds,” *Personal Relationships* 10 (2003), pp. 333–347. Note that the groups compared in this study differ in both culture and race, which makes the interpretation of differences only in terms of “cultural grounding” unwarranted.

(which turns out to be different from and preceded by the awareness of self-agency<sup>4</sup>) which emerged in primate evolution, may well be more consequential for the quality of friendship than any differences between genera *Homo* (humans) and *Pan* (chimpanzees).

Friendship is based (in various proportions) on liking and trust and as such it is a subjective phenomenon that we humans know to some extent by introspection, intersubjective communication, and behavioural observation of our conspecifics (whose interactions we can understand owing to our faculty of empathy). Bonds based on liking and trust operate in many other vertebrates which are motivated by conscious, value-laden mental representations and which are therefore living subjects rather than objects. Of course, the entire subjectivity or psyche emerged to serve biological needs and cannot under natural conditions effectively oppose natural selection. However, the subjective domain and the motives as proximate causes<sup>5</sup> show a limited autonomy with respect to the biological needs (ultimate causes), which is conveyed by the vertebrate motivational system based on reward and punishment. This system generates value-laden central states, either positive or negative, and thus responds only as a whole – you cannot be somebody's friend and enemy at the same time (even if it would be useful for opportunistic alliances, as in politics). Moreover, the vertebrate motivational system is likely to motivate quasi-neutral rewarding behaviours that are not fully accountable in terms of fitness gains or, at the very least, behaviours that are currently rewarding are more likely to be initiated and thus to evolve than behaviours that are not rewarding (let alone those that are currently punished by pain or other negative experience). All this is relevant to the understanding of friendship which in natural conditions remains under the selective control as far as it affects fitness, and yet may depend to an extent on the margin of tolerance that is used by subjects helping themselves to the sources of reward, as in the case of play. Defining friendship in biological rather than psychological terms would be tantamount to explaining it away by reducing it to some sort of cooperation and thus stripping it of all essential and distinctive subjective concomitants. Regardless of its impact on the (Darwinian) fitness, friendship cannot be reduced to biology without losing it in the process.

### The Family Roots of Friendship

The preceding argument for the psychological autonomy of friendship may seem entirely superfluous to scholars in the humanities, and yet it is relevant to the lingering confusion about kinship and friendship<sup>6</sup> which have been treated as mutually exclusive

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<sup>4</sup> Justin J. Couchman, "Humans and Monkeys Distinguish between Self-generated, Opposing, and Random Actions," *Animal Cognition* 18 (2015), pp. 231–238.

<sup>5</sup> Elliott Sober and David Sloan Wilson, *Unto Others / The Evolution and Psychology of Unselfish Behavior*, Cambridge MASS-London: Harvard University Press, 1998.

<sup>6</sup> Rexroth and Schmidt, *op. cit.*

kinds of social relationships.<sup>7</sup> However, the awareness of genetic relatedness requires at least some understanding of the causal connection between mating and giving birth and some theory of genealogical continuity which was traditionally (before any knowledge of genetics) placed in blood. Consequently, only humans (and possibly to some extent other hominids) can be aware of their genealogic kinship *per se* (as opposed to any observed social reality) and usually deliberately hold a special attitude towards relatives. Human kinship commonly features an “axiom of amity,” a presumption that kin are entitled to aid simply by virtue of being kin, although this presumption is often socially imposed, motivated less by affection between donors and recipients than by social pressure.<sup>8</sup> Nepotism in its original psychological meaning of deliberate promotion of relatives is uniquely human. This does not mean that relatives or family members cannot be friends (even if their friendship could be difficult to tease out from their nepotistic motivation), although more or less socially imposed obligations towards kin may possibly interfere with striking up friendships.

By contrast, most other mammals (and other non-human subjects) enhance inclusive fitness by favouring proximity and similarity. The dominant mechanism of “kin recognition” in mammals comes down to bonding with litter mates and functional family members including caregiver(s) regardless of their genetic kinship or even their species. Of course under natural conditions the litter/nest mates are usually siblings and the caregivers are parents, but known experiments have shown that young mammals and birds may get attached to any animal they grow up with. A more precise mechanism (but usually with weaker motivational effects) is self-referent phenotype matching: an individual compares phenotypic cues such as odor or appearance of the other individual with either one’s own cues or the cues learned from parents and siblings.<sup>9</sup> The odor cues may be genetic which makes the match between favoured mates and siblings precise. However, despite the misleading jargon used in behavioural ecology, young mammals never “learn who their kin are”<sup>10</sup> or “recognize relatives.”<sup>11</sup> All they recognize or rather perceive is who is similar to their litter/nest mates or to themselves, which triggers generalized mechanisms of liking or sometimes disliking<sup>12</sup> similar individuals.

In non-human (or at least non-personal) subjects there is no evidence of any special kind for bonding between relatives, which makes an *a priori* subdivision of relationships into kinship and friendships unwarranted and misleading. All social bonds within the family and beyond turn out to be controlled by the neurochemistry circuits involving

<sup>7</sup> E.g., Peter Kappeler, “Freundschaft bei nichtmenschlichen Primaten,” in: Schmidt, Guichard, Schuster, Trillmich, eds., op. cit., pp. 235–247; Fritz Trillmich, “Ultimate und proximate Fragen zu Verwandtschaft und Freundschaft bei Tieren,” in: Schmidt, Guichard, Schuster, Trillmich, eds., op. cit., pp. 221–234.

<sup>8</sup> Doug Jones, “Group Nepotism and Human Kinship,” *Current Anthropology* 41.5 (2000), pp. 779–809.

<sup>9</sup> Mark E. Hauber and Paul W. Sherman, “Self-referent Phenotype Matching: Theoretical Considerations and Empirical Evidence,” *TRENDS in Neurosciences* 24.10 (2001), pp. 609–616.

<sup>10</sup> Anne E. Pusey, “Social Systems,” in: Johan J. Bolhuis and Luc-Alain Giraldeau, eds., *The Behavior of Animals*, Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2005, pp. 315–341.

<sup>11</sup> Hauber and Sherman, op. cit.

<sup>12</sup> As in the case of chacma baboons avoiding consortships with similar opposite sex group members. See Hauber and Sherman, op. cit.

oxytocin, a hypothalamic neuropeptide that influences many aspects of social behaviour including prosocial approach, trust, and empathy.<sup>13</sup> Oxytocin controls human group psychology, in particular liking and empathizing, compliance with group norms and cultural practices, as well as cooperation and mutual trust, which may lead to defensive aggression and discrimination of outgroup members.<sup>14</sup> The joint action of oxytocin and dopamine in the nucleus accumbens (in the mesolimbic system) is rewarding and thus generates the motivation to engage in social bonds.<sup>15</sup> While interspecies differences exist and the motivation of social bonding is far from being well understood, there is no evidence of different neurochemistries for kin and non-kin bonding.

There can hardly be a better demonstration of the independence of social bonding from genetic kinship than the oxytocin control of interspecies friendships. The majority of positive psychological and psychophysiological effects of human-animal interactions, that is, reduction of stress, improvement of immune system and pain management, increase of trust towards other persons, reduced aggression, enhanced empathy and improved learning, involves activation of the oxytocin system in humans,<sup>16</sup> and the friendly behaviour of non-human partners, at least dogs,<sup>17</sup> depends on the oxytocin as well.

The key role of oxytocin in parental attachment to the young<sup>18</sup> and all socio-positive bonds provides a spectacular corroboration of the long held views that friendship originated within the breeding context. Irenäus Eibl-Eibesfeldt, the founder of human ethology, identified the parental attachment as the most likely source of friendship and love because parental care was first to overcome aggression between individuals and is well suited for strengthening bonds between adults.<sup>19</sup> In response to Konrad Lorenz's proposal<sup>20</sup> that love and friendship evolved from the aggression reoriented against a third

<sup>13</sup> Allison M.J. Anacker and Anneliese K. Beery, "Life in Groups: The Role of Oxytocin in Mammalian Sociality," *Frontiers in Behavioral Neuroscience* 7 (2013), art. 185, DOI: 10.3389/fnbeh.2013.00185.

<sup>14</sup> Carsten K.W. De Dreu and Mariska E. Kret, "Oxytocin Conditions Intergroup Relations through Upregulated In-group Empathy, Cooperation, Conformity, and Defense," *Biological Psychiatry* 79.3 (2016), pp. 165–173.

<sup>15</sup> Jean Decety, "The Neuroevolution of Empathy," *Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences* 1231 (2011), pp. 35–45; Anacker and Beery, op. cit.; Heather K. Caldwell and H. Elliott Albers, "Oxytocin, Vasopressin, and the Motivational Forces that Drive Social Behaviors," *Current Topics in Behavioral Neuroscience* (2015), pp. 1–53.

<sup>16</sup> Andrea Beetz, Kerstin Uvnäs-Moberg, Henri Julius, Kurt Kotrschal, "Psychosocial and Psychophysiological Effects of Human-Animal Interactions: The Possible Role of Oxytocin," *Frontiers in Psychology* 3 (2012), art. 234, pp. 1–15.

<sup>17</sup> Anna Kis, Melinda Bence, Gabriella Lakatos, Enikő Pergel, Borbála Turcsán et al., "Oxytocin Receptor Gene Polymorphisms Are Associated with Human Directed Social Behavior in Dogs (*Canis familiaris*)," *PLoS ONE* 9.1 (2014), e83993, DOI:10.1371/journal.pone.0083993; Lauren E. Thielke and Monique A. R. Udell, "The Role of Oxytocin in Relationships between Dogs and Humans and Potential Applications for the Treatment of Separation Anxiety in Dogs," *Biological Reviews*, in print, DOI: 10.1111/brv.12235.

<sup>18</sup> Shota Okabe, Miho Nagasawa, Kazutaka Mogi, Takefumi Kikusui, "The Importance of Mother-Infant Communication for Social Bond Formation in Mammals," *Animal Science Journal* 83.6 (2012), pp. 446–452.

<sup>19</sup> Irenäus Eibl-Eibesfeldt, *Liebe und Hass. Zur Naturgeschichte elementarer Verhaltensweisen*, München-Zürich: Piper, 1970.

<sup>20</sup> Konrad Lorenz, *Das sogenannte Böse*, Wien: Borotha-Schoeler, 1963.

party (as nothing unites stronger than a common enemy), Eibl-Eibesfeldt observed that reoriented aggression could have worked only after some individualized bonds were already present between potential allies.

A different possibility for the origin of friendship in the family context has been put forward by Hans Kummer who noted that a close mother-young contact exposes the young to his/her siblings and other relatives and thus facilitates their mutually rewarding interactions which may lead to bonds that persists in the adults.<sup>21</sup> Kummer's hypothesis may explain frequent bonds between matrilineal kin in the groups in which females remain (and males emigrate) as in the monkeys, hyenas, and elephants. However, it begs the question of why interactions with siblings (and for that matter any social interactions) should be reinforcing in the first place. Interestingly, Kummer's hypothesis posits a paedomorphic origin of friendship, which contrasts with Eibl-Eibesfeldt's emphasis on parental and thus adult attachment.

### A Dual-Process View of Interpersonal Friendship

"Friends in need are friends indeed" – some element of calculation seems to be inherent to human friendship: people prefer balanced relationships in terms of each party's status and keep track of favours given and received.<sup>22</sup> However, direct reciprocity, that is an immediate reciprocation of help (as in the model case of biologists' "reciprocal altruism") is not expected and even unwelcome<sup>23</sup> suggesting that it may well be advantageous to maintain the status of a creditor or obligee. The recent alliance hypothesis for human friendship holds that human friendship is motivated in part by the need to create alliances for potential disputes – people tend to secretly rank their friends according to how they are ranked by other, third party friends.<sup>24</sup> While this may optimize insurance specifically for the case of conflict within a group, the conjunction of friend rating, tracking exchanges, and the reluctance to accept immediate repayments suggests the minds of human friends entertain the motivation to have insurance against life emergencies.

The expectation of help in need is strengthened by the everyday emotional support and mutually rewarding interactions, which make assistance for one party in trouble psychologically more compelling. It appears then that human friendship is based on two motives which act in concert for most of the time but sometimes clash, leading to the breakup of a friendly bond. One is the emotional reward or support, which motivates bonding in many non-humans and works as a reward for staying together which is advantageous in the long run. In humans the main long run advantage is having insurance for hard times whereby the emotional reward of friendship becomes a reward for

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<sup>21</sup> Hans Kummer, *Primate Societies*, Chicago: Aldine, 1971.

<sup>22</sup> Ming Xue and Joan B. Silk, "The Role of Tracking and Tolerance in Relationship among Friends," *Evolution and Human Behavior* 33 (2012), pp. 17–25.

<sup>23</sup> Joan B. Silk, "Using the 'F'-word in Primatology," *Behaviour* 139 (2002), pp. 421–446.

<sup>24</sup> Peter DeScioli and Robert Kurzban, "The Alliance Hypothesis for Human Friendship," *PLoS ONE* 4.6 (2009), e5802, DOI:10.1371/journal.pone.0005802.

buying insurance. For a subject who is aware of her/himself as of somebody who may need help (i.e., has self-reflective consciousness), buying insurance in itself becomes a second motive of friendship in addition to immediate emotional gratification. Thinking of being helped by others in case of emergency implies some grasp of causality and counting on them for help requires at least some theory of others' mind. This limits the very possibility of human semi-calculated friendship to a few taxa of mammals and birds who, according to the present knowledge, qualify for personhood, that is hominids, dolphins, elephants, and corvid birds.<sup>25</sup>

Of course the personhood characteristics alone do not guarantee the computational skills to keep checks and balances in a friendship, and any such calculation seems impossible in principle in other non-human subjects who do not understand the causal connection between intentions, behaviour and its material consequences (even if they perceive intentions and expect consequences using association and intuition). Shall we then deny "true friendship" and ban the use of this term for bonds that rely exclusively on mutual trust and emotional reward here and now without counting on any future support? I argue that this would be unwarranted if, as it seems to be the case, the proximate mechanisms or motives behind the bonds are the same (homologous) in the sense of evolutionary continuity between the motivational mechanisms in humans and other mammals. This leads us to address the big issue of comparing the motivational or information processing systems in personal and non-personal subjects.

Many if not most human behaviours, especially social ones, and the underlying motivational factors (judgements, attitudes, decisions, etc.) are explained by dual-process theories<sup>26</sup> that is, as a resultant of processing information at two levels called experiential and rational, associative and rule-based, implicit and explicit, impulsive and reflective, intuitive and reasoning. The experiential system is holistic, based on associations, information is processed rapidly, unintentionally and automatically, the reactions are immediate, the processes are unconscious only the results enter awareness, processing is distributed in parallel. By contrast, the rational system is analytic and logical, uses cause-and-effect reasoning,<sup>27</sup> information is processed slowly, intentionally, consciously, and serially, hence inferences are delayed. The experiential system is the default system whereas the rational system can be switched off. The experiential system is present in all mammals<sup>28</sup> (and, to a various degree, at least in all amniotes). The rational system,

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<sup>25</sup> Understood as a purely scientific, non-normative term meaning a category of subjects defined by a set of cognitive faculties. See, e.g., Andrzej Elżanowski, "O podmiotach nieosobowych i osobowych," *Znak* 720 (2015), pp. 14–18.

<sup>26</sup> Arie W. Kruglanski and Edward Orehek, "Partitioning the Domain of Social Inference: Dual Mode and Systems Models and Their Alternatives," *Annual Review of Psychology* 58 (2007), pp. 291–316; Jonathan St. B.T. Evans, "Dual-processing Accounts of Reasoning, Judgment, and Social Cognition," *Annual Review of Psychology* 59 (2008), pp. 255–278; Helmuth Metz-Göckel, "Dual-Process Theorien," *Gestalt Theory* 32.4 (2010), pp. 323–342.

<sup>27</sup> Seymour Epstein, "Integration of the Cognitive and the Psychodynamic Unconscious," *American Psychologist* 49 (1994), pp. 709–724.

<sup>28</sup> Jonathan Haidt, "The Emotional Dog and Its Rational Tail: A Social Intuitionist Approach to Moral Judgment," *Psychological Review* 108 (2001), pp. 814–834.



which in humans arises at the age of two, has been superimposed on the experiential system in the evolution of at least those few mammals and birds who mastered the causal reasoning (as revealed by the production of tools).

Since the intuitive (experiential) basis of friendship is present in non-human social mammals and thus precedes human friendship in evolution, I submit that interpersonal, semi-calculated friendship as we know it arose by the superposition of reasoning onto mutually rewarding emotional bonds that are widespread among primates as well as other mammals. Such bonds operate at the experiential level and clearly preceded in evolution the semi-calculated friendship in humans in which the conscious expectation of insurance and the ensuing calculations of one's investment in the friendship depend on the cognitive faculties that constitute the rational system. The conjunction of the reflective self-consciousness, causal thinking and theory of mind must have resulted in an analytic reflection on one's own bonding with other individuals which inevitably led to some attention to keeping a balance between one's own and the other party's investment. This hypothesis merits the name of the dual-process theory of human friendship. It perfectly fits in with the evolution of reciprocity as proposed by Sarah Brosnan and Frans de Waal, who distinguished three evolutionary stages: symmetry-based, attitudinal, and calculated reciprocity. What has been superimposed on the experiential level of thinking is the calculated reciprocity, "the most cognitively advanced form, [...] based on mental scorekeeping" which "is found only in humans and possibly chimpanzees."<sup>29</sup>

While a two-level motivation may not have been demonstrated as yet for a bond explicitly categorized as a friendship, three lines of evidence support the dual-process theory of friendship. (1) Human friendship involves empathy, and human empathy is an admixture of affective resonance or contagion, which is wide spread among mammals and part of their intuitive thinking, with a theory of mind or cognitive perspective taking<sup>30</sup> which is part of the rational level of thinking. (2) At least one study of interpersonal attraction shows that implicit liking is largely independent of explicit liking, and predicts friendly behaviour above and beyond explicit liking.<sup>31</sup> (3) The action of oxytocin, the powerful neuropeptide that controls social relationships in concert with dopamine-mediated reward, turned out to be dramatically different depending on the level of thinking of a person: it increases ingroup favouritism in those who rely on intuition but decreases it in those relying on reflection.<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> Sarah F. Brosnan and Frans B.M. de Waal, "A Proximate Perspective on Reciprocal Altruism," *Human Nature* 13.1 (2002), pp. 129–152.

<sup>30</sup> Douglas F. Watt, "Social Bonds and the Nature of Empathy," *Journal of Consciousness Studies* 12.8–10 (2005), pp. 185–209.

<sup>31</sup> Sascha Krause, Mitja D. Back, Boris Egloff, Stefan C. Schmukle, "Implicit Interpersonal Attraction in Small Groups / Automatically Activated Evaluations Predict Actual Behavior Toward Social Partners," *Social Psychological and Personality Science* 5.6 (2014), pp. 671–679.

<sup>32</sup> Yina Ma, Yi Liu, David G. Grand, Todd F. Heatherton, Shishui Han, "Opposing Oxytocin Effects on Intergroup Cooperative Behavior in Intuitive and Reflective Minds," *Neuropsychopharmacology* (2015), DOI:10.1038/npp.2015.87.

## Friendship beyond Humans

Enduring sociopositive bonds arising as a result of “a series of interactions between two individuals”<sup>33</sup> are known in many social mammals (primarily placentals) including many ungulates and dolphins, elephants, some carnivores (felids, hyenas), rodents and primates as well as in corvid birds whose alliances resemble those of primates and dolphins.<sup>34</sup> Such a wide taxonomic range shows that motivational mechanisms (proximate causation) for friendly bonds are present in most placental mammals and may have facilitated the evolution of sociality as suggested by the independent origins of sociality in lions, cheetahs, and domesticated cats (but not their wild ancestors) in the cat family (*Felidae*).<sup>35</sup> While the mutually rewarding bonds in many non-humans are important in their own right, especially as evidence of the intrinsic value of their lives, most relevant to the origins of friendship and best studied are friendship in non-human primates including capuchin monkeys, Japanese and rhesus macaques, baboons, and chimpanzees.

In most non-hominid primates, females remain in their natal groups and friendship bonds are mostly between female matrilineal kin (but occur between unrelated females as well). In the chimpanzees, males remain in the natal community and the most frequent friendships are between unrelated males although friendships between females (mostly unrelated) occur as well (at least in some communities). Cooperative interactions between friends are widely separated in time, suggesting a true relationship based on memories of past interactions.<sup>36</sup> Significantly, the primate friendships share tolerance of temporary imbalances in reciprocity or even occasional acts of aggression, which has been emphasized as a hallmark of friendships by human psychologists. In other words, friends cooperate regardless of what has recently happened. This aspect is poorly known in non-primate bonds but I suspect that the tolerance is present there as well – as a friend of four cats I know that our occasional quarrels do not change their affectionate, trusting attitude.

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So shall we (as I frequently did here) call enduring, mutually rewarding affective bonds between non-personal subjects (such as average mammals) friendships? Of course one can easily define friendship in such a way as to stipulate all consequences of human cognitive abilities in their fullest development and thus exclude nearly all non-humans (with a few possible exceptions especially for chimpanzees) who simply like and trust

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<sup>33</sup> Robert M. Seyfarth and Dorothy L. Cheney, “The Evolutionary Origins of Friendship,” *Annual Review of Psychology* 63 (2012), pp. 153–177.

<sup>34</sup> Nathan J. Emery, Amanda M. Seed, Auguste M.P. von Bayern, Nicola S. Clayton, “Cognitive Adaptations of Social Bonding in Birds,” *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society B* 362 (2007), pp. 489–505.

<sup>35</sup> John W. Bradshaw, “Sociality in Cats: A Comparative Review,” *Journal of Veterinary Behavior*, in print, DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.jveb.2015.09.004>.

<sup>36</sup> Seyfarth and Cheney, op. cit.



each other without any calculation, with only implicit (experiential, intuitive) but no analytic knowledge of partner's mind or personality, and without an understanding (in causal terms) of each other's situation. However, should we typify friendship by the relationship between Montaigne and Étienne de La Boétie (whom Montaigne considered his soul mate and the only person to truly understand and accept him) or require friends to "value the relationship itself above and beyond the gratification of personal ambitions,"<sup>37</sup> we would then be forced to use another term for the close bond between two horses, whose psychic comfort depends on each other's proximity.<sup>38</sup> Moreover, such a definition would cut off many relationships that are widely conceived of as human friendships despite great individual variation in cognitive and moral development among adult humans and substantial cultural differences in the understanding of friendship even between western nations such as Germans and US Americans.<sup>39</sup> A definition requiring full cognitive faculties of an adult person would also necessitate renaming children's friendships which are studied by developmental psychologists as "frequent companionship, operationally defined in terms of reciprocal positive social engagement."<sup>40</sup> While a systematic comparative research of social bonds (rather than social behaviours or social organization) is in an early stage and a lot remains to be discovered, the present scientific knowledge concurs with the common perception that friendship is enjoyed by a wide variety of non-human subjects and we can be friends with some of them.

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<sup>37</sup> James Serpell, "Humans, Animals, and the Limits of Friendship," in: Roy Porter and Sylvania Tomaselli, eds., *The Dialectics of Friendship*, London: Routledge, pp. 111–127.

<sup>38</sup> Anja Wasilewski, "Freundschaft" bei Huftieren? – Soziopositive Beziehungen zwischen nicht-verwandten artgleichen Herdenmitglieder, Diss., Phillips-Universität Marburg, 2003.

<sup>39</sup> Greg Nees, *Germany: Unraveling an Enigma*, Yarmouth, ME: Intercultural Press, 2000.

<sup>40</sup> See, e.g., Brett Laursen, William M. Bukowski, Kaisa Aunola, Jari-Erik Nurmi, "Friendship Moderates Prospective Associations Between Social Isolation and Adjustment Problems in Young Children," *Child Development* 78.4 (2007), pp. 1395–1404.



Danilo Facca and Valentina Lepri

**In the Shadow of Cicero:  
An Early Modern Think-Tank  
at the Academy of Zamość**



Danilo Facca and Valentina Lepri

## In the Shadow of Cicero: An Early Modern Think-Tank at the Academy of Zamość\*

The collective production of culture has become a very hot topic in recent years, spurred by the growth of web tools such as blogs, databases, and collaboratively-edited encyclopaedias, which allow an ever broader community to take an active part in knowledge creation and transfer. An analogous phenomenon related to printing occurred at the apex of cultural development in European history. Sixteenth-century book production was an extraordinarily lively sector, animated by a variety of scholars and technicians who expressed their views while experimenting with new communicative registers. Examples of collective enterprises carried out at that time include several monumental publications, such as the famous Complutensian Polyglot Bible (c. 1521) or Giunta's editions of Aristotelian texts in Venice (1562) which involved a number of scholars.<sup>1</sup>

Among the numerous different cultural environments and busy testing-grounds, the Polish intellectual milieu offers a fascinating window on the operations performed by the humanists in the course of the publication process. This was made possible by the foundation of an institution totally unique within Europe: the Academy of Zamość, where the printing house involved the teachers of the school. In other words, by observing the teamwork behind the printing activity in Zamość, it is possible to grasp the essence of how the intellectual and political worlds interact, an issue still very much alive today.

Scholars studying the history of the Academy of Zamość agree that its founder Jan Zamoyski modelled his school on the example of the Academy of Strasbourg, where he studied for several years. However, another crucial period of his education was spent in Italy; as well as studying at the University of Padua, he also remained in contact with a group of intellectuals who, we believe, played a significant role in the setting up of his

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\* These pages offer a preview of the general lines of a research project dealing with the printing activity in Zamość (1594–1627) which will be carried out by us jointly.

<sup>1</sup> There is a vast bibliography on this subject, and we would refer here to only a few of the classical studies: Walter J. Ong, *Orality and Literacy: The Technologizing of the Word*, London: Methuen, 1982; Anna L. Lepschy, John Took, Dennis E. Rhodes, eds., *Book Production and Letters in the Western European Renaissance: Essays in Honour of Conon Fabry*, London: Modern Humanities Research Association, 1986; Brian Richardson, *Printing, Writers, and Readers in Renaissance Italy*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999.

Academy some years later. “Patavium virum me fecit” was one of Zamoyski’s famous sayings and perfectly expresses the significance of the sojourn in Italy in his later career. More specifically, the aim here is not to venture a parallel between the organization of the University of Padua and that of Zamość; the focus is on the cultural environment of which Zamoyski was part in Padua as well as in Venice.

## I.

Let us begin by recalling that during the course of his studies Zamoyski cultivated a fervent interest in Roman law and that, consequently, his Academy was shaped by the teaching of law from the beginning.<sup>2</sup> There is nothing odd about the fact that leading jurists, such as Tomasz Drezner (1560–1616), were employed among the Academy’s teaching staff. Moreover, there are two documents related to the life of the academy that illustrate the way in which Zamoyski fostered the study of law. The first is the Articles of the Academy’s foundation, dating to 1600, namely its statute, where it is clearly stated that the teaching of law ought to involve a large number of students; the second document is Zamoyski’s will, penned by him in 1594, where he reminds the teaching staff of the need to introduce the study of Roman and Polish law to the Academy.<sup>3</sup>

Zamoyski’s professors in Padua included well-known jurists, such as Guido Panciaroli (1523–1599), a specialist in civil law, Tiberio Deciani (1509–1582), an expert in criminal law and, above all, Marco Mantova Benavides (1489–1582).<sup>4</sup> There was another person who was similarly instrumental in stimulating Zamoyski’s interest in

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<sup>2</sup> This was quite against the grain at that time in Poland. In the sixteenth century you could study Roman law in Italy, Germany, and in the south of France following a similar approach. The situation was quite different in Poland where the Polish nobility, the “szlachta,” rejected the study of Roman law since they considered it as a sort of vehicle through which the sovereign could enhance his power. Zamoyski fought against this absence of Roman law from the teaching curricula. The bibliography dealing with the teaching of law in the sixteenth century is large. Among the most relevant contributions on this topic see Jacques Krynen, Michael Stolleis, eds., *Science politique et droit public dans les facultés de droit européennes (XIIIe-XVIIIe siècle)*, Frankfurt am Main: Klostermann, 2008.

<sup>3</sup> Even the publications catalogue can provide further information, since it comprises several texts focused on the field of legal-political literature. Unfortunately the catalogue is still awaiting a complete review, since the list of books needs to be supplemented by the material analysis of the volumes and the analysis of the issues addressed in the publications. To cite a few examples taken from the catalogue: *Speculum Saxonum* in 1601; the *Processus iudiciarius regni Poloniae* by Drezner, again in 1601, and *Farrago actionum iuris civilis* by Jan Cervus in 1607.

<sup>4</sup> It seems probable that Mantova caught the attention of the young student Zamoyski, since they appear to have some fascinating points in common. Mantova was a very productive author, experimenting with different literary genres in order to explain jurisprudence. His humanist side was certainly stimulated by his participation in the activities of the Accademia degli Infiammati, where he enjoyed debates with Sperone Speroni and Francesco Sansovino. In many of his works he was at pains to renew the study of law, also considering jurisprudence as the focus of all education and all disciplines. This point of view is expressed in his *Polymathia. Hoc est disciplina multiiuga* (Venezia: G. Griffio, 1558), and also in the *Colloquia, seu Dialogi. CC. iuris* (Venezia: V. Valgrisi, 1553), a collection of dialogues dedicated to Cosimo de’ Medici and his renewal of the faculty of law in Pisa.

Roman law and the editorial activity promoted in his Academy: it was Carlo Sigonio (c. 1520–1584). Sigonio was the author of fundamental works on Roman history and a commentator on Livy. His works also address other subjects, such as late Antiquity, Hebrew history, and mediaeval Italy. He taught from 1552 to 1560 in Venice, at the Scuola di San Marco, then in Padua (from 1560 to 1563) and finally in Bologna in 1563, where he concluded his career.<sup>5</sup>

Sigonio endorsed Zamoyski's studies in the field of law, and even fostered the publication of his dissertation entitled *De senatu Romano libri II*. The volume was published by Giordano Ziletti (1536–1583) in Venice in 1563 and presented an interesting balance between humanistic taste and reflections on public law. In addition to this, Sigonio and the printer Ziletti are connected to the *modus operandi* through which teachers were actively involved in the production of printed texts in Zamość.

## 2.

All the sixteenth-century academies, including those in Italy, always maintained intense contacts with publishing houses: their mandate included the dissemination of their intellectual contribution and consequently the publication of different kinds of texts was an integral part of their programme. However, the actual printing business was rarely incorporated within the system of these academies. A well-known exception is the Accademia Veneziana, founded by Federico Baduer in 1558, which could be compared with the Academy of Zamość, since it had its own press, where Paolo Manuzio was in charge as publisher, although he did not work exclusively for the Accademia.<sup>6</sup>

The printing house of the Academy of Zamość was initially operated by the printer Marcin Łęski (Martinus Lenscius, active from 1597 to 1616). In the first twenty years of the seventeenth century it published over ninety books in Latin, Greek, and Polish. Most eminent members of the Academy's teaching staff were involved in the publishing activities as authors, editors, translators, and promoters; in the period between school's foundation and the 1620s almost 72 professors were also engaged in the publication activities. The poet Szymon Szymonowic (c.1558–1629)<sup>7</sup> and the physician and philosopher Szymon Birkowski (1574–1626), both teachers at the Academy, are examples of this fertile collaboration. A further illuminating instance is offered by the professor

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<sup>5</sup> See William McCuaig, *Carlo Sigonio: The Changing World of the Late Renaissance*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1989; Guido Bartolucci, "Carlo Sigonio and the Respublica Hebraeorum: A Re-evaluation," *Hebraic Political Studies* 3 (2008), pp. 19–59; idem, "Historian Engagé. Republicanism and Oligarchy in Carlo Sigonio's Political Histories," *Storicamente* 8 (2012), pp. 1–6.

<sup>6</sup> See Michele Maylender, *Storia delle accademie d'Italia*, 5 vols., Bologna: L. Cappelli, 1926–1930, and Cesare Vasoli, "Le accademie fra Cinquecento e Seicento e il loro ruolo nella tradizione enciclopedica," *Annali dell'Istituto Storico Italo-Germanico* 9 (1981), pp. 81–115.

<sup>7</sup> See Stanisław Łempicki, "Symonowicz wobec szkoły i wychowania," in: idem, *Wiek złoty i czasy romantyzmu w Polsce*, Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN, 1992, pp. 538–553. More in general see Jan A. Wadowski, ed., *Anacephaleosis Professorum Academiae Zamoscensis. Wiadomość o profesorach Akademii Zamojskiej (rps z XVII w.)*, Warszawa: Druk Gazety Rolniczej, 1899–1900.

of moral philosophy Adam Burski (c. 1560–1611) who had originally been professor at Kraków University. While commenting on the *Politics* and the *Nicomachean Ethics* in the classroom, in the printshop Burski edited works by his contemporaries and also produced an annotated anthology of Greek and Latin writers in the form of a dialogue dealing with the logic of the Stoics, the famous *Dialectica Ciceronis* (1604).<sup>8</sup>

The circumstances are perfectly reflected in a letter sent by the printer of the Academy, Marcin Łęski, to Zamoyski. In his letters, Łęski pointed out that there were too many people working on the same text, in other words that every book was the result of a combined effort. It sounds as though his printshop had been transformed into a sort crowded bazaar and he was having difficulty doing his own work properly.<sup>9</sup>

Could or would Zamoyski really help him? It is possible to argue that this was what he really wanted and it seems that the reason for this could well be traced back to Zamoyski's earlier European *peregrinatio*, especially his stay in Italy. In Padua a sort of small academy developed that was frequented mostly by Polish students:<sup>10</sup> the name of this special place was “contubernium Polonorum” (meaning “the Polish company,” “the Polish dorms”) underscoring a shared experience of daily life and a frequentation that went beyond mere studying together or intellectual exchange.

### 3.

In fact, living and working in the “contubernium,” among others, were Zamoyski, the philologist Andrzej Patrycy Nidecki (1522–1587), a fellow law student Marian Leżeński,<sup>11</sup> and the Hungarian-Italian humanist Andreas Dudith (1533–1589). They all attended lectures together and jointly perused the classical texts, especially those of Cicero.

Gravitating around this group of students were Sigonio and the publisher Paolo Manuzio (1512–1574), the latter also being the first to use the name “contubernium” in his letters to Dudith. We can indeed derive a great deal of information about the activity of the Polish group from the exchange of correspondence between Manuzio and Dudith.<sup>12</sup> There are two specific cases connected with the activities of the “contubernium”; it is interesting to take a brief look at these: the first concerns Zamoyski's

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<sup>8</sup> Adam Burski, *Dialectica Ciceronis quae disperse in scriptis reliquit, maxime ex Stoicorum sententia, cum commentariis, quibus ea partim supplentur, partim illustrantur* [...], Zamość: Martin Lenscius, 1604, hereafter *Dialectica Ciceronis*.

<sup>9</sup> Paulina Buchwald-Pelcowa, *Historia literatury i historia książki. Studia nad książką i literaturą od średniowiecza po wiek XVIII*, Kraków: Universitas, 2005, pp. 263–282 (Łęski's letter is quoted on p. 275).

<sup>10</sup> See Elisabetta Dalla Francesca and Emilia Veronese, eds., *Acta graduum academicorum Gymnasii Patavini ab anno 1555 ad annum 1565*, Padova–Roma: Editrice Antenore, 2001.

<sup>11</sup> See Tadeusz Ulewicz, “L'enigmatica Accademia degli studenti polacchi a Padova (negli anni 1547–1549 ca.),” *Atti e memorie dell'Accademia patavina di scienze lettere ed arti* 100 (1987–1988), pp. 87–93, and Jan Ślaski, “Marian Leżeński. Padewczyk zapomniany,” *Odrodzenie i Reformacja w Polsce* 48 (2004), pp. 65–93.

<sup>12</sup> Andreas Dudith, *Epistulae*, edited by Lech Szczucki and Tibor Szepessy, 7 vols., Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1992–. Vol. 1 (1992), pp. 61, 69, 72, 98.



aforementioned dissertation, *De senatu Romano*, while the second deals with a famous scandal of the time concerning Cicero's *Consolatio*.

In 1560 Sigonio published *De antiquo iure civium Romanorum* which was undoubtedly a strong influence on *De senatu Romano*, since the similarities between these two texts are strikingly apparent. It is almost as if Zamoyski has taken up Sigonio's reflections and developed them. According to certain recent studies, it is plausible that Zamoyski and Sigonio collaborated on writing the text which was dedicated to their common friend Marian Leżeński.<sup>13</sup> Therefore, Sigonio and Zamoyski jointly constructed *De senatu* on the basis of *De antiquo iure*. Similar circumstances resurfaced in relation to the publication of Cicero's *Consolatio*, in which the Roman orator grieved the death of his daughter, the beloved Tullia. In 1583 Sigonio claimed that he had discovered a lost complete work by Cicero and this work was intensively discussed in literary circles throughout Europe at the time, since it was indeed a fake manufactured through a particular form of teamwork. Letters exchanged between the German humanist Johannes Crato and the Italian physician Girolamo Mercuriale reported rumours about Zamoyski's possession of a manuscript of the *Consolatio*, as well as the possibility that Zamoyski and Nidecki, in liaison with Sigonio, fabricated the text or part of it at the "contubernium Polonorum."<sup>14</sup>

An interest in Cicero was not the only common denominator of the meetings between the Polish students and Sigonio: their intellectual engagement always included the direct involvement of the printer Giordano Ziletti.

Ziletti was a somewhat contradictory figure who undoubtedly deserves attention. A cultured man and a lawyer, he had a troubled life: after standing trial for trading in prohibited books in Bologna, several years later he was an informer for the Inquisition, blowing the whistle on his friend, the Venetian physician Girolamo Donzellini (1513–1587). Regarding what we are concerned with here, Ziletti was the publisher in charge of the books edited by the Polish disciples and by Sigonio – both the works related to their law studies and those focused on the works of Cicero.<sup>15</sup> In 1559 and in 1560 he printed two different editions of *Fragmenta Ciceronis* edited by Sigonio, who in that period (1560–1561) also taught a course on Cicero's *Pro Milone* at the University of Padua. Nidecki too published with Ziletti three different collections of fragments taken from texts by Cicero<sup>16</sup> as well as collaborating on the aforementioned edition of

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<sup>13</sup> Especially the studies provided by McCuaig, see above note 5.

<sup>14</sup> *De consolationis libro edito sub Ciceronis nomine. Antonii Riccoboni iudicium ad Hieronymum Mercurialem medicum clarissimum, et comitem perillustrem*, Padova: Giacomo Bozza, 1583. See also McCuaig, *Carlo Sigonio...*, pp. 37–39.

<sup>15</sup> A research project dealing with Ziletti's activity in liaison with Polish scholars is currently in progress. On Ziletti see Paul F. Grendler, *The Roman Inquisition and the Venetian Press, 1540–1605*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1977, pp. 189–193 and Michela Lombardi, *Gli Ziletti a Venezia (1548–1587): una famiglia di stampatori fra commerci e cenusaria libraria*, M.A. thesis: Università degli Studi di Milano, 1994.

<sup>16</sup> *Fragmentorum M. Tullii Ciceronis tomus IIII. Cum Andr. Patricii adnotationibus*, Venetiis: apud Iordanum Ziletum, 1561, in 8°, the following two editions were printed in 1565 and in 1578 both in 4° format.

*De consolationis libro* edited by Sigonio in 1583.<sup>17</sup> This was published in Bologna, but it also includes a series of Ciceronian fragments deriving from the previous editions of both Nidecki and Sigonio printed twenty years earlier in Ziletti's print shop.<sup>18</sup>

4.

Zamoyski certainly came back home with a solid education in both Roman law and in the works of Cicero, as indeed did Nidecki, who published a collection of maxims taken from Cicero's works in Venice and also in Poland. The catalogue of publications of the Academy of Zamość would also confirm this interest, since it includes various titles related to Cicero's legacy. Three volumes in particular attract attention, all of which present collections of commented fragments extrapolated from the texts of Cicero. The titles are: *Elementa seu loci ex Ciceronis libris desumpti*, printed in 1609 without any indication of the author or authors; *Narrationes, Sententiae, Similia ex libris Ciceronis*, by Simon Piechowski, published in 1611; finally, the aforementioned *Dialectica Ciceronis* by Burski. The latter is of particular interest since it is also an indication that certain dynamics of work that Zamoyski probably experimented in Padua were also pursued in Zamość. Burski's *Dialectica Ciceronis* addresses the subject of Stoic logic and covers an area hitherto relatively unexplored.<sup>19</sup> Zamoyski had just died and Burski dedicated the work to his son Tomasz. The author wrote that the founder of the Academy was convinced that Cicero must be present in the *curriculum studiorum* of the school because his "ratio et oratio" were of the utmost utility in the education of the Polish nobility:

[...] Sive enim domi in Senatu et in quibusvis conciliis agendum, sive foris cum exteris, vel per literas, vel viva voce tractandum, Ciceronis et ratio et oratio, cum rerum, tum orationis civilis ubertate, huic rei videtur commodissima.

[...] indeed both at home in the senate and in all the other assemblies, or from the borders with foreign lands, both in writing and in oral negotiations, in their richness of argument and in their civil eloquence Cicero's *ratio* and *oratio* seemed to him most appropriate to this purpose.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> *M. Tullii Ciceronis Consolatio, vel De luctu minuendo. Fragmenta eius a Carolo Sigonio, et Andrea Patritio exposita. Antonij Riccoboni iudicium, quo illam Ciceronis non esse ostendit. Caroli Sigonij pro eadem orationes II*, Bononiae: apud Ioannem Rossium, 1583 [1584].

<sup>18</sup> In addition to this, the edition also presents the attack on Sigonio by his old student Antonio Riccoboni and two separate speeches of his own in defence.

<sup>19</sup> See Izydora Dąmbska, "Adam Burski i jego *Dialectica Ciceronis*," *Archiwum Historii Filozofii i Myśli Społecznej* 20 (1974), pp. 3–15; Mikołaj Szymański, „*Dialectica Ciceronis*” Adama Burskiego: *Problemy warsztatu filologicznego renesansowego badacza logiki stoickiej*, Warszawa: Wyd. IFiS PAN, 1988; Danilo Facca, *Humanizm i filozofia w nauczaniu Adama Burskiego*, Warszawa: Wyd. IFiS PAN, 2000. More in general see Izydora Dąmbska, "Filozofia w Akademii Zamojskiej w dobie renesansu," in: Lech Szczucki, ed., *Nauczanie filozofii w Polsce w XV-XVII wieku*, Wrocław et al.: Ossolineum, 1978, pp. 87–114; idem, ed., *Filozofia i myśl społeczna XVI wieku*, Warszawa: PAN, 1978.

<sup>20</sup> Burski, *Dialectica Ciceronis*, p. IV 3b (our translation of all Latin quotations).

As is well known, Stoic logic is quite distinct from Aristotelian logic, being based not on terms, but on propositions. To demonstrate that both the former and the latter must be part of the education of Polish nobility, and that of Zamoyski's son, Burski cited Zamoyski's own words:

Quamquam vero ubi aetas olim et profectus permittent, Aristotelis illi *Logica* et discenda et utendi censeam et iubeam, ut pote quae sunt et absolutiora, prae his fragmentis et quae in *Lucullo* et in *Topicis* et in aliis locis Cicero ipse admiratur quibusque nihil acutius, nihil politius censet, tamen et haec perno-scenda suadeam, propter has quas cogito causas [...].

When the time comes it will be well – and I wish him to do so – that he should acquire the logic of Aristotle and perform exercise in it, since these are the matters that are most complete and best done, but before this I would advise him to become familiar with these fragments that Cicero has transmitted in the *Lucullus* and in the *Topica* [...].<sup>21</sup>

In the same fragment we also find an illuminating passage related to both Zamoyski's experience in the “contubernium Polonorum” and the dynamics of work in the publications of Zamość:

In eas cogitationes incumbendo, dum adolescens in lectione continua versarer, memini me talia quaedam notasse et causa memoriae in adversaria coniecisse hoc pacto, ut si qui aedificium aliquod moliri incogitassent, certum aliquod genus deligerent. [...] Agedum igitur Bursi, excerpta haec et collectanea lege, auge, ede.

I remembered that when I was a student I had noted certain things of this kind, so that I would remember them, and I put them together in a diary and if someone wants to construct a building, then they have the bricks and mortar. [...] Come on then, Burski, here is the collection of these fragments: read them, add to them and publish them.<sup>22</sup>

In the volume we find further proof of this joint effort in publishing Cicero's *Dialectica*, namely an elegy by Szymon Szymonowic in which the poet congratulated Burski on his possibility of working with the benefit of Zamoyski's suggestions.<sup>23</sup> This dedicatory letter and the elegy of Szymonowic recall the collective endeavour behind *De senatu Romano* and the *Consolatio* and more in general the activity of the “contubernium Polonorum.” A common effort is bent to the same purpose, namely to elucidate Stoic logic, but it

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<sup>21</sup> Burski, *Dialectica Ciceronis*, pp. IV 3b–V 4a.

<sup>22</sup> Burski, *Dialectica Ciceronis*, p. VII 5°.

<sup>23</sup> *Dialectica Ciceronis, Simon Simonides Adamo Bursio*, c. \*\*\* 4r. Szymonowic writes that Burski was able to hear the *pulchra dictata* from Zamoyski's own mouth, and it is not easy to understand – an aspect certainly worth investigating – whether this is a generic reference to the “fine things he loved to repeat” or more literally to contents that Burski penned under dictation.

materializes in a vertical direction through a stratification of actions at the end of which only the finished object, the book, documents the participation of the various agents.

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To conclude, we should like to take the liberty of making a free reflection on the entou-rages of Zamoyski in Padua and Zamość – a reflection that is also in harmony with the intention of this volume. In short, we are convinced that the study of this case can alert us to several aspects of the production of knowledge which, despite being important, are frequently overlooked.

We are accustomed to conceiving literary authorship as the effort and effect of a demiurgic subject, an individual creator starting from subject-matter that tends to be amorphous. This means that we too often lose sight of the fact that this conception ought to be put in perspective, since in historical terms it is restricted to the late-modern, romantic, and post-romantic periods. In actual fact, at the time of the *respublica litterarum* in Europe in the sixteenth century, the published text was in numerous cases the result of a very different and considerably more complex operation involving several individuals and several phases. That said, what can be revealed about the nature of this process?

On the one hand, it is true that a bevy of different persons gravitating around the text for different purposes and in different circumstances could give the impression of organizational chaos, or of a conflict of not entirely admissible or respectable interests. To explain the phenomenon we could also resort to the spheres of “patronage” or of “cultural policy” or other sociological categories, as part of a broader political project. Nevertheless, we feel it would be ungenerous to stop at such a purely pragmatic interpretation of what Zamoyski and his collaborators were intending to do. Furthermore, it could prevent us from discerning ulterior motivations which, at the end of the day, can be seen to be comprised within a thorough going project of humanistic *paideia*.

Despite the myriad contradictions engendered by personal and intellectual limitations or historic contingencies, all these individuals had clearly before them the ancient ideal of the *philia lamicitia* learnt from the texts of the ancients, as it echoes from the *Nicomachean Ethics* or from Cicero’s *Laelius*. In other words, the idea that true friendship, that which makes people “noble,” consists of nothing more than the common quest for wisdom, that is, of a knowledge which is above all true and – given that it is true – both beautiful and good. The extraordinary layering of the text, its convoluted itinerary – stretching from the sources, through their literary elaboration to the presentation of the latter in book form – is in a certain sense a story of the “friendship,” the “amity,” between many different people. Individuals who come together in both the diachronic and synchronic dimensions to seek the truth, with no other interest beyond that truth. And so we like to think that, at heart, it is precisely in this “amicable” dimension of the Renaissance printed text that the very meaning of humanism lies, and hence also the

profound attraction that the *artes liberales* exert on those who nurture and savour their fruits with passion and determination.



Taras Finikov

**Project Proposal**  
*New Approaches for Transferring  
of Ancient Values to Postmodern  
Academic Community*  
**Brief Executive Summary**

AMICITIA  
SINCERA



Taras Finikov

**Project Proposal**  
***New Approaches for Transferring of Ancient Values  
to Postmodern Academic Community***  
**Brief Executive Summary**

**1. Problem we want to solve**

The dramatic devaluation of moral values and models of behaviour in the academic community, which became particularly apparent during the last decades and is connected to postmodern deconstruction of academic traditions, forces us to launch an active resistance and an intervention. We need to support academic integrity as “a commitment, even in the face of adversity, to five fundamental values: honesty, trust, fairness, respect, and responsibility.”<sup>1</sup> Hence, we recognize the importance to find the ideal models and solutions in order to ensure a continuation of European academic tradition and to support its systemic character.

**2. Project proposal goal**

In situation of a permanent financial crisis and extremely limited support from donors’ organizations we expect to identify applicable models of commitment to realistic practices of true spiritual survival in conditions of wild consumerism. Paradoxically, the solution of this dramatic problem could be found in returning to ancient stoic traditions. Implementation of such an idea would:

- a. ensure the continuation of millennia of European history;
- b. be accepted as simple and understandable by all the target audiences;
- c. prove inexpensive enough (to make this project especially valuable and attractive).

In order to achieve this desirable goal, we need to determine concrete cases of personal practices, which could serve as a benchmark for future generations of European academics.

**3. Resources needed**

First of all, we need a direct access to a concrete case and unique example of *amicitia sincera* (that endured no less than 50 years) between two prominent European intellectuals with the highest status in academic hierarchy and recognized *reputation* in public space. We know of such an extremely rare case – the relations between Professor Jerzy

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<sup>1</sup> See *The Fundamental Values of Academic Integrity*, The Center for Academic Integrity, Oct. 1999, at <http://www.academicintegrity.org/icai/about-4.php> (consulted April 14, 2016).

Axer and Professor Jan Kieniewicz. In spite of cynicism and pragmatism prevalent in our world, these two outstanding figures of profound moral strength demonstrate:

- a. a boundless mutual support in all possible situations, even in strange and adventurous cases;
- b. the ability to promote an academic colleague more than oneself and altruistic commitment to building of academic career of *other*;
- c. warm and active attitude in different complicated situations, *sanctum sacrificium* when friends need either help or support;
- d. mutual energizing of each other within the widest circles of colleagues, including the youngest ones.

Secondly, we need a differentiated communicative technology for infecting (according to methodology of Georges Bataille<sup>2</sup>) different groups of European researchers by indicated behavioural models.

Thirdly, the desire of European academic community for spiritual recovery based on the invention of *Axer & Kieniewicz healing mechanism*.

#### 4. Expected Results

Short-term results:

- The universal character of the proposed model for different types of academic audience;
- Intensive dissemination of *antiqua dignitas* among participants of scholarly and virtual networks.

Long-term results:

- Elaboration of a new (and eternal at the same time) ethical code designed as a global *Codex of Academic Integrity*.

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<sup>2</sup> Georges Bataille, *Oeuvres complètes*, Gallimard: Paris, 1970–1988.

Hieronim Grala

**“As to a Former Comrade and Friend”:  
Boris Godunov and Lev Sapieha  
during the Moscow Negotiations,  
1601 AD**



**“As to a Former Comrade and Friend”:  
Boris Godunov and Lev Sapieha  
during the Moscow Negotiations, 1601 AD**

On 11 March 1601, participants in the grand ceremony held at the Kremlin, during which the twenty-year truce between the Commonwealth of the Two Nations and the State of Muscovy was to be confirmed by oath – a ceremony which concluded protracted negotiations – must have been sincerely surprised to see the “sovereign of All Russia,” Tsar Boris I Fyodorovich, transgress the time-honoured ceremonial of embassy presentation. This is what transpired, according to the verse account by Eliasz Pielgrzymowski: a moment before the act of oath-taking, Boris Godunov turned to the leader of the legates, the chancellor of Lithuania Lev Sapieha, and addressed him entirely *privatissime*:

Here he kindly spoke to the lord chancellor as to a former comrade and friend. He told him: ‘Do you remember, when I was the steward to my sister’s husband, that I was your friend? And I liked you wholly, truly with all my soul, and now these things must be as they were of old.’<sup>1</sup>

The astonishment of all the assembled, especially the stewards, the members of the Boyar Duma and the tsar’s courtiers, was probably caused not so much by the friendly form of the tsar’s address, but by the very fact that the monarch of All Russia infringed the sacred tradition of the Kremlin etiquette, which absolutely did not include the option of the enthroned tsar conversing personally with a foreign legate. Such conversation was supposed to happen only through the intermediation of dyak (secretary) of the Duma in charge of the Muscovite envoy service, or through the seal-keeper.

This principle became fixed in the diplomatic ceremonial of the Muscovite court in the sixteenth century. It was occasionally infringed by Tsar Ivan the Terrible (who

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<sup>1</sup> Eliasz Pielgrzymowski, *Poselstwo i krótkie spisanie rozprawy z Moskwą. Poselstwo do Zygmunta Trzeciego*, ed. Roman Krzywy, Warszawa: Neriton, 2010, p. 203: “Tu się w tym ozwał mile panu kanclerzowi / Jako družbie dawnemu i przyjacielowi, / Powiadając: ‘Czy pomnisz, gdym był prawicielem / U szurzyzna, żem ci był, swego, przyjacielem / I całym, iście wszytką lubiłem cię duszą, / I teraz po staremu ty rzeczy stać muszą.’” Cf. Kazimierz Tyszkowski, *Poselstwo Lwa Sapiehy w Moskwie 1600 r.*, Lwów: Towarzystwo Naukowe we Lwowie, 1927, p. 68.

was, in fact, famous for his penchant for unconventional behaviour), especially when he was receiving the imperial, papal, or English embassies; but it was observed with exceptional consistency with respect to the envoys from the traditional enemies: the Commonwealth and Sweden. The single instances when this principle was infringed were interpreted by the official Moscow sources as acts of exceptional condescension on the part of the monarch and a proof of his Christian humility. The autocrat of Russia stated this very pointedly giving an audience to Jagiellon diplomats in 1568: “Behold, here I, a Christian monarch, unheeding of my dignity as tsar, personally converse with you, servants of my brother”; this was later appropriately interpreted in the boyars’ letter to the Lithuanian dignitaries: “[...] in the interest of peace among Christians, unmindful of his royal station, he personally spoke to the envoys of your master” (1570).<sup>2</sup> This stance was parallel to the principle which the boyars, speaking in the name of the tsar, spelled out to the English diplomat Jerome Bowse: “It is long that we have not had the custom of us, the great rulers, speaking personally to envoys.”<sup>3</sup> This custom became fixed during the reign of Fyodor I Ivanovich and was consistently applied at the court of his successor Boris Godunov.

In this context, the attending circumstances faded into the background,<sup>4</sup> even though they included the very length of the negotiations (the oath-taking ceremony crowned their nineteenth session!), which had continued with varying intensity since 16 November of the preceding year (the embassy entered the tsar’s capital on 13 November) and abounded in dramatic turns. Even the relative fiasco of the negotiation – as the intended goal was a treaty of eternal peace or even nearly a union of the two states (the so-called Triple Union, embracing the Crown of Poland, Lithuania, and Muscovy), but what was finally achieved was a truce, a long-lasting one but nevertheless only a truce – paled in comparison. It is necessary to add here that the friendly, practically familiar tone of the Muscovite monarch’s speech provided a considerable contrast to the many excesses committed by the Lithuanian dignitary. His behaviour, often bordering on severe infringement of protocol, and reprimands addressed to Muscovite dignitaries had repeatedly taxed his hosts’ patience.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>2</sup> See *Сборник Императорского Русского Исторического Общества*, vol. 71, Санкт-Петербург, 1892 (= *SIRIO* 71), pp. 289, 313. Cf. Л.А. Юзефович, *Путь посла. Русский посольский обычай. Обиход. Этикет. Церемониал. Конец XV – первая половина XVII в.*, Санкт-Петербург: Издательство Ивана Лимбаха, 2007, pp. 198–200.

<sup>3</sup> *SIRIO* 38, Санкт-Петербург, 1883, p. 113.

<sup>4</sup> On the course of the negotiations, see: Tyszkowski, op. cit., passim; idem, “Plany unii polsko-moskiewskiej na przełomie XVI i XVII wieku,” *Przegląd Współczesny*, vol. 7 (1928), no. 25, pp. 392–402; Б.Н. Флоря, *Русско-польские отношения и балтийский вопрос в конце XVI – начале XVII в.*, Москва: Наука, 1973, pp. 140–160; idem, *Русско-польские отношения и политическое развитие Восточной Европы во второй половине XVI – начале XVII в.*, Москва: Наука, 1978, pp. 249–267; Arkadiusz Czwołek, *Piórem i buławą. Działalność polityczna Lwa Sapiehy, kanclerza litewskiego, wojewody wileńskiego*, Toruń: Wydawnictwo Naukowe UMK, 2012, pp. 147–157.

<sup>5</sup> The man to bear the full brunt of Lev’s ire was a member of the boyar commission, Ignatij Tatishchev, who rather incautiously charged him with not being entirely truthful, to which he heard the following responses: “You yourself lie, you stupid boor, I speak the truth” (“Sam ty łżesz, chłopie głupi, jam zwykł prawdę mówić”), “You lie with every breath” (“Ty co tchniesz, to łgniesz”), and “To the stables with you,

At the last stage of the negotiations, however, Sapieha curbed his temperament, especially when he had to stand face to face with Godunov himself. Boris reproved him saying that the treaty of eternal peace was blocked by nothing but the legates' obstinacy in denying him the title of tsar. The chancellor hid behind the royal instruction; the “placated” monarch answered with a compliment tinged with a hint of bitterness:

You are a great man, a man of many powers; you might have ended all this and back there persuade your King so that he would like it. Had I not been ailing, all may have gone differently.<sup>6</sup>

The Muscovite monarch's public declaration of “former friendship” cannot be ignored, especially in the context of the concurrent infringement of etiquette and the clearly accentuated familiarity. The questions that arise at this point concern the origin and the true character of that acquaintance, and to some extent also the reasons for the tsar's display of amity.

It is beyond doubt that personal contacts between Sapieha and Godunov could have commenced only during Lev's legation to Moscow as the envoy of King Stephen Báthory in 1584. This mission was exceptional in the history of diplomatic relations between the Commonwealth and the Muscovite state, because, having arrived in Moscow, Sapieha learnt that the addressee of his legation, Ivan IV the Terrible, had recently died, and he witnessed the dramatic events that unfolded at the court afterwards. A considerable role in those events was played by Boris Godunov, brother-in-law to the new monarch, Tsar

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ruffian, with such speeches” (“Wstajnić by, chłopie głupi, takie mowy miewać), see Pielgrzymowski, *Poselstwo*, p. 117. The altercation escalated, Sapieha called the Muscovite dignitary a “corrupt dog” and “reek” (ibidem, pp. 117–118) and during the subsequent audience at the Kremlin he turned to the heir to the throne Fyodor Godunov asking that Tatishchev be removed from the Russian delegation. His wish was fully satisfied, and more: after Sapieha's complaint, his unfortunate polemicist was placed under tsar's official disfavour (the so-called *opala*); see ibidem, pp. 118–119, cf. Tyszkowski, *Poselstwo Lwa Sapiehy*, pp. 60–61. The row with Tatishchev was not the only incident in which the chancellor played a leading role: during the negotiations, one of the tsar's cousins heard from him the brusque “Mister Ivan Hodunov, forgive me, you are babbling” (“Panie Iwan Hodunow, odpuść mi, pleciecie,” ibidem, p. 173), whereas *okolnichy* Michail Saltykov (who later was the pillar of the pro-Polish faction at the Kremlin and supported the election of Prince Ladislaus to the tsar's throne) was warned that if the war should recommence, he would be hospitably received at the chancellor's estate “when you are brought there, and all your companions, on a rope” (“gdy cię tam przywiodą / I z Twoim towarzystwem w powrozie zawiodą,” ibidem, p. 135). The impetuous Lithuanian crossed all the possible lines when he proposed that the Muscovite tsar may consider the gifts from the legates to be advance payment for the upkeep of the (very large) legation; this caused a diplomatic scandal, see Hieronim Grala, “Dyplomacja z upominkami w tle. Wokół ceremoniału poselskiego w stosunkach polsko-moskiewskich na przestrzeni XVI-XVII wieku,” in: Natalia W. Raszgowan, Irina A. Zagorodniaja, Anna Saratowicz-Dudyńska, eds., *Skarby Kremla. Dary Rzeczypospolitej Obojga Narodów. Wystawa ze zbiorów Państwowego Muzeum Historyczno-Kulturalnego „Moskiewski Kreml”, 7 września-8 listopada 1998, Zamek Królewski w Warszawie*, Warszawa: Arx Regia, 1998, pp. 54–56, 80–81.

<sup>6</sup> Pielgrzymowski, op. cit., p. 202: “Człowiek wielkiś, siła w Tobie się zawiera / Mogłēś to wszystko skończyć i tam perswadować / Królowi, żeby mu się mogło to podobać. / Bym nie był bolem, wszystko mogło być inaczej.”

Fyodor Ianovich.<sup>7</sup> Detailed records in the Muscovite diplomatic ledgers make it possible not only to fix the date of their first meeting, but even to relate its course.

Contrary to the view expressed by Ruslan Skrynnikov, the tsar's brother-in-law was not present during the first appearance of the Commonwealth's internuncio at the Kremlin, which took place on 2 April; this assumption is based on the erroneous identification of the Godunov mentioned in the diplomatic ledger. In reality, Sapieha was received by the boyar Prince Fyodor Trubetskoy, two *dyaks* of the Duma, the brothers Andrey and Vasilij Shchelkalov – the “strongmen” of Moscow bureaucracy – and a Godunov; only this was a cousin to Boris, Stepan Vasilievich, who already during the reign of Ivan IV had achieved considerable distinction (nominated voivode at Fellin in 1573, *okolnichy* in 1576).<sup>8</sup>

It turns out, therefore, that the first official meeting of the two dignitaries occurred much later, during Lev Sapieha's official audience with the new tsar at the Kremlin, i.e. on 22 June Old Style (further as O.S.). Let it be added that the ceremonial of that reception did not leave a shadow of a doubt as to the new status of the tsar's brother-in-law: the boyar and Master of the Horse Boris Fyodorovich Godunov stood beside the throne, towering above the entire Boyar Duma, whose members sat below, and the court. Slightly below, side by side with the so-called *rindi*, the monarch's bodyguards, who hailed from the Moscow aristocracy, stood his then-ally, the *dyak* of the Duma Andrey Shchelkalov, chief of the Bureau of Envoys (*Posolskij prikaz*).<sup>9</sup>

On this occasion, the ambitious and quick-witted Lithuanian diplomat received an object lesson, so to speak, of the current pyramid of power in the Muscovite state, especially considering that the first meeting with the tsar himself did not leave him impressed. The realization was obvious: with the weak monarch, his talented and energetic brother-in-law became the true regent, and it was he who henceforward would have to be reckoned with.<sup>10</sup> It is, however, intriguing that the records of the 1584 negotiations

<sup>7</sup> See Kazimierz Tyszkowski, “Poselstwo Lwa Sapiehy do Moskwy w 1584 r.,” *Przewodnik Naukowy i Literacki* 49 (1921), pp. 122–134; Czwołek, *Piórem i buławą*, pp. 31–35; idem, “Ku wojnie czy unii? Polityka Rzeczypospolitej wobec Moskwy w latach 1584–1586,” *Czasy Nowożytne* 10/11 (2001), p. 72.

<sup>8</sup> In his letter to Krzysztof Radziwiłł dated 26 April 1584, Lev Sapieha mentioned “Fyodor Borisovich Godunov” (*sic!*) together with Trubetskoy and both the Shchelkalovs, see: *Archiwum domu Radziwiłłów (Listy ks. M.K. Radziwiłła Sierotki – Jana Zamoyskiego – Lwa Sapiehy)*, “Scriptores Rerum Polonicarum,” vol. VIII, Kraków: Wydawnictwo Komisji Historycznej Akademii Umiejętności, 1885, p. 174, yet the precise note in the diplomatic ledger records the rank of the said Godunov and thus leaves no doubt at all as to his identity, see: Russian State Archive of Ancient Acts (RGADA), Фонд 79 (*Сношения с Польско-литовским государством*), оп. 1, кн. 15, fols. 33–33v.: “1 апреля в 2 день в четверг царь и великий князь велел литовскому послу Льву Сапеге быти у бояр в набережной полате в подписаной у боярина у князя Федора Михайловича Трубцского да у околичного у Степана Васильевича Годунова да у дяков у Ондарся да у Васнаия у Щскаловых” [underlined by H.G.].

<sup>9</sup> RGADA, Фонд 79, оп. 1, кн. 15, fols. 208v–209v (“А у государева места выше рында стоял боярин и конюшей Борис Федорович Годунов, а возле рында стоял дяк Ондарей Щскалов”).

<sup>10</sup> Tyszkowski, op. cit., pp. 130, 133. Considering Boris' advancement, which must have occurred shortly before this audience, it is difficult to accept Tyszkowski's view that in the period “Boris did not wield any power” (ibidem, p. 134), while according to the contemporary observers in the late 1584 to early 1585 the tsar's brother-in-law shared power with no-one but the *dyak* of the Duma Andrey Shchelkalov, cf. P.G. Скрынников, *Россия накануне „смутного времени”*, Изд. 2, Москва: Мысль, 1985, pp. 30–31.



seem to suggest that Lev and Boris did not meet again, even though when during the negotiations the Shchelkalov brothers every now and then disappeared in order to report to the monarch (“государю сказывали посольские речи”) and returned to the legate with an answer, it is to be expected that the response actually came not from the tsar, but from the by then all-powerful *pravitel*.<sup>11</sup> Neither was Godunov present during the leave-taking audience on 17 July O.S., during which the honour of looking after the envoy fell to Prince Dymitr Yeletsky, who had presented the guest to the monarch and greeted him by clasping his hand (“имался с послом за руки”).<sup>12</sup>

In the light of the documentation of the Moscow negotiations in 1584, contacts between Sapieha and Godunov at that time seem rather limited. Whether any confidential meetings had taken place is not known; yet the enormous difference in social status between a diplomat holding the modest title of the Grand Secretary of Lithuania and the all-powerful brother-in-law of the tsar, the boyar and the Master of the Horse rolled into one makes such option doubtful. The hieratic structure of the tsar’s court virtually ruled out the prospect of such unequal contacts, and additionally any dealings with an agent of what was, after all, an odious neighbouring power, may have brought a charge of high treason on the head of an incautious politician – a charge happily and, let it be added, very effectively used by Godunov himself to fight his own rivals.<sup>13</sup>

Of course, Sapieha’s sojourn in Moscow not only provided him with a wealth of invaluable knowledge regarding the Muscovite court etiquette and diplomatic practice, but also assured him an at least official contact with many local politicians who were to play a significant role in the coming decades. For instance, he got well acquainted with both the Shchelkalov *dyaks*; he knew the Princes Mstislavsky (the younger of which, Prince Fyodor Ivanovich, was later the leader of the Boyar government that took the oath at the election of Crown Prince Ladislaus Vasa to the tsar’s throne), the tsar’s uncle Nikita Romanovich – the leader of the Romanov clan, the Princes Shuisky – especially the head of the family Ivan Pyotrovich, the legendary defender of Pskov from the army of Stephen Báthory – and many others. Having spent many months in Moscow, Lev Sapieha – who had been brought up in the Orthodox culture and was fluent in Ruthenian – most probably gathered much valuable information regarding the power struggle within the Moscow élite, which was to be finally won precisely by Boris Godunov.<sup>14</sup>

<sup>11</sup> See RGADA, Фонд 79, оп. 1, кн. 15, fol. 267.

<sup>12</sup> RGADA, Фонд 79, оп. 1, кн. 15, fols. 332, 333v. Godunov’s absence may be linked with the status of Sapieha’s mission: although Lev strove to be offered honours proper to the “the grand emissary,” from the point of view of the envoy ceremonial he was only an internuntius (*poslannik*), i.e., a lower-ranking legate. This from time to time resulted in comical incidents. For instance, after Sapieha’s audience with the tsar, Prince Fyodor Tyufakin and *dyak* Druzhina Petelin arrived at the embassy’s residence, having been sent from the Kremlin “with the table.” Lev refused to receive them, considering it a dishonour that he had not been invited to the monarch’s table, see *ibidem*, fols. 212–214; cf. кн. 16, fol. 6 (“и он к себе со государевым жалованем с столом в възбу не пустил, и государсва жалования не взял, и жил не посолским обычаем”), but the manner of “the tsar’s hospitality” towards Sapieha was caused not by his diplomatic rank, but by the court mourning after the death of Ivan IV.

<sup>13</sup> Скрынников, *Россия накануне „смутного времени,”* pp. 38–39.

<sup>14</sup> See Скрынников, *op. cit.*, pp. 30–39, 56–63.

He benefited from this knowledge very soon, as after his return to the Commonwealth he was nominated vice-chancellor (on 2 February 1585), most probably in recognition of his achievements in Muscovy. It came even more useful to him just a few years later, when, having been nominated chancellor (in April 1589) he became the *de facto* head of the Lithuanian diplomacy.<sup>15</sup> But Lev's achievements, although impressive, were incomparably lesser than Boris' stunning rise to power: the tsar's brother-in-law had held the rank of boyar and the title of Master of the Horse since 1584, but soon he also received the title of the "servant of the tsar" (in 1591; the title had been granted only three times since the reign of Ivan the Great, in each case to a prince of the blood), and not long after the title of *pravitel*, i.e. regent, which was entirely unprecedented in the local tradition.<sup>16</sup>

It seems that Lev's increasingly close connections with the members of the Moscow élite should be linked with his progressive advancement; this, in fact, would have been in keeping with the tradition, by then centuries old, of contacts between the "lords Council" and the Duma boyars. In the state of Muscovy, such dealings carried a considerable personal risk (in the era of Ivan IV the Terrible many dignitaries paid for them with their lives<sup>17</sup>), but they permitted the members of the élite to conduct unofficial diplomatic affairs. In the era of successive conflicts, such transactions were beneficial to both states, as they offered the chance to hatch numerous peace-keeping schemes, undertake conciliation missions, and engage in other secret endeavours without infringing the honour of either side's own monarch.<sup>18</sup> The dealings of Muscovite malcontents were a separate issue; for instance, the stunning defection of Prince Andrey Kurbsky (1564) was preceded by a secret exchange of letters with Mikołaj "the Red" Radziwiłł, Ostafi Wołłowicz, and Prince Stefan Zbaraski,<sup>19</sup> whereas Godunov was for years troubled by the likelihood of underhand dealings between the powerful Princes Shuisky with the dignitaries of the Commonwealth. Reports of their pro-Báthory sympathies reached the king's court as early as May 1585 and were indirectly confirmed by the reports of the embassy to Moscow conducted by castellan of Minsk Michał Haraburda (April 1586).<sup>20</sup> During the final confrontation with the Princes Shuisky in the second half of the year 1586, Boris himself publicly charged the then-voivode of Smolensk, Andrey Shuisky, of conducting confidential meetings with the Lithuanian envoys under the

<sup>15</sup> Cf. Henryk Lulewicz and Andrzej Rachuba, eds., *Urzednicy centralni i dostojnicy Wielkiego Ksiestwa Litewskiego XIV–XVIII wieku. Spisy*, Kórnik: Biblioteka Kórnicka 1994, pp. 53, 134, 147.

<sup>16</sup> Скрынников, *Россия*, pp. 110–111.

<sup>17</sup> Cf. Inge Auerbach, "Spione und Verräter im Moskauer Rußland und das Großfürstentum Litauen," *Russian History* 14 (1987), pp. 5–35.

<sup>18</sup> Hieronim Grala, "Herren-Rada und Dumabojaren zwischen Kampf und Frieden: Anschauungen der litauischen und Moskauer Elite von den Ursachen des Krieges im 16. Jahrhundert," in: Horst Brunner, ed., *Der Krieg im Mittelalter und in der Frühen Neuzeit: Gründe, Begründungen, Bilder, Brauche, Recht*, Wiesbaden: Reichert Verlag, 1999, pp. 353–359, 367–370.

<sup>19</sup> Иероним Граля, *Иван Михайлов Висковатый. Карьера государственного деятеля в России XVI в.*, Москва: RADIKS, 1994, pp. 258, 344–345.

<sup>20</sup> Флоря, *Русско-польские отношения*, pp. 132–134.

pretext of hunting in the forests along the frontier.<sup>21</sup> The above accusation, based on rumours reported by frontier scouts, could be considered ungrounded if not for one crucial detail: at the parliament session of 1605, speaking against granting support to Dmitriy the False, Chancellor Jan Zamoyski – once King Báthory’s closest associate and trusted collaborator in his anti-Muscovite plans – pointed to none other than the Princes Shuisky as the closest kinsmen of the extinct Muscovite line and hence its natural heirs!<sup>22</sup>

The Lithuanian and Muscovite dignitaries attempted to cultivate those links even *inter arma*, as is perfectly illustrated by the period of the Livonian War, when the official diplomatic relations were suspended, but the leading dignitaries of the warring states, Grand Hetman of Lithuania Hrehory Chodkiewicz and the then-leader of the Boyar Duma, the boyar and Master of the Horse Ivan Fyodorov-Cheladnin continued to exchange letters (autumn 1562).<sup>23</sup> Slightly earlier Vice-Chancellor Ostafi Wołłowicz, the leading Lithuanian expert on Muscovite affairs, very energetically courted the influential *dyak* of the Duma Ivan Viskovatyi and tried to win the trust of the tsar’s favourite Aleksey Adashev. He also pulled off a master stroke: in reality being a supporter of the Reformation, he managed to promote himself as a defender of Orthodox faith against the hostile Lutherans and an advocate of peace with Muscovy threatened by the aggressive “men from the Crown’s land.”<sup>24</sup>

It is beyond doubt that similar transactions were conducted during the reign of Fyodor Ivanovich as well, especially considering that this monarch, in his attempt to win the crown of the Commonwealth (1586–1587), was eager to win the favour of the élites of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. Links forged by the Boyar Duma and by Boris Godunov himself played an important part in these attempts (which, incidentally, ended in a resounding fiasco). One embassy after another travelled to the Commonwealth to court supporters for the tsar; the boyars’ official interaction with senators and dignitaries reached unheard-of proportions. Godunov and his councillors perceived the attitude of the Lithuanian senators and Ruthenian nobles to be the potential key to success.<sup>25</sup> Yet in this period also Sapieha – who late in Báthory’s reign had usually been mentioned in the correspondence between Lithuanian dignitaries and the Boyar Duma as the very last<sup>26</sup> – was of too little political importance to be specially courted, at least in the perception of the Muscovite regent, who after all exchanged personal letters with

<sup>21</sup> Скрынников, *op. cit.*, pp. 34, 37–38.

<sup>22</sup> See *Pisma polityczne z czasów rokoszu Zebrzydowskiego*, ed. Jan Czubek, t. II. *Proza*, Kraków: Akademia Umiejętności, 1918, p. 87–88; cf. Jarema Maciszewski, *Polska a Moskwa 1603–1618. Opinie i stanowiska szlachty polskiej*, Warszawa: PWN, 1968, p. 71; Флоря, *Русско-польские отношения*, p. 134.

<sup>23</sup> See *SIRIO* 71, pp. 70–73.

<sup>24</sup> See *SIRIO* 59, Санкт-Петербург, 1887, pp. 550–551, 601. See also Граля, *Иван Михайлов Висковатый*, pp. 251–259; Grala, *Herren-Rada*, pp. 356–357, 362–363.

<sup>25</sup> Borys Floria, “Rosyjska kandydatura na tron polski u schyłku XVI wieku,” *Odrodzenie i Reformacja w Polsce* 16 (1971), pp. 85–96; idem, *Русско-польские отношения и политическое развитие Восточной Европы*, pp. 141–180; cf. Henryk Lulewicz, *Gniewów o unię ciąg dalszy. Stosunki polsko-litewskie w latach 1569–1588*, Warszawa: Neriton, 2002, pp. 376–379.

<sup>26</sup> See *Lietuvos Metrika. Knyga Nr. 594 (1585–1600)*, ed. Algirdas Baliulis, Vilnius: Lietuvos istorijos instituto leidykla, 2006, pp. 26, 28, 32, 43; cf. RGADA, Фонд 79, оп. 1, кн. 16, fols. 60v, 106, 136, 265, 303, 309v, 315v, 318. Nevertheless, Sapieha was at that time often mentioned in the reports of tsar’s en-

the Habsburgs and was a “dear cousin” to Queen Elizabeth I. Faced with the energetic activities of the Habsburg diplomatic circles and the candidature of Sigismund Vasa, which was a particular aggravation to Muscovy, Boris Godunov was keen on winning the support of mainly those personages whose alleged pro-Muscovite leanings went hand in hand with a leading position in the Commonwealth: Prince Konstanty Ostrogski, whom the Kremlin considered to be the actual leader of the Orthodox party in the Commonwealth, and Prince Janusz Zbaraski, although the efforts to win the latter fell to Andrey Shchelkalov<sup>27</sup>.

The fiasco of the election endeavours and Lev’s quickly growing influence (as he was nominated the Grand Seal-Keeper of Lithuania in 1589) unavoidably drew Godunov’s attention, especially considering that he invariably perceived the Polish-Lithuanian state to be the main threat to Muscovy. His attention was further focused when it quickly became clear that the Lithuanian élite is much more peacefully disposed towards the eastern neighbour than the Crown élite. The Lithuanian chancellor’s authority as an expert on Muscovite affairs came to shine during the negotiations in the years 1590–1591, especially during the senatorial convocation in Janowiec, where the twelve-year truce with Muscovy was ratified. Soon not only the first notable of the Grand Duchy, the Voivode of Vilna Krzysztof “The Thunderbolt” Radziwiłł, but also Lev Sapieha had the honour of receiving a personal letter from Godunov informing of his victory over the Tatars (July 1591), even though the headings of those letters did not leave any doubt as to the difference in the addressees’ status: Boris greeted the grand general as the “beloved brother,” while the chancellor was no more than “Lord Councillor.”<sup>28</sup> This was most probably when the Lithuanian dignitary and the Muscovite one began to correspond regularly; only Godunov’s ascension to the throne (September 1598) necessarily put an end to such correspondence. It seems that the man to put forward the initiative to enter into such closer contact was, in fact, the new chief of the Lithuanian diplomatic service. It is not impossible that the Lithuanian diplomats’ “double” mission was an important factor in this: in the spring of 1592, two royal envoys of a differing rank: the internuncio Paweł Wołk and the courier Marcin Suski, arrived in Moscow at the same time. In addition to the royal letters to the tsar, the two men were provided with slightly different diplomatic instruments: Wołk carried letters to Boris Godunov from the voivode of Vilna Krzysztof Radziwiłł and the chancellor Lev Sapieha, whereas

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voys as a powerful adherent of the Muscovite candidature, see RGADA, Фонд 79, кн. 17, fols. 193v–194, 215–216.

<sup>27</sup> Cf. Флоря, *Русско-польские отношения*, 144, 212. The report of dyak Zakhar Sviyazev from April 1587 provides a valuable insight into the character of the contacts between the dignitaries of the two states. Writing to his principal, the Seal-Keeper Andrey Shchelkalov, Sviyazev described his confidential meeting with a courtier of the voivode of Braclav. The letters enumerate gifts for Zbaraski (a hat, a saddle-horse, falcons) and describes the magnate’s amiable reaction: “князь Януш великим приятелем тебе держит и хвалит добре в разговорах з паны часто: говорит, такова, дес, аж человека разумна не знаю, как, дес, то во вси государства один он листы пишет и справу большую всю выдает,” see Б.Н. Флоря, “Частные письма русских дипломатов XVI века,” *Исторический архив* 2 (1992), p. 163.

<sup>28</sup> Algirdas Baliulis, ed., *Lietuvos Metrika. Knyga Nr. 593 (1585–1604). Diplomatinų reikalų knyga*, Vilnius: Lietuvos istorijos instituto leidykla, 2009, pp. 137–141; cf. Czołepek, *Piórem i butawaq*, p. 93.

Suski was bringing a letter to the same, but only from the chancellor. The two letters differed widely as to subject matter: the first was an intervention concerning vexations and outrages suffered by Lithuanian merchants, while the other, following the plea of a captain of royal cavalry Temriuk Szymkowicz, interceded on behalf of his cousins, Cherkes princes who had been abducted by the Don Cossacks.<sup>29</sup>

It must be assumed that the chancellor's standing with his Muscovite partner increased considerably after the death of King John III Vasa, when the responsibility of conducting the Swedish-Muscovite negotiations in the name of his son and successor, Sigismund III, passed to the Lithuanian chancellery. As part of his newly acquired duties, Lev Sapieha sent his personal envoy Adam Łukaszewicz to Boris Godunov, asking for the Swedish-Muscovite truce to be observed, which it was (1593).<sup>30</sup> Records of similar contacts abound; yet the documentation of successive legations does not seem to contain a testimony of a particular amity between the two notables, nothing, in any case, that would go beyond the customary relations between two chiefs of diplomatic service. This assessment is not changed by the last, ultimately unaccomplished effort of the Lithuanian diplomacy, aimed at winning Godunov's support for Sigismund III's claim to the tsar's throne when it was vacated by Godunov's brother-in-law, Tsar Fyodor Ivanovich (the legation of Jan Korsak Hołubicki and Mikołaj Radziejowski, in March 1598). The king's guarantees for Boris, effectively dictated by Sapieha, proved pointless when their addressee himself donned the Monomakh's Cap.<sup>31</sup>

To recapitulate: the “friendship” with Chancellor Lev Sapieha mentioned by Tsar Boris did not flourish on the ground of their personal contacts, because it is possible that the two men had met only twice, both times in conditions ruled entirely by diplomatic protocol (audiences for envoys on June 22, 1584 and November 16, 1600). Neither does it seem that contacts between them were made any closer by Godunov's efforts to promote the claim of his brother-in-law, Tsar Fyodor, to the Polish-Lithuanian throne (1587) or by their regular but *de facto* official correspondence in the years 1591–1598, where the contact arose from their duties as the regent and the chancellor. The publicly demonstrated familiarity between the tsar and the Lithuanian dignitary appears to be purely an invention; this, however, necessitates an enquiry into its reasons.

We may assume that the reason for this act was quite prosaic: Godunov publicly declared his friendship towards Sapieha because he wished to acquire the Lithuanian notable's support for a scheme that was particularly dear to the tsar's heart: the marriage of his daughter Xenia to King Sigismund III Vasa, who had been widowed in February 1598. This issue surfaced rather unexpectedly during the negotiations which preceded the confirmation of the treaty by oath, precisely on the day of that leave-taking audience (11 March). When after the introductory meeting with the tsar the legation proceeded to the so-called *otvetna palata*, representatives of the boyar commission – probably not by

<sup>29</sup> Г.Н. Анпилогов, *Новые документы России конца XVI – начала XVII в.*, Москва: Издательство Московского Университета, 1967, p. 33, 53–59; cf. Czwołek, *Piórem i buławą*, p. 99.

<sup>30</sup> Czwołek, *ibidem*, p. 100; cf. Флоря, *Русско-польские отношения и балтийский вопрос*, pp. 48–49.

<sup>31</sup> See Флоря, *Русско-польские отношения и политическое развитие Восточной Европы*, p. 248; Czwołek, *Piórem i buławą*, p. 124.

accident they were two Godunovs, Stepan and Iwan Vasilievich – somewhat brusquely accused them of concealing a rather crucial part of their mission, i.e. an attempt to obtain the hand of the tsar’s daughter!<sup>32</sup> The legates – quite, as it seems, surprised – were told that the tsar was “delighted” and had even managed to discuss the idea with the patriarch, getting him to agree (*sic!*), and subsequently they were treated to a lecture on the historical precedent, the marriage of Alexander Jagiellon to Helena, Ivan III’s daughter. The boyars made use of the moment to propound strong arguments of a moral and political nature in favour of the plan: “This would be to the delight of the entire Christendom and instil no small a fear in all heathenry. [...] From this you may understand what would transpire if the king became a kinsman to the tsar” (“Byłoby to z radością wszęgo chrześcijaństwa i postrachem niemałym wszystkiego pogaństwa. [...] Możecie stąd rozumieć, na co by to wyszło, gdyby z carem królowi tak się skrzewnić przyszło”), and finally they demanded that the legates inform the king of this allegedly Polish proposal: “And you carry these our words to the king” (“I wy te mowy nasze do króla niesiecie”).<sup>33</sup> The legates’ reaction is most significant: wishing to bring the negotiations to a peaceful conclusion, they undertook to report this proposal to the king instead of offering the lack of appropriate instructions as their excuse.<sup>34</sup>

It is beyond doubt that, attempting to reinforce his family’s claim to the tsar’s throne, Boris Godunov did not spare the effort to find a suitable bridegroom for his only daughter and at the same time to assure political alliances needed by the new dynasty. The list of candidates to the *tsarevna*’s hand inspires respect for Boris’ endeavours, even though they were to prove futile: Prince Gustav Eriksson Vasa of Sweden (1598), Archduke Maximilian Habsburg, the son of Emperor Rudolf II (1599), Archduke Maximilian Ernest of Austria, Prince John of Denmark (dies in Moscow in 1602), the Georgian Prince Khosrow (1604), and finally one of the cousins of King Christian IV of Denmark (1603). It is absolutely obvious that none of these candidates was as attractive to Godunov as the Polish-Lithuanian one. The plan to establish kinship ties with the most powerful neighbour could have soothed Muscovy’s relations not only with the Commonwealth, but also with Sweden, not to mention that it would have amazingly enhanced the status of the dynasty itself – after all, a granddaughter of the arch-*oprichnik* Malyuta Skuratov would have married an heir to the Jagiellon kings and a kinsman to the Rurikids!<sup>35</sup> The tsar’s embassy that would soon go to the Commonwealth to ratify the truce could also conduct the marriage negotiations. The support of the chancellor of Lithuania – a man who stood close to the king, who for more than a year had been a son-in-law to the powerful Radziwiłłs and who also maintained friendly relations with the leading notables

<sup>32</sup> See Pielgrzymowski, op. cit., p. 199: “The *hospodar* has found out, this was spoken of, / That you were commanded, from the king to the tsar, / To ask for his daughter, and yet you care nothing, / For her to be given to him in marriage” (“Dowiedział się hospodar, była o tym mowa, / Że od króla do cara w poruczeniu macie / O córkę mówić jego, a wy nic niedbacie, / Żeby była w małżeństwo wydana za niego”).

<sup>33</sup> It is symptomatic that the Muscovite official sources entirely ignore the matrimonial thread of the negotiations, see *SIRIO* 137, p. 55; cf. Tyszkowski, op. cit., pp. 67–68; Флоря, *Русско-польские отношения и балтийский вопрос*, pp. 159–160.

<sup>34</sup> Pielgrzymowski, op. cit., p. 200.

<sup>35</sup> Cf. Флоря, op. cit., pp. 87–89, 112, 176–177, 180–183, 200.



of the Crown – would have been an asset not to be underestimated. In fact, Chancellor Zamoycki himself had proposed a similar plan for the Polish-Muscovite alliance through marriage (1602). But the notion found no response whatsoever at the Polish court. In December 1605, after seven years as a widower, Sigismund III married Constance of Austria. Almost at the same time his Muscovite would-be bride, having suffered the ignominy of being the concubine of False Dmitriy, was forced to take monastic vows and was locked in a monastery on the bank of Lake Beloye...

In spite of the obvious fiasco of the tsar’s scheme and the ephemeral character of the truce that was being negotiated, it seems noteworthy that later, from the perspective of more than three decades – after the bloody events of the Time of Troubles and the exhausting Smolensk War (1632–1634) – both sides were willing to take a rosy view of the course of Lev Sapieha’s embassy. It was mentioned by his son Kazimierz Leon, the Grand Secretary of Lithuania, at the time when, being the Grand Legate of the Commonwealth, he participated in the negotiations that ended with the Treaty of Polyanovka (1635). He recalled how courteously Lev had been treated by the *hospodars*, and the Muscovite dignitaries responded with their own warm recollections of the grand chancellor, highlighting his excellent knowledge of the envoy ceremonial (“he knew how to carry out an embassy”) and concluding that “being a legate in good dealings, he stood both sides in good stead.” A memory of that leave-taking audience at the Kremlin and Boris Godunov’s unusually open display of his great friendship towards the chancellor of Lithuania seems to resonate in this phrase.<sup>36</sup>

Translated by Klaudyna Michałowicz

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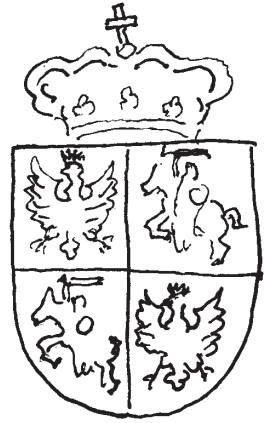
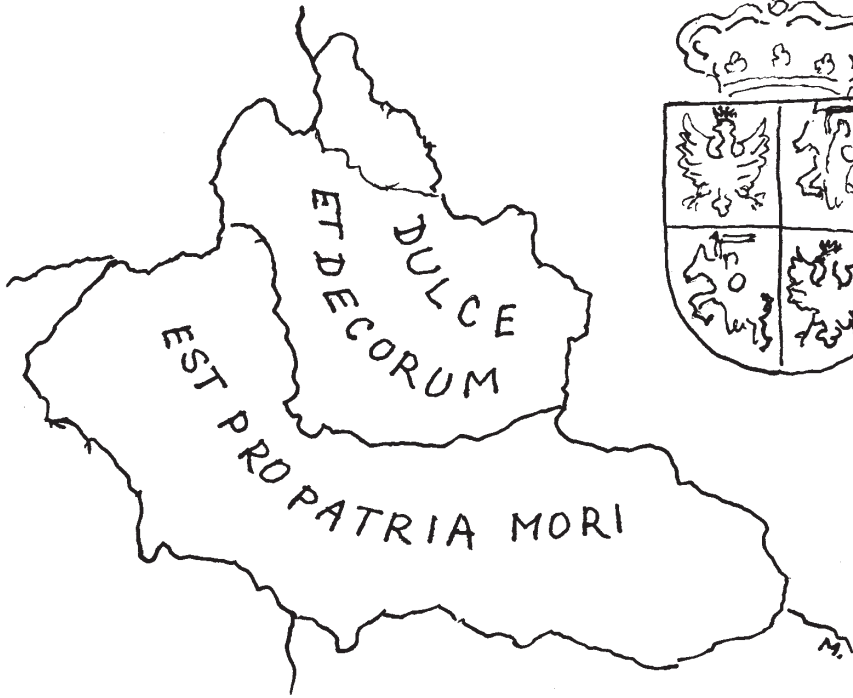
<sup>36</sup> See Adam Darowski, “Misja dyplomatyczna w XVII wieku,” in: *ciusdem*, *Szkice historyczne. Serja pierwsza*, Sankt Petersburg: Księgarnia Polska K. Grendyszyńskiego 1894, pp. 264, 275.





Anna Grześkowiak-Krwawicz

**“Kind Courtesy toward the Homeland”:  
On the Notion of Friendship between  
Citizens and the Republic**



Anna Grześkowiak-Krwawicz

## “Kind Courtesy toward the Homeland”: On the Notion of Friendship between Citizens and the Republic\*

The political discourse of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth (at the time referred to as the *Rzeczpospolita*, or the Republic), analyzed in this paper, typically invoked the notion of *amor patriae*, or love of one’s country. This figured as a major concept in the language of the Polish gentry, known in Polish as *szlachta*, from the sixteenth century until the second half of the eighteenth century, when it was replaced by the term “patriotism.” *Amor patriae* was beyond doubt one of the highest political values: noble citizens were expected to love their homeland, much in the same way a son loves his mother, and to treat it with utmost care and concern. This is why the title of this paper may appear somewhat surprising: when we examine the feelings underpinning the relationship between citizens and their homeland, we typically refer to the notion of “love,” which carries a lot more emotional connotations. The word “friendship,” on the other hand, is certainly not widely used in the context of the relationship that existed between citizens and the *Rzeczpospolita* in the centuries under discussion, yet I will seek to show here that it nonetheless appears to reflect certain aspects of this relation better than “love.” While fully aware of the figurative nature of this word, I hope to use it to highlight certain characteristic features of the political language used by noble citizens and, perhaps even more broadly, the relationship between them and the state that they themselves constituted and at some point decided to treat as their property. It should be stressed very clearly, however, that this image of the Old-Polish *amor patriae* is by no means exhaustive and focuses on just one aspect of this concept, albeit an undoubtedly interesting one.

### I.

We should duly note at the outset that long before the word “patriotism” first appeared in Polish political debates, the discussants already had an exceptionally rich vocabulary

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to describe behaviour regarded as desirable in the relationship between citizens and their *Rzeczpospolita*. In addition to the most popular phrase “love of the homeland,” the sixteenth and seventeenth century abounded in such expressions in Polish as “virtue towards the homeland,” “politeness towards the homeland,” “kind courtesy towards the homeland,” “generosity towards the homeland,” as well as a number of Latin terms such as *amor patriae*, *caritas patriae*, *pietas in patriam*, and *zelus patriae*. Since the word “patriot” was not yet present, those who loved their country were described as lovers of the homeland, faithful citizens of the homeland or, to use the Latin archetype *bonus civis patriae*, “a good son of the homeland,” and “citizens who wished their homeland well.” Although by no means exhaustive,<sup>1</sup> this list serves to illustrate the richness of the political language used at the time, partially signalling the unique nature of the relationship between an individual and the homeland, or rather a citizen and the *Rzeczpospolita*.

Such a relationship was highly complex, even more so than the contemporary understanding of patriotism, rooted in the tradition of the nineteenth century. In a sense, it was also less emotional. One could even hazard the claim that love of the homeland engaged not only the hearts of citizens but also their minds. Natural, unconditional love of one’s country and nation, a sentimental attachment to one’s country of birth that in a sense runs in one’s blood, began to appear in Polish political discussions in the sixteenth century.<sup>2</sup> However, those references remained infrequent, at least until the 1780s. The prevalent vision of *amor patriae* encapsulated love of the homeland not merely as a feeling but also – and maybe especially – as a civic virtue, a certain stance, obligation, and imperative, and also a reasonable type of behaviour in one’s own best interest as well as a characteristic *quid pro quo* transaction. I should like to take a closer look at this latter element, which may specifically reflect elements of friendship, a mutually beneficial relationship, rather than love, usually perceived as selfless, unconditional, and often unreflective. Meanwhile, “kind courtesy towards the Republic” could be described as simply beneficial, based on very rational premises, and, lastly, not unconditional.

## 2.

Such understanding of love of the homeland followed from the particular vision of the state adopted in the discourse of the *szlachta*, which was deeply rooted in the ancient tradition and reiterated in civic humanism.<sup>3</sup> In that tradition, patriotism was linked to

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. Ewa Bem, “Termin ‘ojczyzna’ w literaturze XVI i XVII wieku,” *Odrodzenie i Reformacja w Polsce* 34 (1989), pp. 131–156.

<sup>2</sup> This was very adroitly used during the first free election by an advocate of electing a Pole as king, arguing that this would be an ideal candidate “as it is by nature that everyone loves the customs of his homeland and is in love with his natural language, and so is greatly disgusted and offended by foreign custom and also language and unaccustomed speech,” “Elekcyjca chrześcijańska...,” in: *Pisma polityczne z czasów pierwszego bezkrólewia*, collected by Jan Czubek, Kraków: Nakładem Akademii Umiejętności, 1906 [hereafter cited as: Czubek I], p. 305.

<sup>3</sup> This tradition of speaking and thinking about the state was first pointed out by Hans Baron in his well-known book *The Crisis of the Early Italian Renaissance: Civic Humanism and Republican Liberty in*

participation and the state was not an independent entity reminiscent of Hobbes’ Leviathan, which stood above the individual, but a community of citizens who formed the *Rzeczpospolita* and made decisions concerning it. Love of the homeland was considered in civic and political terms rather than from the cultural and ethnic perspective.<sup>4</sup> Abandoned in Western Europe in the seventeenth century,<sup>5</sup> the concept proved exceptionally durable in the Commonwealth and ultimately met up with Rousseau’s ideas<sup>6</sup> in the late eighteenth century. In this context, the homeland and the citizens that constituted it were inextricably linked, as were the situation of the homeland and the fate of its citizens. Each and every citizen looked after the homeland as “a faithful and kind member of our homeland,”<sup>7</sup> as they owed everything to their homeland and losing it meant losing everything. After all, they were elements of the *Rzeczpospolita* as an organism and could not exist without it. One characteristic example was the popularity of an allegory that had its roots in Aristotle, likening the Commonwealth to a boat that could safely reach harbour only through the care of all the passengers, whereas a disaster, for it also entailed a disaster, for each and every passenger individually. As one participant in the first free elections in the Commonwealth wrote, “its health is the health of *privatorum*, its collapse is the collapse of *privatorum*.”<sup>8</sup>

One of the most important Polish Renaissance humanists Łukasz Górnicki explained that “what is bad for everyone in general cannot be good for you alone, because everyone also means you.”<sup>9</sup> That argument was present in the political discussions in the following centuries. The conviction that “any grief that may befall the Republic will

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*an Age of Classicism and Tyranny* (Princeton–Oxford: Princeton University Press, 1955). Since then a vast literature has emerged on the topic; for a listing covering at least the twentieth century see: Martin van Gelderen, Quentin Skinner, eds., *Republicanism: A Shared European Heritage*, vols. 1–2, Cambridge: CUP, 2002, and for a critical evaluation of the state of research, see: James Hankins, ed., *Renaissance Civic Humanism: Reappraisals and Reflection*, Cambridge: CUP, 2000. The deep rooting of Polish political thought and Polish political discourse in classical, above all Roman tradition was first pointed out by Jerzy Axer, “*Latinitas* jako składnik polskiej tożsamości kulturowej,” in: Jerzy Axer, ed., *Tradycje antyczne w kulturze europejskiej – perspektywa polska*, Warszawa: OBTA, 1995, p. 74; idem, *Kultura polska z punktu widzenia mechanizmów recepcji tradycji antycznej – Prolegomena do syntezy*, in: Marek Prejs, ed., *Humanistyczne modele kultury nowożytnej wobec dziedzictwa starożytnego*, Warszawa: Neriton, 2010, pp. 51–53.

<sup>4</sup> Marco Viroli, *For Love of Country: An Essay on Patriotism and Nationalism*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995, p. 25.

<sup>5</sup> Balázs Trencsényi, Martin Zászkaliczky, “Towards an Intellectual History of Patriotism in East Central Europe in the Early Modern Period,” in: Balázs Trencsényi, Martin Zászkaliczky, eds., *Whose Love of Which Country? Composite States, National Histories and Patriotic Discourses in Early Modern East Central Europe*, Leiden–Boston: Brill, 2010, p. 35.

<sup>6</sup> Jerzy Michalski, *Rousseau i sarmacki republikanizm*, Warszawa: PIW, 1977; Andrzej Walicki, *Idea narodu w polskiej myśli oświeceniowej*, Warszawa: IFiS PAN, 2000, p. 21.

<sup>7</sup> [Jan Dymitr Solikowski], *Votum szlachcica polskiego ojczyznę wiernie miłującego o zatożeniu skarbu rzeczypospolitej i o obronie krajów ruskich, napisane od autora roku 1589, a teraz między ludzie podane* (1596), published by Kazimierz Józef Turowski, Kraków: Wydawnictwo Biblioteki Polskiej, 1859, p. 4.

<sup>8</sup> “Iż na społecznem zjeździe w Kaskach” [inc.], Czubek I, p. 243.

<sup>9</sup> Łukasz Górnicki, “Rozmowa Polaka z Włochem o wolnościach i prawach polskich” (1616), in: Łukasz Górnicki, *Pisma*, collected by Roman Polak, vol. 2, Warszawa: PIW, 1961, p. 350; similarly Andrzej Wolan, *De libertate politica seu civili. O wolności Rzeczypospolitej albo ślacheckiej* [1606], published by Maciej Eder, Roman Mazurkiewicz, Warszawa: Neriton, 2010, p. 147.

be equally burdensome to its sons”<sup>10</sup> was expressed both in the face of threats and in typical discussions regarding the country’s needs. As Polish Enlightenment’s precursor, Stanisław Konarski explained to his contemporaries: “No one can be fortunate in an unfortunate homeland, no one can be safe in an unsafe, weak Commonwealth.”<sup>11</sup> He added that “when the homeland perishes, who else perishes but we who constitute the homeland.”<sup>12</sup> Antoni Popławski, a Piarist student of Konarski, put that succinctly and firmly: “[...] when loving ourselves, we should love our homeland.”<sup>13</sup> Care for the common homeland might be described as the only rational stance, since the homeland acted as the guarantor of all the tangible and intangible possessions of its citizens. As Konarski put it, “it is thanks to the homeland that we have everything we have and everything our blood and our descendants may expect from it.”<sup>14</sup> He was but one in a long series of writers who listed what noble citizens owed to the *Rzeczpospolita*. In a sense, we could say that if love of one’s country was a feeling, that feeling was gratitude for all the benefits that the *Rzeczpospolita* had bestowed upon its sons. Taking a cue from Plato, one sixteenth-century “lover of the homeland” wrote:

[...] everyone should recognize that they owe their homeland help, rescue, and support at any time, looking at what are the not inconsiderable benefits that they derive from it.<sup>15</sup>

One characteristic example of this approach was the *Rzeczpospolita*’s address to one of its citizens in a *rokosz* (rebellion) pamphlet from 1606:

Remember that having given birth to you in this Crown, I bequeathed you [...] freedom, I gave you love, I raised you, and strengthened you for defending me and my health; [remember] that I took the bread from my own mouth and gave it to you; do not now let me perish disgracefully and miserably.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> [Jan Leszczyński], “Considerationes quibus modis ten domowy ogień uspokoić” [1665], in: *Pisma polityczne z czasów panowania Jana Kazimierza Wazy 1648–1668. Publicystyka, eksorbitancje, projekty, memoriały*, collected by Stefania Ochmann-Staniszevska [hereafter cited as: Ochmann-Staniszevska], vol. 3: 1665–1668, Wrocław et al.: Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich, 1991, p. 50.

<sup>11</sup> Stanisław Konarski, *O skutecznym rad sposobie*, vol. 1, Warszawa: Drukarnia XX Scholarum Piarum, 1760, p. 184

<sup>12</sup> Stanisław Konarski, *O skutecznym rad sposobie*, vol. 4, Warszawa: Drukarnia XX Scholarum Piarum, 1763, p. 7.

<sup>13</sup> Antoni Popławski, *Zbiór niektórych materyi politycznych*, Warszawa: Drukarnia XX Scholarum Piarum, 1774, p. 288

<sup>14</sup> Konarski, *O skutecznym...*, vol. 4, p. 7.

<sup>15</sup> *Philopolites, to jest miłośnik ojczyzny, albo powinności dobrego obywatela, ojczyźnie dobrze chcącego i onę miłującego krótki traktat*, Kraków: Maciej Wirzbięta, 1588, f. B.

<sup>16</sup> “Żałosna mowa Rzpltej polskiej pod Koprzywnicą do zgromadzonego rycerstwa roku 1606,” in: *Pisma polityczne z czasów rokoszu Zebrzydowskiego 1606–1608*, collected by Jan Czubek, Kraków: Nakładem Akademii Umiejętności, 1916–1918 [hereafter cited as: Czubek II], vol. 2, p. 97.

As we can see, the homeland demanded no selfless support. It had serious and concrete reasons to hope for the gratitude of its citizens. One sixteenth-century writer who demanded that the clergy should contribute to the country's needs out of their wealth explained that “it is also fitting that they should share in some of the benefits they generously derive from their mother, the Republic, to keep it as well as themselves and all of us with God's blessing in wellness and peace.”<sup>17</sup> Such sentiments could be found in numerous writings. Writers who relied on such reasoning in their deliberations included Szymon Starowolski, who authored *Lament utrapionej matki Korony Polskiej, już konającej na syny wyrodne, złośliwe i niedbające na rodzicielkę swoją* [The Lament of the Despairing Mother, the Polish Crown, Complaining About Her Malignant Sons Disregarding Their Parent] around 1655, in which the homeland, depicted as a mother, lists in detail the numerous benefits it has bestowed onto its ungrateful children. Gratitude towards “the good mother” was mentioned by Stanisław Leszczyński<sup>18</sup> as well as Enlightenment authors.<sup>19</sup> It is again necessary to stress at this point that what underlay such deliberations were not the imperatives to show gratitude but the best interests of the citizens themselves. “Remember, gentlemen and landlords,” one *rokosz* participant of 1606 appealed to his countrymen, “that after God, whatever you have you have from your homeland; it raises you, it feeds you, it gives you all abundances; let it also be so dear to you because if it perishes, we all must perish with it.”<sup>20</sup> Jan Nepomucen Poniński openly elaborated on the principles of patriotism understood in this way in the eighteenth century:

I now rest in the shade of law and liberty, equal to all and not subject to any; were I not to strive to save my rights I could moan under the yoke of bondage and disgrace. What virtue, what valour, could such a strong interest, mutual to all, not inspire?<sup>21</sup>

The priest Michał Karpowicz expressed similar views despite using the phraseology of the Enlightenment:

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<sup>17</sup> [J. D. Solikowski], *Votum...*, p. 116 .

<sup>18</sup> Cf. Stanisław Leszczyński, *Głos wolny wolność ubezpieczający*, published by Aleksander Rembowski, Warszawa, 1903, p. 79: “I am obliged to this duty [paying taxes] by recognition of the supreme lord of the republic, I am obliged by love for the homeland, which having conceived and raised me, like a good mother, feeds me, so that I should not be a disgrace [...]”

<sup>19</sup> Cf. Popławski, *Zbiór...*, p. 294: “Having received the most abundant blessings from that universal mother, is it not a fitting thing, concurring with the duty of gratitude, for [a nobleman] to repay it by risking his life and through bloodshed...”; Adolf Kamiński, *Edukacyjna obywatelska*, Warszawa: Drukarnia XX Scholarum Piarum, 1774, p. 9: “[...] first after God and parents, every citizen should owe gratitude to the homeland.”

<sup>20</sup> “Pismo szlachcica jednego, w którym o rozprawie znać daje do braciej,” *Czubek II*, vol. 3, p. 367.

<sup>21</sup> [Jan Nepomucen Poniński], *Projekt uszczęśliwienia ojczyzny*, Czartoryski Library manuscript 2619, p. 198.

The homeland [...], through sweet liberty ensuring happiness and safety to all, virtually itself instils love in its own citizens.<sup>22</sup>

3.

From the principle of mutual obligations between citizens and their homeland, but a few writers drew conclusions that applied also to the underprivileged estates, chiefly the peasantry, arguing that if they received nothing from the *Rzeczpospolita*, they also owed it nothing in exchange. Such views could be found, for instance, in Starowolski's *Reformacja obyczajów polskich* [Reformation of Polish Customs]. However, perhaps the most powerful arguments were formulated during the Swedish wars by the priest Jan Chądzyński, who explained that the duty to defend the homeland rested upon its sons, who derived all the benefits from it ("liberties, salaries, high ranks"), and not upon the "farm hands," saying bluntly that "the peasants would lose little, gain better masters and free themselves from their captivity, if they fell under a different state, one guided by better justice."<sup>23</sup>

In the eighteenth century, those who supported the idea of granting rights to the other estates started to reverse those arguments, suggesting that if they had provided meritorious service to their homeland, probably even to a greater degree than the *szlachta*, then the homeland owed them care and kind courtesy. Some of the first writers to invoke that argument were Leszczyński in his *Głos wolny wolność ubezpieczający* [Free Voice Ensuring Freedom]<sup>24</sup> and Stefan Garczyński in his *Anatomia Rzeczypospolitej* [Anatomy of the Commonwealth]. The "*pauperes*," latter author claimed, "have not been dignified with their homeland's protection" and he devoted a lot of space to demonstrate that they were fulfilling their obligations towards the homeland better than the *szlachta*.<sup>25</sup> However, such cases were rare, with the motif becoming more visible later in discussions in the Poniatowski era, especially during the Four-Year Sejm, in the context of the idea of granting rights to the underprivileged estates, especially the burghers. It was employed by both supporters and opponents of social reforms: the former highlighted the merits of the "peles,"<sup>26</sup> whereas the latter refused to grant rights to the burghers specifically on

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<sup>22</sup> Michał Karpowicz, *Kazanie o miłości ojczyzny*, 1781 [no place, no pagination].

<sup>23</sup> Jan Chądzyński, *Dyskurs kapłana jednego polskiego [...], w którym pokazuje za co Bóg Koronę Polską karze i jako dalszego karania ująć mamy*, Ochmann-Staniszevska, vol. 1, Wrocław et al.: Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich, 1989, p. 186; for something similar about the Livonian peasants in the face of the Muscovite invasion, although more in the context of justice, see: Wolan, *De libertate...*, p. 111.

<sup>24</sup> On the injustices to the peles: "But if they are, as they should be, a supporting pillar of the homeland, then also this nineteenth salutary maxim, to hold them in greater consideration," Leszczyński, *Głos...*, p. 111.

<sup>25</sup> Stefan Garczyński, *Anatomia Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej*, Wrocław 1753, pp. 221 and 241–242 (about how it is the peasants who largely contribute to the military and it is they who pay taxes).

<sup>26</sup> This was taken furthest by Franciszek Salezy Jezierski under the headword *Pospółstwo*, in his "Niektóre wyrazy porządkiem alfabetu zebrane," in: Franciszek Salezy Jezierski, *Wybór pism*, collected by Zdzisław Skwarczyński, Warszawa: PIW, 1952, p. 244.



the grounds of their alleged indifference towards their homeland. “His goal is his own fortune,” one author averse to the burghers wrote about one of them, adding that noble citizens cared for “the fortune of the nation.”<sup>27</sup> Following Jan Chądzyński’s lead, some suggested that if the homeland did not look after the lower estates, they could hardly be expected to look after the homeland. “Give your subjects freedom,” an anonymous author appealed to lawmakers in the early days of the Sejm, “once you make them citizens and give them a homeland, which so far has been not a mother but a cruel step-mother, you will undoubtedly find the strength in them to resist the greatest of powers.”<sup>28</sup> Such sentiments were nonetheless merely marginal. By identifying the homeland with the Commonwealth and patriotism with civic duties, the discourse of the nobility, except for the treatises of sixteenth-century humanists and enlightened reformists, discussed love of the homeland only in the context of those who themselves constituted the Republic, in other words: the noble citizens.

#### 4.

It must be stressed again that *amor patriae* was not an unconditional feeling. An anonymous author clearly formulated this principle of reciprocity:

I admit I am a citizen of my homeland, I owe it help and protection, I do not shun the law it has imposed on me and I abide by it, whereas it **has a duty to** look after my security and well-being.<sup>29</sup>

We could imply that this way of thinking had been influenced by the discourse of the Enlightenment yet the same issue appeared in Polish writings much earlier. Despite using somewhat different words, an anonymous author raised that matter in 1628 by lamenting the “exorbitances” in the Commonwealth. He went one step further and openly warned of the consequences of the homeland’s failure to fulfil its duties:

Where there is freedom, justice, and peace, the motivation to combat an enemy comes from loving and enjoying that which he wants to wrest away. But where there is servitude, unbearable wrongs, and anxiety from one’s own, there is no such motive. Many a person will think: how can I be certain whether,

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<sup>27</sup> “O skutkach z poniżenia stanu szlacheckiego,” in: *Materiały do dziejów Sejmu Czteroletniego*, collected by Jerzy Michalski, Emanuel Rostworowski, Janusz Woliński, vol. 2, Warszawa: Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich, 1957, p. 482; more broadly cf. Anna Grześkowiak-Krwawicz, *O formę rządu czy o rząd dusz: Publicystyka polityczna Sejmu Czteroletniego*, Warszawa: IBL PAN, 2000, particularly the chapter entitled “Wolni mówią do wolnych,” pp. 161–197.

<sup>28</sup> *Poparcie “Uwag nad życiem Jana Zamojskiego”*, Warszawa: Gröll, 1788, p. 118.

<sup>29</sup> *List obywatela do sąsiada w służbie wojskowej zostającego* [no place, c. 1776], p. 2 (emphasis A.G-K.).

once the enemy conquers us, we might be able to attain what we cannot attain from our own?<sup>30</sup>

Hidden within those arguments was a serious threat that became tangible as the noble Republic neared its ultimate demise. This is because the principle of reciprocity could be interpreted to mean that the homeland's failure to honour its obligations relieved citizens from the duty of loving it and caring for it. Such an interpretation was by no means exclusively a Polish phenomenon: similar arguments, rooted in the ancient tradition, can be found in the works of Italian humanists.<sup>31</sup> On the other hand, this notion of a broken contract essentially remained non-existent in the political discourse of the Commonwealth as long as it remained under strong influence of classical thought. References to such a concept were made by those who participated in disputes in the eighteenth century. Before that happened, a significant shift occurred in the discourse, more specifically in the perception of the links between the homeland and freedom.

In the discussions of the sixteenth century and the first half of the seventeenth century, no one had any doubt that the former guaranteed the latter. Freedom was the most precious gift that the *Rzeczpospolita* could bestow upon its citizens and a feature that distinguished it from other European countries. Those who wanted to protect that freedom should therefore look after their homeland. Over time, however, that hierarchy of values was reversed: the homeland no longer served as the guarantor of freedom, but freedom acted as a necessary prerequisite for a country to be regarded as a homeland. Defenders of the old governmental system drew radical conclusions from such arguments during the Four-Year Sejm. In their understanding, any attempt to restrict the liberties enjoyed by the *szlachta* amounted not only to an attack on the homeland but even to treason.<sup>32</sup> What is more, a homeland without freedom was no longer a homeland at all. "What would be the purpose of being called Poles, if we were unfree?" – an anonymous defender of the free elections asked rhetorically.<sup>33</sup> It therefore comes as no surprise that after the enactment of the Constitution of May 3, some of its most ardent opponents decided that open violations of their liberties infringed upon the aforementioned principle of mutual obligations between the homeland and citizens and the latter were therefore in a sense freed from their obligation to serve their homeland. As Jan Suchorzewski put it in the Sejm on May 3, 1791:

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<sup>30</sup> *Egzorbitancja powszechna, która Rzeczpospolitą królestwa polskiego niszczy, zgubą grożąc* (Warszawa, 1628), ed. Kazimierz Józef Turowski, Kraków: Wydawnictwo Biblioteki Polskiej, 1858, p. 8.

<sup>31</sup> Cf. Viroli, *For Love...*, p. 33: "[...] the citizen has an obligation towards his *patria* because he owes it all the goods of life, and he loves his *patria* because it is place where he can enjoy sweet freedom. If the *patria* dissolves into a tyranny of arrogant men, the obligation ceases and love turns into hatred."

<sup>32</sup> Seweryn Rzewuski, *O sukcesji tronu w Polsce rzecz krótka*, Amsterdam [Warszawa?], 1789, p. 30.

<sup>33</sup> *O polepszeniu elekcji królów myśli obywatela województwa podlaskiego ziemi bilskiej*, [no place], 1788, p. 3.

I want to defend my homeland, because I am free, but if there should be tyranny, I shall despise it and declare myself an enemy of Poland.<sup>34</sup>

In a sense, that was undeniably a logical consequence of a specific vision of patriotism. Unconditional and somewhat instinctive love cannot be destroyed even if the ones we love do us harm, yet such a disappointment may lead to the severing of friendship, as a relation based on mutual trust and mutual benefits. Even so, that interpretation was extreme, with similar opinions being formulated only in the course of fierce political disputes and by very few participants.

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In conclusion, it should be stressed again that this paper presents a by no means exhaustive analysis of the notion of *amor patriae* in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, attempting above all to highlight its distinctiveness in a certain regard, resulting from the fact that in those times the concept of homeland and the proper feelings to be harboured towards that homeland were then discussed in different terms than in modern times. Hence, certain aspects have been deliberately omitted here (chiefly the idea of sacrifices made for the homeland and the absolute imperative to serve it in all fields, along with the evolution of the notion in the late eighteenth century in the writings of such authors as Stanisław Staszic and Franciszek Salezy Jezewski<sup>35</sup>).

As such, we should point out that although this paper focuses on “friendship” between the *Rzeczpospolita* and its citizens along with the rational aspect of that relationship, there was also room for deep-set emotional feelings there – in addition to such friendship, there was indeed also love, just like in good marriage. That was later confirmed by the subsequent loss of independence, which caused not so much a change in the language itself as the selection of different elements of that language.<sup>36</sup>

Translated by Daniel Sax

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<sup>34</sup> Jan Suchorzewski, speech on May 3, 1791, as quoted by Jerzy Michalski, *Konstytucja 3 Maja*, Warszawa: Zamek Królewski w Warszawie, 1985, p. 48.

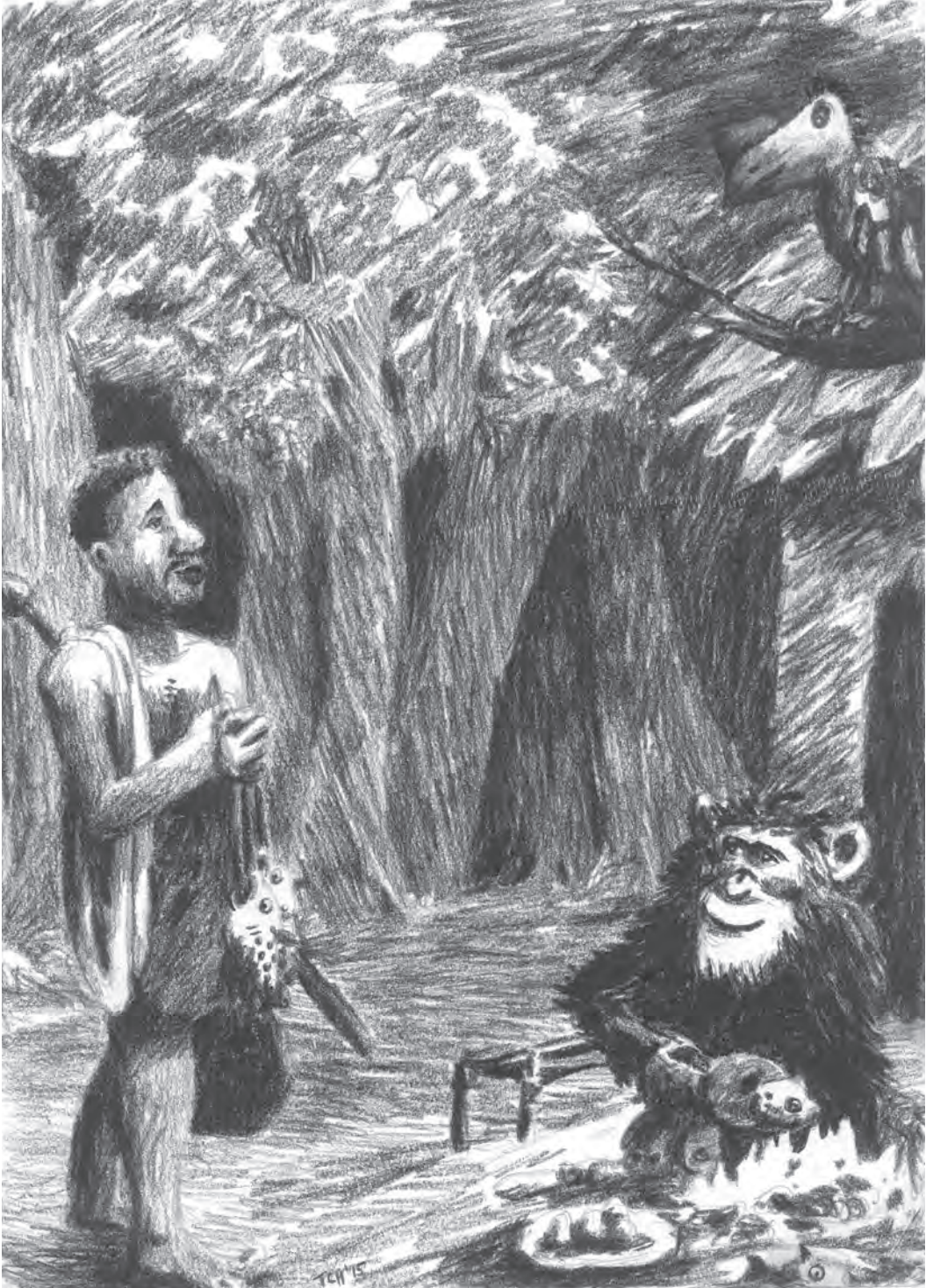
<sup>35</sup> For more on this topic, see: Anna Grześkowiak-Krwawicz, “Citizen, Homeland, and Patriotism in the Political Discourse of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth,” in: Trencsényi, Zászkaliczky, eds., *Whose Love of Which Country?...*, pp. 255–284.

<sup>36</sup> Cf. Maciej Janowski, “Rozpacz oświeconych: przemiana polskiego języka politycznego a reakcje na upadek Rzeczypospolitej,” *Wiek Oświecenia* 25 (2009), pp. 29–60.



Thurston Cleveland Hicks

**Non-Darwinian Notions of Kinship and  
Friendship Between People and Great  
Apes in the Congo Basin**





Thurston Cleveland Hicks

## **Non-Darwinian Notions of Kinship and Friendship Between People and Great Apes in the Congo Basin**

**T**he following accounts of local traditions and beliefs relating to the relationship of humans to great apes were compiled by the author while living and working over a thirteen-year period in the Congo Basin. The stories were usually not recorded verbatim, and are conveyed here in my own phrasing and cadence. I first worked closely with Babendzele foragers at the Mondika Research Center in Central African Republic (CAR) from 1999 to 2001, picking up some basics of the Babendzele language while on daily follows of gorilla groups through the swamps and forests. Between 2001 and 2002, I lived in the village of Grima, CAR, studying the effects of logging on the chimpanzees and gorillas inhabiting the forests to the south. Finally, from 2004 to 2012, I lived and worked with the Azande and Babenza people in Northern Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). During my travels in this region, I collected legends about great apes from a number of different ethnicities who inhabited the area. Some of the results are compiled here, with a particular emphasis on ideas of kinship, and even friendship, between certain human groups and chimpanzees. No systematic interviews were conducted, and thus these anecdotal accounts can by no means be considered to be representative. Nevertheless, in several cases I heard identical stories from different people in different times and places, indicating that they are shared by a number of people. It is my hope that this chapter will inspire other researchers to carry out more systematic ethnographies of the colourful and diverse African beliefs concerning great apes and other wildlife, particularly in the until now neglected Congo Basin.

### **Babendzele**

The Babendzele are forest foragers occupying the forests of the Republic of Congo and CAR and are famous for their tracking prowess, evocative music, and diminutive igloo-shaped leaf houses. They live in a near-symbiotic societal relationship with the taller and less nomadic Bantu (or Bofi) villagers. The Babendzele have no taboo against eating chimpanzee or gorilla meat. They do, however, seem to identify with chimpanzees, as opposed to gorillas.





In the town of Bayanga, in which I stayed repeatedly over a two-year period, Bantu villagers would often refer to the Babendzele in a derogatory manner as ‘chimpanzees.’ On the other hand, when we would find gorilla dung in the forest, our Babendzele trackers, mostly originating from the Bayanga-Moussapoula area, would regularly joke that the dung belonged to ‘Bilo,’ or villagers. They would then proudly refer to themselves as being more like chimpanzees! Some villager friends, on the other hand, claimed to be more like gorillas than chimpanzees, contrasting themselves with the Babendzele. My impression was not that either of these two peoples considered themselves to be related to these great apes, but more that they felt a spiritual affinity with them, in the same way that westerners might identify with the animal mascots of their favourite sports team. These conceptions, however, should be investigated in more detail.

One night around the campfire at Mondika, project tracker Balonyona, accompanied by the rhythmic chanting of the other trackers, regaled us with the following delightful story starring a chimpanzee and a tree pangolin:

Once in the days of the ancestors, the daughter of a powerful chief had just reached marriage age. She was a lovely woman and highly-desired as a wife by men across the entire kingdom. The chief sent out a message that all potential suitors should convene in his village, at which point he would set them a challenge to win the hand of his daughter. Men came from all directions, in pirogues, on foot, across the savannahs, and through the forests. They gathered on a hill beside the village, upon which grew a tall fruit tree. The canopy of the tree was bustling with dozens of delicious ripe fruits [...] but they were so high up! ‘The man who can bring me down those fruits,’ announced the chief, ‘will be the man who will have my daughter’s hand in marriage!’ The daughter arrived beside her father and surveyed the sea of hopeful suitors. Dozens of pairs of eyes studied the limbless tree, looking for a way up into the canopy. Chimpanzee was there, and a self-satisfied smirk spread across his face. Why of course, he would be the obvious victor, given that he was the very best climber of the lot of them! Casting a seductive eye at his future bride, he clambered up towards the crown of the tree, eyes fixed on the juicy fruits beckoning above. But when he was almost in the canopy, he encountered a terrible problem: thousands of little black ants swarmed over his body, biting him hard through his fur. Chimpanzee yelped, swatted at the ants and struggled to reach the fruits just an arm’s length above his head – but the bites overwhelmed him, and he tumbled cursing to the ground below. As he scratched and smacked at the ants covering him, another talented climber tried to succeed where he had failed – but just as with Chimpanzee, this hopeful arboreal acrobat failed as well, and came scrambling back down the tree swatting and smacking himself. The bride-to-be looked at her father in distress. Had he not chosen an impossible task? Would she remain forever unmarried? No one else dared to approach... until finally, from the back of the crowd, sluggish scaly Pangolin shuffled up to the base of the tree, his nose twitching and his eyes blinking dully upwards. Chimpanzee jeered dismissively at this lethargic pine-comb of a beast. Such a dullard would never be able to get by all of those ants, let alone gather all of the fruits. Pangolin began to lumber up the trunk, inch by tedious inch. Chimpanzee cat-called at him all the way up: if he had not been able to do it, there was no way this bloke could. Hours later, Pangolin finally

reached the canopy, and was predictably attacked by the swarm of biting ants. Chimpanzee, along with the other suitors, grinned as they waited to see their competitor swat madly at himself and then tumble to the ground. Maybe then the chief would ease up and give them all an easier challenge. But then, to Chimpanzee's astonishment, Pangolin extended his long sticky tongue and he began lapping up the ants covering his carapace – for him, a delicious meal! His scaly body protected him and allowed him to not only gather up all the fruits in his slow and methodical style, but to fill his belly with delicious insects. Chimpanzee scowled and shook his fist in jealous anger from the ground below. Finally, Pangolin returned to the ground and presented the chief with the tasty fruits, and he and his new bride went off to spend their lives together, leaving Chimpanzee and the other gathered suitors to curse their luck and imagine how great it would be to have Pangolin's body armor and long curved tongue.

In this delightful the 'tortoise and the hare'-like tale, the ape was neither the hero nor the villain, but instead played the role of the fool or jester. Nevertheless it is of interest that he was considered as a potential spouse of the chief's daughter, and also that another animal (the tree pangolin) ended up besting him for the hand of the bride. In this part of the world, where Babendzele are rumoured by villagers to take the form of elephants and destroy the crops of their enemies or Azande men are rumored to turn themselves into crocodiles at night and terrorize the villagers of Bili, barriers between humans and non-humans are quite slippery, especially when compared to the much firmer ones recently imposed by Christianity.

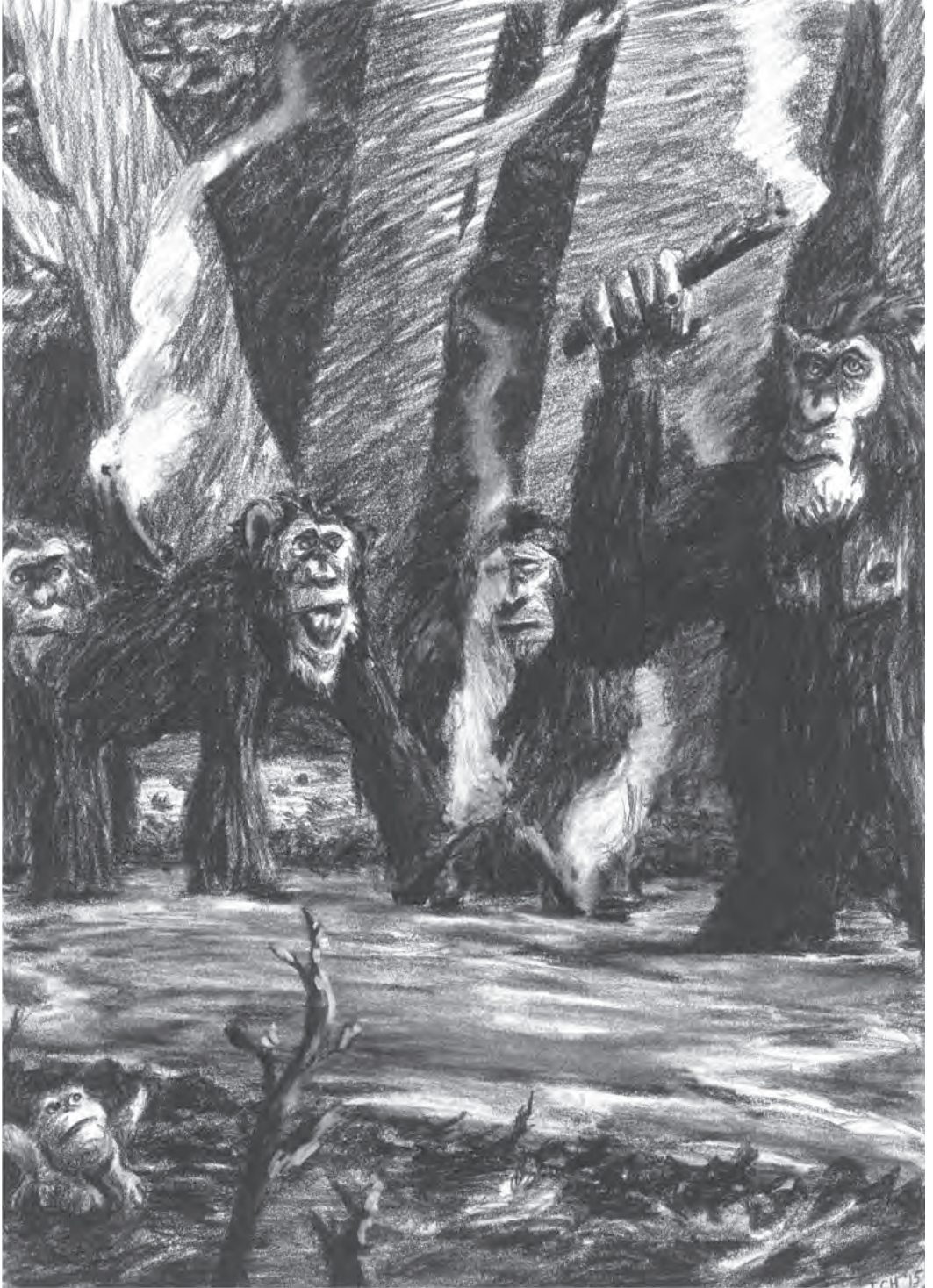
### Bofi

I lived with the Bofi people in the village of Grima, in southwestern Central African Republic, where they share the forest with a sizeable population of chimpanzees and gorillas.<sup>1</sup> The Bofi, who live in a mixed society of foragers and farmers,<sup>2</sup> seem to respect chimpanzees a good deal more than they do the gorillas occupying the same forest. The men with whom I worked claimed that their parents and grandparents had hunted gorillas in the recent past but never chimpanzees. This may explain why the local chimpanzees often responded to our research team with more curiosity than fear, while the gorillas would flee in terror into the swamps without even a bark from the silverback.

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<sup>1</sup> Thurston C. Hicks, Roger S. Fouts, and Deborah H. Fouts, "A Survey of Chimpanzees (*Pan troglodytes troglodytes*) and Gorillas (*Gorilla gorilla gorilla*) in the Selectively Logged Ngotto Forest, Central African Republic," *Journal of Applied Animal Welfare Science* 12.3 (2009), pp. 165–188; Thurston C. Hicks, Roger S. Fouts, and Deborah H. Fouts, "Chimpanzee (*Pan troglodytes troglodytes*) Tool Use in the Ngotto Forest, Central African Republic," *American Journal of Primatology* 65.3 (2005), pp. 221–237.

<sup>2</sup> Hillary N. Fouts, Barry S. Hewlett, and Michael E. Lamb, "Weaning and the Nature of Early Childhood Interactions among Bofi Foragers in Central Africa," *Human Nature* 12.1 (2001), pp. 27–46.



FCH 15

The Bofi trackers who guided us through the forest, despite their formidable skills and impressive knowledge, showed some confusion as to the number of great ape species living there. In addition to gorillas and chimpanzees, they were convinced that a third species of great ape was present: ‘le chimpanzé rouge’ or the red chimpanzee. These smaller, reddish, pale-faced apes were said to be strictly arboreal and much more inquisitive and aggressive than the larger ‘chimpanzés noires’ (black chimpanzees) with whom they shared the trees. The third species of great ape, gorillas, were believed by the Bofi to never climb into the trees. The trackers insisted on this, even when we encountered gorilla nest sites composed of a mix of tree and ground nests: these, they said, must have been chimpanzees sleeping in the trees above gorillas. In the end, after we shared a number of contacts with gorillas and chimpanzees, it was clear that my Bofi guides considered young, pale-faced chimpanzees to be a separate species from the older black-faced ones. They were unaware that as chimpanzees grow older their faces change color from pale white to black. Any large ape seen on the ground was assumed to be a gorilla, and any large black-faced ape seen in the trees was not a gorilla but a ‘black chimpanzee’.

My Bofi hosts shared with me a lovely explanation for why chimpanzees, despite being so humanlike, do not possess the secret of fire:

In ancient times, chimpanzees had tamed fire. They carried with them flaming torches for use in cooking and scaring away predators. One day, the ancestral chimpanzee group had to cross a forest stream to get from one part of their territory to another. As they waded across the stream, the alpha male inadvertently dipped his torch into the water. This action produced a sound, a sizzling “hissssss,” which mightily impressed all of the lower-ranking chimpanzees. Being the fine imitators that they are, the entire group followed his example and doused their torches into the stream to reproduce this fantastic sizzling sound. Afterwards, as they withdrew their now smouldering and soggy torches from the water, they realized, chagrined, that they had just lost the secret of fire. To this day chimpanzees walk about the forests fireless, and can only gaze with jealousy at the varied and creative projects to which their human counterparts put their burning flames to use.

### Barisi

In the centuries following colonialism in Africa, conservative Christian beliefs which stress the separation of humankind from the rest of Creation have proliferated across the continent. Humankind was created in the image of God, therefore viewing humans and non-humans as related can be considered as sacrilege. Interestingly though, people who have had little exposure to the Darwinian world view and live within a larger Christianized society sometimes maintain traditional beliefs which emphasize the continuity of their ethnic groups with other life forms.



The Barisi (singular: Morisi), a tribe of fisherfolk who paddle their pirogues up and down the Uele River in Northern DR Congo, tell the following story to explain their origins (see the opening illustration):

In the time of the ancestors, a Morisi man once left his village to go on a fishing trip. He followed a long winding path through the primeval forest to reach his simple fishing camp beside a riverbank. Every morning he would leave his camp to go down the river and fish. Unbeknownst to him, the man's arrival had been noticed by a female chimpanzee hidden in the leaves high up in the canopy. Curious, she spied on him every day as he gathered his fishing supplies and left camp. One morning, following his departure, she worked up her courage, climbed down from her tree and crept into the campsite. Using the man's own provisions, she sat by the fireside and spent the day cooking up a delicious dinner of manioc, banana, and fish. When the man returned in the evening, hungry after his long day of fishing, he was shocked to discover the fabulous dinner spread out before him. At first he was apprehensive, wondering who might have intruded into his campsite, but seeing no one around, he sat down and ate with delight the sumptuous meal which had been prepared for him. Hidden up in the leafy canopy, the chimpanzee chuckled as she watched him eat, quite pleased to see how much he enjoyed her cooking. Over the next few days, whenever the man would set off for the river to fish, she would creep back into camp and work her culinary magic, cooking him up delectable dinners. This saved the man time which he was able to use to catch more fish, which were then duly cooked for him by his secret benefactor. The man was so overwhelmed with happiness that he promised that if he ever found the cook he would marry her. The female chimpanzee overheard his vow and blushed. Then one day the man returned early from fishing and caught her in the act of cooking his dinner. They both swooned, fell head-over-heels in love and were soon married. They lived happily together in the Barisi village and had many grandchildren.<sup>3</sup>

The Barisi people consider themselves to be descendants of this union, and are proud of their chimpanzee heritage. To this day they refuse to eat chimpanzee meat, and indeed have been known to greet a visiting field primatologist (me) proudly proclaiming to be chimpanzees (the field primatologist greets them right back as a fellow chimpanzee, reflecting his Darwinian perspective). Although the Barisi do eat other species of primates, their dependence on a fish diet may serve to reduce their consumption of bushmeat, a possible explanation for the abundance of okapi, chimpanzees, monkeys, and other wildlife alongside the rivers where the Barisi ply their craft.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> This story was related to the author in identical form on two different occasions by two non-Barisi in different towns (Buta and Likati). It was confirmed to be legitimate by several Barisi contacts, and on numerous occasions I was spontaneously greeted by Barisi claiming to be in the family of (and descended from) the chimpanzee.

<sup>4</sup> Thurston C. Hicks et al., "Trade in Orphans and Bushmeat Threatens One of the Democratic Republic of the Congo's Most Important Populations of Eastern Chimpanzees, *Pan troglodytes schweinfurthii*," *African Primates* 7 (2010), pp. 1–18.

### Azande

Other peoples in Northern DR Congo may have taboos against eating chimpanzees as well. Although Azande men sometimes kill and eat these great apes, the author was told by his (male) Azande co-workers from Bili that some women of this tribe traditionally refuse to eat or cook them, out of fear that their babies will be born with ‘big chimpanzee ears’ (the men claimed that their own wives believed this). In addition, Azande women are said to perceive the apes as ‘too human-like’ to eat. I was told by a Zande man 150 km south that if a man brings chimpanzee meat into the house with the intention of cooking, his wife will not only refuse to cook the meat but will order it removed from the house. When I asked them, several Azande women confirmed their reluctance to cook chimpanzee meat due to the similarity of the apes to humans, or to fears of big-eared babies. This belief is not universal, however. At least one Zande women I interviewed told me that she had eaten chimpanzee meat and that taboos against eating it were just superstitions (‘croyances’). Clearly this topic requires more research.

### Traditional vs. Modern Beliefs

In addition to the Azande, I was told by Babenza informants living near the town of Aketi, also in the Northern DRC, that in the past the women of this ethnic group eschewed eating chimpanzee meat. Although other groups such as the Baboia show no such reluctance to eat chimpanzees, I do wonder if the prevalence of such beliefs in the region may in part explain why large numbers of chimpanzees still survive there.<sup>5</sup> The possible existence of such taboos must be balanced, however, with beliefs that chimpanzee bones ground-up and inserted into babies’ rectums or into small cuts provides the infants with strength and vigor. In addition, rapid societal changes are transforming local cultures. For example, the spread of Branhamism across the Uele region of Northern DRC appears to be having an adverse effect on traditional taboos against eating certain species. A particular Congolese interpretation of the teachings of American prophet William Branham appears to encourage people to put aside their taboos and eat all forms of wildlife. Mainstream Christian and Muslim doctrine in general does not encourage humans to see themselves as related to other forms of life. Given this, it is perhaps surprising that such taboos still flourish.

It is obvious that such traditions prohibiting the consumption of chimpanzees and other wildlife are fragile and easily shattered by today’s expanding ‘religion’ of profit-over-all. If an out-of-town gold miner or merchant will offer a large sum of money for chimpanzee bushmeat or an orphan to be sold in the big city, we cannot expect ancient traditions to trump economic opportunity. Benza field assistant Kisangola

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<sup>5</sup> Thurston C. Hicks et al., “Absence of Evidence Is Not Evidence of Absence: Discovery of a Large, Continuous Population of *Pan troglodytes schweinfurthii* in the Central Uele Region of Northern DRC,” *Biological Conservation* 171 (2014), pp. 107–113.

Polycarpe told me that old hunting traditions in the Aketi region are falling by the wayside as gold miners and Bangelema professional bushmeat hunters sweep through the forests, often using dogs, and hunt anything that moves. The smoked meat is sold in large urban markets in Kisangani and elsewhere. This seemed to be confirmed by the shocking number of chimpanzee orphans and carcasses we documented in the region between 2007 and 2009.<sup>6</sup> We cannot be certain how much of this can be attributed to the linking of markets via new roads together with the proliferation of weapons and demographic changes, and how much of it to changes in cultural attitudes towards wildlife. Nevertheless, if we seek to protect chimpanzees and other species of wildlife, it is vital that we understand the interaction between indigenous beliefs regarding the connection between humans and other species and the ‘new’ ideas being imported into the area (the killing of the sacred by capitalism, i.e. ‘everything has its price,’ and the Christian idea of humankind’s separateness from nature and other life forms being two predominant and far-reaching examples of the latter).

An ideal conservation strategy might be to celebrate and promote such ancestral taboos and beliefs in kinship and friendship between the human and the non-human. We could wed this approach to education about the Darwinian interconnectedness of life on earth and more ‘animal-friendly’ versions of Christianity and Islam. If local people value chimpanzees or other species as their kin, their friends or their totem animals, then efforts to preserve these peoples’ cultural heritage should include conservation efforts aimed at these species. Such an approach might have the happy effect of wedding human interests with the protection of endangered species. It would also counter the stereotype of Africans and, in particular of the Congolese, as starving, hungry bushmeat hunters who inexorably consume every animal they encounter. Actual African cultural diversity is far more complex and interesting than that. Along with primatologists surveying forests for chimpanzee nests and tools, we should send cultural anthropologists into these areas to further document, beyond the anecdotal reports presented here, the rich cultural heritage that informs Africans’ interactions with our closest relatives.

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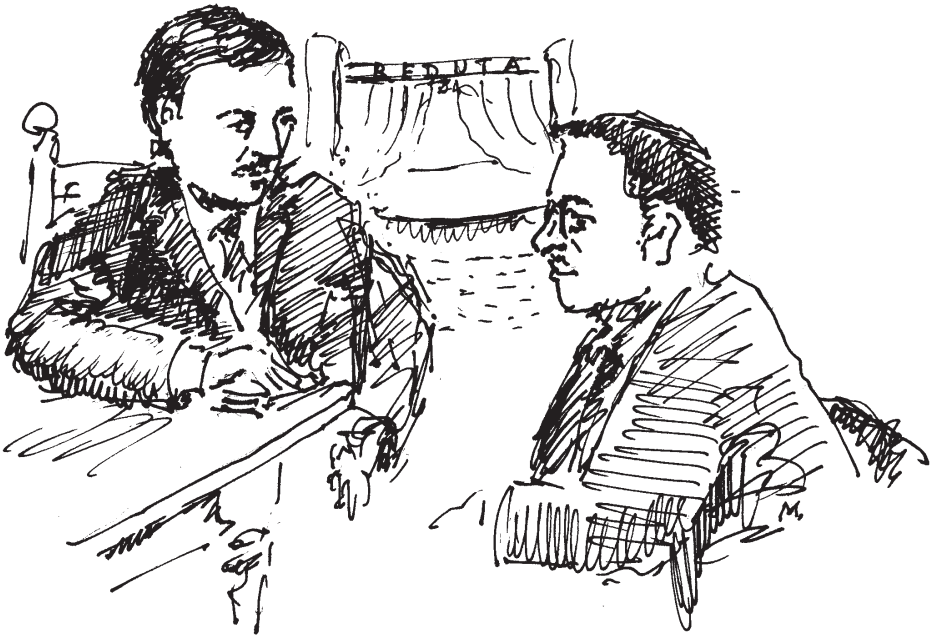
<sup>6</sup> Thurston C. Hicks et al., “Trade in Orphans and Bushmeat Threatens...,” pp. 1–18.





Maria Kalinowska

**From the History of the Friendship  
Between the Founders  
of Reduta Theatre**



## From the History of the Friendship Between the Founders of Reduta Theatre

The Reduta Theatre,<sup>1</sup> considered the most important theatre troupe in twentieth-century Polish culture prior to the theatres of Tadeusz Kantor and Jerzy Grotowski, would never have come into existence if it had not been for the creative friendship of two extraordinary and romantic personalities: a charming and great actor, Juliusz Osterwa, and a slightly “crazy” geology professor, Mieczysław Limanowski, a scientist and artist at the same time.<sup>2</sup> A great deal has been written about their creative collaboration, including multi-faceted analyzes of its artistic effects and comparisons of its phenomenon to the relationships of such “theatre couples” as Stanislavsky–Nemirovich-Danchenko and Grotowski–Flaszen.<sup>3</sup> Actually, ever since Zbigniew Osiński’s works, when considering the history of Reduta it is impossible to separate what Osterwa contributed to it as a man of theatrical practice and a subtle judge of the human psyche from what this

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<sup>1</sup> Reduta was “the theatre group considered to be Poland’s first theatre laboratory. It was founded in 1919 in Warsaw by Juliusz Osterwa and Mieczysław Limanowski, who together created Reduta’s ideology and led its work. The group’s main principle was studio work towards a fundamental artistic and ethical reconstruction of the Polish theatre scene thanks to which it would become capable of creating an original national theatre, derived from the works and projects of Mickiewicz, Słowacki, and Wyspiański. Reduta was the first to combine artistic work and education with multifaceted pedagogical activities, which were to lead to the formation of mature and conscious artists, with this in turn bringing about the creation of pioneering methods of work on oneself. The creation of Reduta was preceded by conversations held in Moscow in 1916 between the founders, which also included their joint visit to the First Studio of the Moscow Art Theatre, while Reduta’s direct predecessor was the Polskie Studio Sztuki Teatru im. Adama Mickiewicza (the Adam Mickiewicz Polish Studio of Theatre Arts) founded by Limanowski in Warsaw,” source of the quotation: <http://www.grotowski.net/en/encyclopedia/reduta> (consulted Oct. 5, 2015).

<sup>2</sup> Zbigniew Osiński’s works on Reduta are invaluable, especially those on the role played by Mieczysław Limanowski as well as those outlining the two artists’ friendship. See Zbigniew Osiński, *Pamięć Reduty: Osterwa, Limanowski, Grotowski* [Remembering Reduta: Osterwa, Limanowski, Grotowski], Gdańsk: słowo/obraz terytoria, 2003, and his introduction to Mieczysław Limanowski & Juliusz Osterwa, *Listy* [Letters], compilation and introduction Zbigniew Osiński, Warszawa: Państwowy Instytut Wydawniczy, 1987.

<sup>3</sup> See e.g. Zbigniew Osiński, “Grotowski o ‘parach teatralnych’ (Osterwa–Limanowski, Stanisławski–Niemirówicz–Danczenko, Grotowski–Flaszen) i swoim Centro di Lavoro – Workcenter w Pontederze” [Grotowski on ‘Theatre Couples’ (Osterwa–Limanowski, Stanislavsky–Nemirovich-Danchenko, Grotowski–Flaszen) and His Centro di Lavoro – Workcenter in Pontedera], *Pamiętnik Teatralny* 50.1–2 (2001), pp. 14–39.

extraordinary theatre owed to Limanowski as a naturalist (!), cultural anthropologist, art critic, in other words – a Renaissance-like erudite and “man of imagination” that integrated artistic and scientific experience.

When we think of Osterwa and Limanowski’s collaboration as simply a phenomenon of friendship, however, it might be worth noting its close connection to their joint artistic work, the way this friendship was born of the two personalities’ mutual artistic, spiritual, and intellectual inspirations, how it crystallized precisely as creative energy and a veritable hub of theatre activity and experience. This was not a friendship struck up at a young age and set to last forever due to the shared history of a generation, as had been the case, for example, with Adam Mickiewicz who greatly valued the bonds created in his youth, especially in the Philomath community,<sup>4</sup> and cultivated them as something that would save him from the dangerous fate of a Romantic exiled poet.<sup>5</sup> For Osterwa and Limanowski, joint creative work was the essence of their friendship, its foundation and its source, though of course a broader affinity was not without significance; they shared some jointly and emphatically professed values: above all, the dignity of art and the ethos of an artist’s social obligations.

Many have wondered about the secret of the collaboration between those “theatre couples” who have won such a solid place in the history of European theatre. What role did Ludwik Flaszen play in Jerzy Grotowski’s creative searches? Who was Nemirovich-Danchenko to Stanislavsky, what did he contribute to the quest of the Moscow Art Theatre’s founder? In a long letter to Osiński, Grotowski pondered on this kind of relationship, analysing the similarities and differences between these different “theatre couples,” and noting (in fact seeing Liman’s [i.e., Limanowski’s] “eruptiveness and disarray” as his “own domain”):

In our collaboration with Ludwik, his striking, bracing role consisted in being the *advocatus diaboli*.<sup>6</sup>

Also with regard to Osterwa and Limanowski, many have passed judgment on the character of their artistic collaboration and their special division of competences or roles in the artistic and organizational activities they pursued. The findings to date, often formulated on the basis of what was said by the two artists and by witnesses, can be summarized as follows: Limanowski with his erudition and rich imagination as well as his theatrical intuition was first and foremost an inspirer of creative ideas, a kind of *spiritus movens* of their joint projects; he brought motion, dynamics, but also gave the troupe’s theatrical practice greater intellectual and spiritual depth. Osterwa contributed

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<sup>4</sup> The Philomath Society (Filomaci) was an association of students of the University of Vilnius (1817 to 1823) which was established by among others Adam Mickiewicz.

<sup>5</sup> See Alina Witkowska, *Rówieśnicy Mickiewicza: życiorys jednego pokolenia* [Mickiewicz’s Peers: Biography of a Generation], Warszawa: Wiedza Powszechna, 1962.

<sup>6</sup> See “List Jerzego Grotowskiego do Zbigniewa Osińskiego (fragment), Pontedera, między majem 1987 a około 1 grudnia 1987” [Letter from Jerzy Grotowski to Zbigniew Osiński (excerpt), Pontedera, between May 1987 and ca. 1 December 1987], *Pamiętnik Teatralny* 50.1–2 (2001), p. 8.

a bonding and integrating element: a focus on theatricality and its subtleties, but also courage for innovative activity and the ability to create a team and integrate it around joint projects.

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All the above we already know; it has been described in general outlines and from different perspectives. I was encouraged to return to the issue of the special friendship between Osterwa and Limanowski after reading an unusual manuscript from the Mieczysław Limanowski Archive housed at the Museum of the Earth in Warsaw.<sup>7</sup> This poignant document from 1947 was written by Limanowski just after Osterwa's death. In it, he tried to look back, to retrace their friendship of many years, but he was also an old man looking back upon his life and trying to settle accounts with himself and what he had achieved. This was Limanowski's attempt at writing a posthumous tribute to Osterwa, which also became his attempt at recounting his own life and everything that was the most important in it. Limanowski's old age was not a matter of when he was born, and not even of his illness; it was a matter of being tired of living, especially the exhaustion stemming from his time spent in occupied Vilnius and later the experience of exile and all the hardships of post-war life. The manuscript is hard to decipher, written in barely legible, uneven handwriting; it is not a finished, closed text but is variant in character. The most poignant thing about it is that Limanowski begins the text several times, tries to launch his narrative over and over again, to collect his thoughts and express the essential content of his memories. He tries to write about his friend several times, seeming to be searching for the right expression for his thoughts, but also for everything that his relationship with Osterwa had meant to him, since it had encroached upon the most important aspects of Limanowski's life...

This extraordinary manuscript in which Limanowski struggles to express the wealth of his relations with his friend, shows as if through a lens just how multi-faceted their creative collaboration was and how many narratives it can project. Limanowski relives the Moscow period as a fundamental moment for their collaboration, but these notes also touch upon other periods of their working together (e.g. the time of outdoor performances in the 1920s), and especially the beginnings of their creative, artistic friendship. He seeks proper ways to describe the essence of their friendship and looks for a "founding" event, the first and most important thing that decided about their creative rapport and continued friendly collaboration.

The manuscript that Limanowski wrote near the end of his eventful life points us towards his earlier texts, those in which Reduta's co-founder outlined how he and Osterwa started working together. It needs adding that Limanowski's writings include several such notes or reconstructions – of both the beginnings of Reduta and the beginnings

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<sup>7</sup> See n. 17.

of his creative relationship with Osterwa – and each offers a slightly different account of their mutual relations and therefore also of the Reduta Theatre's early development.

Among the earliest such testimonies are two very critical theatre reviews by Limanowski, their subject – significantly – being in fact Osterwa as a director and as an actor. These reviews are extremely frank, written with respect for Osterwa's hard work but at the same time uncompromisingly tracing and highlighting any false notes and shallowness in his acting and his staging ideas. The way Limanowski judges Osterwa is reminiscent of the principles that later lay at the foundation of Reduta's artistic activity: seeking the truth of artistic expression and the truth of experiencing as well as fighting against clichés, against ossification, and falseness in art.

Both reviews concern performances at Warsaw's Rozmaitości Theatre: a production of Lucjan Rydel's *Złote więzy* [Golden Fetters] from 1914 and Stanisław Wyspiański's *Wesele* [The Wedding] from 1915 directed by Osterwa.<sup>8</sup> Limanowski notices great artistic potential in the young Osterwa, he appreciates the hard work that went into staging *Wesele* ("He put the effort of all efforts into his work" (W, p. 111), praises his "solid ingenuity, his love for the finished work" (W, p. 111):

Osterwa can disarm us with his great love, his reverence for art. [...] He has elucidated every fragment of the play, looked at each one, embraced it with his loving eye. (W, p. 111)

Already in this praise we can notice respect for the values on which Reduta's later activity would be founded: meticulous delving into the meanings of a work and selfless love of art. This was the moment, in a way, when these two personalities met, when they found their place in the ethos of great dignity of artistic activity. But more important than praise in these two reviews are negative judgments on Osterwa's artistic choices, on the parts he played (Zygmunt August and the Groom), and his directing. Limanowski's negative opinion on the Rozmaitości Theatre's choice of repertoire is also striking, especially on the comprehensive concept of theatre's functioning in society that this theatre presented:

[...] the unclarified work of Art, impure like Rydel's play [...] is a d e p r a v - i n g factor when it is offered to the masses as spiritual nourishment. Nobody, especially not the masses, should be served dubious products as works of significant value. The fact that this play is performed on the principal Polish stage (how you have declined, oh stage of Żółkowski, Rapacki, and Leszczyński!), by the best troupe, with a maximum of theatre production and directing effort,

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<sup>8</sup> Mieczysław Limanowski, "Złote więzy Rydla w Teatrze Rozmaitości" [Rydel's *Golden Fetters* at the Rozmaitości Theatre], in the same author's *Duchowość i maestria: recenzje teatralne 1901–1940* [Spirituality and Mastery: Theatre Reviews 1901–1940], Warszawa: Instytut Sztuki Polskiej Akademii Nauk, 1992, pp. 64–74 (originally printed in *Prawda*, April 25 and May 2, 1914, Nos. 17 and 18); the same author's "Wesele w Teatrze Rozmaitości" [*The Wedding* at the Rozmaitości Theatre], in: *Duchowość...*, pp. 108–119 (originally printed in *Mysł Polska*, April 1915, No. 1). Abbreviations used here: quotes from the review of *Złote więzy* are marked 'Z,' and of *Wesele* – 'W.'

to my mind is one of the moments that bring down our collective soul. (Z, p. 68, spaced font in the original)

This “bringing down of the collective soul” was accompanied by destruction of the talent of young actors, who could not develop in a false, non-creative theatre that was betraying an essential calling of theatre art: “[...] the fullest liberation of the spirit trapped at the bottom of the stage work” (W, p. 109). We come very close here to the goals of the future Reduta which built its identity precisely on negation of this kind of “theatre production” and on concern for shaping a new kind of actor – something that starts to come across in both reviews. Limanowski’s remarks on acting as the foundation of a new theatre art in both reviews were inspired by Osterwa’s work, even the comments very critical of his future friend. The new kind of actor was necessary to a new kind of theatre, theatre that would not naturalistically reproduce the physical surface of reality but theatre that included reality in the giant mythical order of world transformation; the theatre of Dionysius, in other words. The actors that such theatre needed would have to be able to “extract from a staged play all that is concealed in its depths [...]”. Because a creative actor as well as a true artist must be ruthless: whatever is great, they should honestly take to greatness, whatever is small and only gives a semblance of greatness, they should expose without mercy” (Z, p. 69).

Limanowski’s description of the acting displayed by Osterwa, who by this time was a favourite of Polish theatre-goers, includes almost only negative judgments, accounts of what his role lacked and how Osterwa had betrayed his essential vocation as an actor. Based on an analysis of Osterwa’s acting, Limanowski offers a radical programme of the new kind of acting that they would later practise at the Reduta Theatre. Of course Limanowski’s extremely critical opinion of Rydel’s *Golden Fetters* is a major factor here. The play did not give the young actor any chance of creating a great interpretation; however, Limanowski is critical of Osterwa also in *The Wedding*, a play that he valued highly. What, then, did Osterwa’s acting lack?

Great actors [...] in great plays extract all that is hidden at the bottom, and elevate the extracted qualities to the stars; in small, pretentious plays they mercilessly expose the mask of commonality lurking in the corners. (Z, p. 69)

That was the task in which Osterwa failed. He created the inner world of his characters two-dimensionally, without inner dynamism and without uncovering a depth that today we would call archetypal. According to Limanowski, Osterwa and his stage partner Janina Szyllinzanka subconsciously sensed “the fundamental falseness at the basis of the play being performed” (Z, p. 71) and “couldn’t act it out as a synthesized whole” (Z, p. 71). Moreover, “Osterwa has a hyper-inclination towards external representation that does not grow from inner truth” (Z, p. 72). If we add to this Limanowski’s criticism of Osterwa’s affected manner of speaking (“Acting with another’s voice is absolute suicide for an actor of the great repertoire,” Z, p. 70), we can see the road that Osterwa travelled,

given that he later became a master of expressing the depth of his characters' inner truth and a master of the spoken word.

What irritated Limanowski about Osterwa's staging of *The Wedding* was the "naturalization" of this visual and archetypal drama. Both as the director and as an actor, Osterwa went "for the unimportant details, or even those that were deadly for the mood that was supposed to arise in ourselves" (W, p. 111). He also obliterated the play's peculiarly mythical musicality but did not replace it with a visually vivid image. *The Wedding* at the Rozmaitości Theatre "tried to present a photograph of some of the living people on whom the characters were based" (W, p. 115) and that was exactly how Osterwa approached his part. "An evil spirit told Osterwa to photograph Lucjan Rydel. Through this he killed his acting; he became unnatural, artificial, pretentious" (W, p. 115). Moreover, he began showing "that he could do a lot" (W, p. 115). "The things Osterwa did with gestures in scene 22 of the [first] act, illustrating the onomatopoeia of sounds, is not a part of theatre, it belongs in circus productions that have no connection to Art. He should promptly abandon them, move towards simplicity, be himself and simply descend into the depth" (W, p. 116).

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The most well-known among Limanowski's texts of interest here, testifying to his developing artistic friendship with Osterwa and providing evidence of how the Reduta theatre emerged, and also the one that best reconstructs the beginnings of Reduta, is the article *Jak powstała Reduta przed trzynastu laty?* [How Did Reduta Come Into Being Thirteen Years Ago?].<sup>9</sup> The text has been discussed many times; even to this author it constituted fascinating evidence of Reduta's "founding myth" – the story of Mickiewicz's *Dziady* [Forefathers' Eve] as the script of a completely non-theatrical ritual. The small group of Reduta-affiliated artists celebrating the Forefathers' Eve rites in spring 1919, connecting in a mystical – and Eleusinian Mystery-like – ritual with their dead, are a very long way from theatre: "Józio Poręba was the Enchanter, and also the purest soul."<sup>10</sup> "This was not theatre at all. Theatre was miles away from us. We helped him summon the spirits."<sup>11</sup> In this text Reduta, which later became brilliant at psychological realism,<sup>12</sup> paradoxically emerges from a religious ritual, from Polish Romantic drama, and from the power of a mythical story about the collective soul being reborn in a pagan/ancient mystery. When we look at this text from the viewpoint we are considering

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<sup>9</sup> Mieczysław Limanowski, "Jak powstała Reduta przed trzynastu laty?" [How Did Reduta Come Into Being Thirteen Years Ago?], in the same author's *Był kiedyś teatr Dionizosa* [There Once Was the Theatre of Dionysius], edition and introduction by Zbigniew Osiński, Warszawa: Instytut Sztuki Polskiej Akademii Nauk, 1994, pp. 223–228.

<sup>10</sup> Ibidem, p. 224.

<sup>11</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>12</sup> Leaving aside the enormous literature on the two "faces" of Reduta: intimate psychological theatre and mystery-play theatre, the latter largely latent.



here, namely Limanowski re-creating Osterwa's role in Reduta's beginnings, it reveals new perspectives. Limanowski writes:

One day Osterwa came to us. He sat down quietly and as the whole event unfolded, he sat more and more still. Osterwa is an artist above all. His being could not but immediately catch on to what we had already started noticing. We were touching the grain, contacting the dead. It came as a surprise to him that thanks to Mickiewicz's text you could force your way into a world that is a thousand times fuller than theatre produced by even the wildest imagination, that thanks to this text, when you had real corn, your eyes could shine like an angel's through the sacred gesture of hands as an expression of a heart opening to the utmost, that it is possible to have theatre founded on trances.<sup>13</sup>

The chorus contributes "collective remembrance of the dead to the group," while "Osterwa's heart, unusually sensitive as far as any kind of contacts were concerned, quickly descended into the depths"<sup>14</sup> of the ritual:

Osterwa dropped into the ritual all of a sudden, becoming a part of the Chorus. He sat very quiet, focused and moved. He didn't even manage to stop an unintentionally rolling tear. [...] What strange moment was this? *Poręba* is summoning the spirits. The spectres bow over the corn and the sun, shining brightly, also helps the springtime forefathers. This was the moment when a motherly voice whispered to Osterwa that he should take the little group gathered around the table into his care.<sup>15</sup>

Reduta became a home for those who literally – after the Great War – as well as metaphorically wandered the earth at the time:

I couldn't repeat the words with which Osterwa expressed his concern. I only know that it was an act of his heart. I also know it was one of those moments that give life to new worlds.<sup>16</sup>

This well-known and often repeated story about Mickiewicz and rituals as the inspiration for Reduta, a theatre long considered an intimate theatre of psychological realism, in this new reading becomes Limanowski's wonderful story about his artist friend who created this theatre thanks to his sensitivity and deep spirituality, but also thanks to having entered the mythical world of the Forefathers' Eve ritual ("a motherly voice whispered to Osterwa"). He created Reduta when he became a part of the chorus and the participant most deeply touched by the ritual.

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<sup>13</sup> Limanowski, "Jak powstała Reduta...", p. 226.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 227.

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Finally, the last piece of testimony: the pages of Limanowski's reminiscences mentioned earlier, in which Limanowski returns yet again to Osterwa, their friendship and the beginnings of Reduta, but now from the perspective of his entire life. This time he writes about Moscow and WWI, a period they both spent in Russia, deported there by the Russian authorities as Austrian citizens. The manuscript, very hard to decipher and even illegible in places, shows Limanowski's repeated struggle to pinpoint the moment when Reduta was born – of course not in a formal sense, because the year of its formation as a specific institutional entity was 1919 – but in the sense of a theatrical idea that crystallized – in stages, as we can see – in the course of the two men's artistic friendship. Again, Osterwa is at the focus of these reminiscences, not so much as an actor with a unique artistic personality but as a collaborator and friend, organizer and originator of the concept of a new kind of theatre. Where Limanowski's early theatre reviews, as described above, showed the first seeds of an idea that fully developed within Reduta, the later reminiscences written after Osterwa's death present the ideas of Reduta and its inception *ex post*, so to speak; we see them from the perspective of the whole road that the Reduta troupe travelled together. On this road, Moscow was especially important as a time of creative ferment during meetings, discussions, projects among the group of Poles forced to stay there as well as in the surrounding historical reality: "Theatre, theatre reform, the actor, forming the actor [...]. From the war that raged, there slowly emerged an extraordinary whole." The manuscript begins with the words:

Every day in the afternoon I walked to the Osterwas who lived in a small street in a garden filled with jasmine. We gathered in Moscow and held passionate discussions.<sup>17</sup>

As mentioned earlier, this three-page manuscript is a variant text, in the sense that it is an unfinished rough draft linked to other autographs that accompany it, together forming a set of different versions of a thematic and structural whole. Limanowski started writing it three days after Osterwa's death and continued in autumn of the same year, i.e. in the final months of his own life. Two of the versions are entitled "Osterwa"

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<sup>17</sup> I focus here on the three-page manuscript entitled *Osterwa*, dated Oct. 5, 1947. This manuscript and other unpublished autographs by Limanowski were the subject of a MA thesis that Agnieszka Boruszewska (Faculty of Languages, Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń) wrote under my supervision; I quote her readings here (but in a few places I propose a different lection). However, I also consider a bigger group of manuscripts about Osterwa and the Moscow period in the collaboration between Limanowski and Osterwa, which are housed in the archive of the Museum of the Earth in Warsaw. These texts were written in 1947 after Osterwa's death; some of them are dated: May 13, 1947 as well as Oct. 5, 1947 and Oct. 25, 1947. The text "Pod niebem otwartym w roku 1924" [Under the Open Sky in 1924] was published in the volume *Był kiedyś teatr Dionizosa*, op. cit. I wrote about Limanowski's manuscripts from 1947 described here in the book: *Los. Miłość. Sacrum. Studia o dramacie romantycznym i jego dwudziestowiecznej recepcji* [Fate. Love. The Sacred. Studies on Romantic Drama and Its Twentieth-Century Reception], Toruń: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Mikołaja Kopernika, 2003, pp. 253–271.

[Osterwa], others either do not have titles or have temporary ones: “Rok 1915” [The Year 1915], “Pod niebem otwartym” [Under the Open Sky], “Objazd 1924” [The 1924 Tour]. Thus, this entire set of variant texts was produced under the influence of Osterwa’s death and sees Limanowski looking back, returning chiefly to the Moscow beginnings of Reduta but also, through the topic of Reduta Theatre’s tours, to the Theatre’s maturity and Osterwa’s role in it. What is striking about this vision of Reduta’s beginnings is that the narrative leads to (from?) a great historic transformation, to the emergence of new ideas for theatre in the new historical situation created by the changes brought about by WWI. Also striking is how Limanowski highlights the inspiration gained from meeting Stanislavsky, a theme to which Limanowski had returned on many occasions in his inter-war texts. Looking back, what is Limanowski’s perception of Osterwa’s role and the role of their friendship in the early period of their work together? What new element, compared to his earlier texts about Osterwa, does Limanowski add to his image of his friend?

Almost all the versions of interest to us here begin with a description of the meetings at the Osterwas’ place, with phrases appearing in different variations: “Every day in the afternoon I walked to the Osterwas who lived in a small street in a garden filled with jasmine”; “I’ll never forget the house and garden in Uspensky cul-de-sac, a little street joining two giant thoroughfares in Moscow [...]” The participants in those meetings included Juliusz and Wanda Osterwa, Wincenty Drabik, and “a multitude of Polish actors,” as Limanowski writes:

Theatre was the issue of our life. It burned us like fire whenever we thought about it. We wanted to improve it, renew it. A revolution was brewing in Russia. In this world seeking new expression, new shape, we sat at the window around a huge table, crowded in a small room, separated from the city by the garden’s high wall.

The discussions centred on theatre and at times it seemed we would start fighting, not being able to agree. We sat at the window around a huge table shouting, almost fighting. We behaved like early Polish ancestors until, after a long period of disquiet, we came so close to one another internally that we could constitute a true civilization, a group of people able to fight effectively for one and the same thing. In these battles Reduta was born.

Day after day, after every battle, we were not farther from one another but closer. We did what any good author does before they start writing a book. They extract thoughts from their inner selves, the content that has to be arranged. Into the composition they put their feelings, their longings, the commotion of work. We composed together. We didn’t even realize how those discussions were forming us, how they produced a world from us that would not just shine once but would develop and move forward efficiently. I mean Reduta. After these quarrels [...] we went into the garden. We were young. How much we enjoyed throwing a ball that bounced off the wall enclosing the garden. How much joy was brought by the blossoming [...] jasmine. Flying, running, stamping our feet, shouting, all kinds of appeals and impulses made

a collective body of us. War raged in the world. We didn't even realize that forces were growing in Moscow to topple the old world... We were born in the commotion reigning around us, we were happy.

We said goodbye, ran home strangely youthful, internally calm, to gather again tomorrow, [...] sit around the table, hold discussions, be a single group, a team of people that with each day of being together was becoming more cohesive as an army that, too, was strongly needed in the Polish nation.

These fragments contain repeated images of the journey to Moscow, the journey back from Moscow to Poland, via Smolensk, Białystok, to Warsaw, and in Warsaw – searching for Osterwa:

After a whole day sleeping at the hotel I set off into the city, to the Polski Theatre, wanting to find Osterwa. In fact I bumped into him on the stairs, overjoyed. We were both healthy, full of life, full of humour of youth which is eager for action, dances, yells joyfully, forgets about hunger and fatigue, wants to work, struggle, devote itself to everything [that is worthy].

Next Limanowski outlines a conversation with Osterwa in which they exchanged confidences about their plans. Liman spoke of his desire to combine geology with forming a theatre group: "I looked deep into my friend's eyes. Everything was in turmoil inside him, churning [...]. He had a plan, too [...]."<sup>18</sup> Work began on forming a theatre group. Reduta was born.

This late group of Limanowski's manuscripts, saturated with emotion, humanly very poignant, presents an image of Reduta as emerging from the historical experience of the nation as it was being reborn, a formation that not only sought new theatre in a formal and aesthetic sense, but which – rejecting the gentry, Sarmatian (those early Polish ancestors!) tradition – searched for new civilizational roads and formed a collective body, "a group of people able to fight effectively for one and the same thing." Also in this fight, Osterwa's disciplining and integrating role was of key importance. This cursory look at three groups of material by Limanowski, all of them testifying to the multi-faceted importance of Osterwa for the formation of the Reduta Theatre, also shows the many aspects in which the two creative men's artistic friendship was important.

A sceptic might say that everything which is contained in this testimony, we already knew in a general outline, and have known for a long time... Is that really true? So far no one has tried to build a comprehensive image of Osterwa from the testimony left by his closest, faithful, and loyal friend. The work is waiting to be done... In terms of reflecting on friendship and its forms, the focus of our interest here, it might be worth noting how Limanowski's writings contain metaphors of the rebirth and renewal of life, often connected to springtime which is sometimes understood almost mythically. Almost all of Limanowski's accounts of his and Osterwa's joint artistic activity quoted

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<sup>18</sup> For the source of this and the above quotations see n. 17.

here end with a record of existential experiences into which their joint artistic projects evolved. This is always a profound experience of opening, renewing life, overcoming darkness and doubt. It is youth being won.

Translated by Joanna Dutkiewicz



Przemysław Kaniecki

**“Sunday, the Century’s Lowest  
of the Low”:  
On Dygat “the Master”  
and Konwicki**





## “Sunday, the Century’s Lowest of the Low”: On Dygat “the Master” and Konwicki\*

The wit, the complaining, the cracks at the competition, the rooster struts, the confessions of weakness, envy, laziness, the flights into the past, back to the war (what war? what other war is there?), back to the Hollywood of the thirties, forward to the films of modern times (he also makes films), more envy, more cracks, the man does go on, making fun of himself, of others, but making no bones about who he is: he’s a real writer [...].

This is how Gary Gildner summarized *Wschody i zachody księżycyca* [Moonrise, Moonset] written by Tadeusz Konwicki in 1981 (English translation: 1986).<sup>1</sup> It is too bad that the American critic never read *Kalendarz i klepsydra* [The Hourglass and the Calendar] from the mid-1970s (never translated in full into English<sup>2</sup>), of which *Moonrise, Moonset* is a continuation. A formula of the genre has been somewhat expanded (a diary of sorts, composed of various literary forms<sup>3</sup>), but the book faithfully follows the mode of self-presentation of the 1970s original, difficult to modify further. With *The Hourglass...*, the author reached an absolute turning point; he produced a literary piece which became a model for ways of expressing one’s own condition, ways leading

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\* Based on: Przemysław Kaniecki, *Samospalenia Konwickiego* [Konwicki’s Self-Immolations], Warszawa: Sub Lupa, 2014, pp. 82–89.

<sup>1</sup> Gary Gildner, “I Am Invited to Write about Konwicki,” *Review of Contemporary Fiction* 14.3 (1994), p. 132.

<sup>2</sup> See excerpts: “From the Hourglass and the Calendar,” transl. Daniel Bourne, *Review of Contemporary Fiction* 14.7 (1994), pp. 124–131.

<sup>3</sup> Both *The Hourglass...* and *Moonrise...* are *silvae rerum*, as described by Ryszard Nycz in *Sylwy współczesne. Problem konstrukcji tekstu* [Contemporary Silvae Rerum. The Problem of Constructing Text], Wrocław et al.: Ossolineum, 1984. To read more on the books’ genre see: Jerzy Smulski, “*Ulepiec*. Kilka uwag o formie gatunkowej tryptyku Tadeusza Konwickiego *Kalendarz i klepsydra, Wschody i zachody księżycyca, Nowy Świat i okolice*” [*Ulepiec*. Some Remarks on the Genre of Tadeusz Konwicki’s Triptych *Hourglass and the Calendar, Moonrise, Moonset, New World Avenue and Vicinity*], in: Czesław Niedzielski, Jerzy Speina, eds., *Formy i strategie wypowiedzi narracyjnej* [Forms and Strategies of a Narrative], Toruń: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Mikołaja Kopernika, 1993, pp. 137–161.

to general reflection, sketching the state of mind of a contemporary Polish writer, in contrast to how the condition of a Polish writer was being perceived, at least from the onset of the nineteenth century.

Konwicki's stance, transparent in both *The Hourglass...* and *The Moonrise...*, as well as in his subsequent essays and para-literary punditry (especially his published interviews), could be encapsulated as a defense against falling in love with himself. In *The Hourglass...*, the key chapter which develops this thread is entitled "Sunday, the Century's Lowest of the Low" and is devoted to Stanisław Dygat.

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Dygat (born 1914) and Konwicki (born 1926) met in the very early 1950s (according to Konwicki's account in *The Hourglass...*). By then, Dygat had already been an established literary figure, especially as the author of controversial *Jezioro Bodeńskie* [Lake Constance] (1946), a mocking take on the conservative model of Polish patriotism. Konwicki was a rising star of the new, socialist literature, above all as the author of a reportage entitled *Przy budowie* [At a Construction Site] (the writer offers an extensive explanation of this phase in his biography in *The Hourglass...*). He was also the author of *Rojsty* [Marshlands] (written 1948, published 1956), a piece on Polish partisans in the years 1944/1945, somewhat similar to *Lake Constance*, back then still unpublished but widely read – in typewritten copies – amongst the so-called magic circles. Their friendship has become one of the legends of the literary life in the Polish People's Republic as the friendship of two most widely read authors. It lasted almost thirty years, until Dygat's death (in 1978). There was a one year break, caused by the aforementioned chapter of *The Hourglass...* Dygat took offence at Konwicki for revealing some private anecdotes.

"He taught me that literature counts for as much as anybody is willing to read," wrote Konwicki about Dygat in *The Hourglass...*, "[...] that literature does not grant anyone any special rights or privileges; it does not sanctify anyone, or bring anyone closer to God."<sup>4</sup>

Citing the author of *Pożegnania* [Farewells] (1948) and *Disneyland* (1965), in *The Hourglass...* Konwicki challenges "Polish literary critics, Polish magicians of the Word who entrapped the meaning in the ritual and their own sensitivity in the air of false mission," to quote Janina Lubaś-Cunnelly in a review published in *Wiadomości* [The News].<sup>5</sup> The section of the book devoted to Dygat is substantially polemical with the tradition of literature as a mission – in this particular case, polemical with accepted portrayals of writers. The author depicts his writer-friend not as someone sitting at his desk with an inspired expression on his face, but rather as an aging man, extremely amusing, full of petty foibles. The reader is presented with over a dozen hilarious anecdotes of

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<sup>4</sup> Tadeusz Konwicki, *Kalendarz i klepsydra. Kompleks polski* [The Hourglass and the Calendar. Polish Complex], Warszawa: Agora, 2010, p. 92.

<sup>5</sup> Janina Lubaś-Cunnelly, "Polskie *dzienniki poufne*" [Polish Confidential Diaries], *Wiadomości* 31 (1976). *Wiadomości* was published in London by Polish emigre circles.

“the monster” adventures – some related to him trying to lose weight, some offering suggestions at how to make erotic life less monotonous. There is also a story of a trip to some literary convention in Budapest Dygat and Konwicki took as representatives of Polish literary world. The trip ended with a precipitated return to Warsaw, as the delegates had not found the venue of the international convention.

Such a “brief” on Dygat, a “friendly” and “amicably teasing,”<sup>6</sup> was in Konwicki’s intention a model for an author who was paying homage to his “Master’s” rules: “to be nonchalant about the writing business; [...] to disregard the outward attributes of the trade, [...]”<sup>7</sup> It is a portrayal sketched “according to his own aesthetic and philosophical principles” set by Dygat.<sup>8</sup> At least that is a claim of the “disciple” himself, laid seven years later in yet another *silva rerum* – *Moonrise, Moonset*, while spinning more tales about his friend (who had passed away by then), including the unexpected offence he had taken on his “disciple” in 1976.<sup>9</sup> It ought to be noted, however, in order to present the idea of the “programme” chapter of *The Hourglass...* in its entirety, that it indeed ended with a touch of self-mockery: sharing with the reader the author’s own compromising adventure, which – according to Konwicki’s reasoning – was to compensate, albeit partially, Dygat’s moral damage and to satisfy his philosophy of a non-prophetic nature of art. Konwicki recounted the humiliation he experienced one day in a police van (“I was punched”); the episode was, however, removed from the first few editions of the book by censorship. The fragment was restored in more recent editions. To spite the censorship, Konwicki included the fragment in *Nowy Świat i okolice* [New World Avenue and Vicinity] (1986; American edition from 1991). With this self-mocking story complementing the ironic portrayal of a friend, the chapter would have exerted an altogether different impact in the first editions.

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Dygat’s “aesthetic and philosophical guidelines” refer to the rule of “refutation,” to use Konwicki’s phrase from *Pół wieku czyśćca* [Half a Century of Purgatory] (1986). While stating that he rejects “everything that is artificial, fake, and habitual” and professes “refutation” as his principle – the writer admits that this kind of attitude is very close to the genre of literature represented by Dygat.<sup>10</sup> Artistic programme encoded in *The Hourglass...*, the book which begins with a vegetable metaphor: “We wear so many layers of spoof, like flakes of an onion. Some of us look like old artichokes,”<sup>11</sup> is based

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<sup>6</sup> Konwicki, *Kalendarz...*, p. 91.

<sup>7</sup> Konwicki, *Moonrise, Moonset*, transl. Richard Lourie, New York: Farrar Straus & Giroux, 1986, p. 20.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>9</sup> To read on Dygat’s reaction to his portrayal see: Kazimierz Kutz, “Przyjaźń, dla której warto było się urodzić” [Friendship Worth Being Born For], *Tak i nie* 23 (1984), pp. 219–292.

<sup>10</sup> Stanisław Bereś, *Pół wieku czyśćca. Rozmowy z Tadeuszem Konwickim* [Half a Century of Purgatory. Conversation with Tadeusz Konwicki], Kraków: Wydawnictwo Literackie, 2003, p. 243.

<sup>11</sup> Konwicki, *Kalendarz...*, p. 6.

on the principle of "refutation." The above multi-genre form of the book appears to be the best construction for such declarations. *Silva rerum* represents but a block of forms considered "exponents as well as rebellious carriers of a certain aesthetic orientation, hostile [...] to classicist ideals."<sup>12</sup>

Literature cannot, for various reasons, depict the world in an objective fashion. Therefore, the author remains provocatively subjective throughout the book. He is being provocative because not only does he not pretend to hold any objective opinions, but he openly manifests his lack of objectivity, thus undermining his own stance as a critic. "I remember very clearly the film entitled *Struktura kryształu* [The Structure of Crystal] (1969) by Krzysztof Zanussi. A nice film, stirring, likeable. I remembered it for its bizarre plot, which I will now repeat in a biased fashion,"<sup>13</sup> so begins the fragment which challenges the logic of depicting Polish intelligentsia as proposed by the young film director. By emphasizing that he would summarize the film plot in "a biased fashion," Konwicki perversely alerts the reader to himself by weakening the impact of his own arbitrary opinion. Obviously, we can assume that we are dealing with a tactical self-mockery, that Konwicki is using this tactics in order to reassert his position. He preempts the attacks of his adversaries by showing them that he is perfectly aware they would soon accuse him of being biased. By making such an introduction, he deprives them of their case, or at least makes the case much more difficult to prove. Such statements provoking contestation that one must not believe the author who can so skillfully rid the opponent of his case, make the act of alerting the reader to Konwicki all the more effective. The irony shoots up to an altogether different level, adding points to the programme of an author who detests moralism and moralists.

That is exactly why Konwicki keeps provoking his reader so eagerly by reasserting – as in conclusion of a chapter devoted to Wilhelm Mach, another writer-friend: "I do not care in the least if you choose to believe me."<sup>14</sup>

Konwicki interviewed by Edward Zyman says:

My self-embarrassments are based on the following concept – I tell the reader: please, take any information from me which agrees with your spirituality, your moral system, your aesthetic code; but be careful! [...] I am of an opinion that a contemporary reader must be bright and sharp, must see everything around him, and choose from this enormous amount of information and impulses only those which agree with his insides. I help the reader through the process, I alert him to my opinions, but these are my opinions. The reader must approach them with a certain dose of criticism.<sup>15</sup>

<sup>12</sup> Stefania Skwarczyńska, "Kariera literacka form rodzajowych bloku silva" [Literary Career of the Silva Rerum Genre], in: eiusdem, *Wokół teatru i literatury. Studia i szkice* [On Theatre and Literature. Studies and Outlines], Warszawa: Pax, 1970, p. 182.

<sup>13</sup> Konwicki, *Kalendarz...*, pp. 77–78.

<sup>14</sup> Ibidem, p. 22.

<sup>15</sup> "Wiem, że jestem nieprzewidywalny" [I Know I Am Unpredictable], Konwicki in conversation with Edward Zyman, *Przegląd Polski*, Nov. 15, 2002. See also remarks by Ewa Starosta in her review of *New World Avenue...*: "Zamiast powieści" [Instead of a Novel], *Życie Literackie* 7 (1987), p. 10: "Reading can

To approach with criticism, yet only having carefully listened to and reflected on the author’s opinions, and assuming a minimum of goodwill towards him.

Assuring the reader’s goodwill is the foremost ambition of Konwicki when he is verbalizing his opinions. He does admit that much in *The Hourglass...* itself, when he elaborates on the sentence from the aforementioned portrayal of Mach in another section of the book (devoted to Tadeusz Borowski): “I am not authoritative, I am not to be believed, but with a modicum of goodwill I can be trusted.”<sup>16</sup> By prompting us to be sceptical about his own words, this “disciple” of Dygat renders the modicum of goodwill a condition of mutual understanding. He also provides a requisite for the most basic thing, and yet for a writer often difficult to achieve in a sufficient degree – his reader’s attention. Years later in a conversation with Adam Michnik Konwicki says:

Clearly, I was never really bothered about my readers accepting what I had to say. I felt like grabbing the reader by his throat, forcing him to participate in this artistic-intellectual séance which I myself had designed. That is why I tried to use a somewhat aggressive language, one which would not let the reader remain indifferent. I wanted the reader to keep reading. And I wanted him to trust me.<sup>17</sup>

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It should be noted here that Romantic ironists had already announced they were not able to depict the world objectively long before Dygat or Konwicki. However, the condition of literature at the time of Konwicki was entirely different from the one at the times of, say, Juliusz Słowacki. When the poet argued with his Muse in *Podróż do Ziemi Świętej z Neapolu* [Trip to the Holy Land from Naples], when he derided and mocked her, the Muse was still there, alive, despite feeling ill-treated. She functioned as an emblem of the classic convention to which Słowacki referred to: he was perhaps ambivalent about this convention, but it was imperative to him not to lose the sight of it. He felt its presence. In Konwicki’s *oeuvre* there is no Muse, just as there are no old, dignified conventions and no “tradition” itself. It seems as if at the very beginning of his literary piece, Konwicki is leaning towards the Muse, only to turn his back on her in a provocative way, to mark her absence. “Where shall I begin?” – goes the first sentence of *The Hourglass...* Neither Homer nor Byron would have ever come up with such a sentence. But now there are no conventions, so by extension there is no one to address the invocation to (even if it were as deeply ironic as Słowacki’s invocation). All we are left with is the author’s “I,” evoked in the very first sentences of *The Hourglass...*: “Perhaps with the sign of the cross, or with a curse? I am superstitious. More and more

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have a positive effect on the psychological well-being of those whose well-being, a sense of perfect orientation in anything, including literature, is due to their ignorance or naivety.”

<sup>16</sup> Konwicki, *Kalendarz...*, pp. 77–78.

<sup>17</sup> “Uchodzę za przekornego” [They Think I Am Contrary], Konwicki in conversation with Adam Michnik, *Konteksty. Polska Sztuka Ludowa* 3–4 (2010), pp. 72–79.

so.”<sup>18</sup> Traditional shape of literature, as well as its role, is in shatters. How did it happen? Dygat made an attempt at answering this question in his novel entitled *Podróż* [Journey] from the 1950s – a very important book for Konwicki, who wrote a screenplay based on it, together with Jerzy Kawalerowicz (the project eventually fell through due to the withdrawal of foreign producers). To express his state of mind, the narrator says at the beginning of the novel:

After all that had happened in the previous centuries on our planet, I felt, as its resident, dead bored with tradition. I could not help thinking that each beauty, to a greater or lesser extent, was a propaganda of some system of power, *that it serves to obscure the truth about mass murders, about crimes and villainy of individuals whose exaggerated ambitions, petty desires, power of absolute cruelty, with addition of various aspirations straight from an operetta allowed them to do whatever they pleased to other people. Obviously, people would rebel, from time to time, and smack the individual on the head. But even amongst the rebels, there will always be someone endowed with an exaggerated ambition, petty desires, and aspirations straight from an operetta, who feels that the success of dealing with the individual is due entirely to him, and so he seizes the power over his rebellious brethren and the story begins anew.*<sup>19</sup>

No wonder that the censorship intervened with that very fragment of the novel, disposing of the sentences marked with italics.

In *The Hourglass...*, Konwicki, too, shows us the condition of literature and art “[a]fter all that had happened in the previous centuries on our planet.” The issue here is the vicious “instrumentalization” of the category of beauty, as shown in the censored sentences from Dygat’s novel. Literature has sold itself, literature is discredited, tainted, enslaved, and fallen – and as such, it does not possess the rights it used to, and neither do the people who create it. How can one talk of writer’s predestination under such conditions?

In *The Hourglass...*, Konwicki repeatedly demonstrates “corruption” of literature to his readers – sometimes allusively, sometimes directly, at other times even in a jocular tone. At times *en passant*, as in the case of the prologue to a story of a horrendous love drama, i.e. a swan’s love for a goose in the pond next to the Radziejowice Palace. He writes of close relations between men of letters and “mediocre dignitaries” at the Palace: “[...] we played a very complicated and hazardous game of being present at the governmental salons.”<sup>20</sup> He also demonstrates the impossibility to speak freely, so humiliating for a writer, and related to the nature of literary communication.

A reader of the early editions of *The Hourglass...* knew that Konwicki himself selected the material and artistic measures to present it, and that later on some cuts were made –

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<sup>18</sup> Konwicki, *Kalendarz...*, p. 7.

<sup>19</sup> Archiwum Akt Nowych, Główny Urząd Kontroli Prasy, Publikacji i Widowisk, call number 427 (34/8), file 124. See: Stanisław Dygat, *Podróż* [Journey], Warszawa: Państwowy Instytut Wydawniczy, 1958, p. 8.

<sup>20</sup> Konwicki, *Kalendarz...*, p. 8.

in all likelihood there was a good number of such cuts. The reader was informed not merely in the editorial note with an annotation referring to the time it had taken from the moment the text was typeset till it was printed; the author himself informed him about it by way of allusions and suggestions interwoven in the text. Konwicki not so much anticipated that many fragments would be cut out from the text; he announced that numerous fragments would not appear, because he had been restrained – i.e., he had restrained himself – as he indicated at the very beginning that he would not reveal the “whole truth” in the book simply because he was not able to write without the intention of publishing what he wrote.<sup>21</sup>

The author points out to the very reason why not everything can be said in the book. He also refers to his relation with this reason in one of the most widely known fragments of the book. “I have learned how to function in the treadmill. I doubt I would be able to function freely anymore,” he says, affectionately admitting to becoming intimate with his reader, so prone to intervene with the text and to make decisions for him.<sup>22</sup> While stating how wonderful everything is, Konwicki admits that he is a slave at the treadmill. He therefore uses self-mockery again, ridding the society of wrong assumptions about the prophetic dimension of literature.

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It does not mean, however, that he challenges the legitimacy of dealing with art. Lubaś-Cunnelly, the literary critic already quoted here, also emphasized that by discussing the issue of fight in *The Hourglass...* with a “false mission”:

Doubting the prophetic aspect of literature does not equal doubting the very sense of literature. Konwicki aims more at giving literature back its proper perspective.<sup>23</sup>

The programme of recalling the fact that art is mired, encoded in *The Hourglass...*, is an example and proof that Konwicki believed in the sense of literary work. Not only that, it is widely known that he believed in the basic role of art in shaping the moral condition of a society. He will write a politically engaged novel entitled *Mala Apokalipsa* [A Minor Apocalypse] several years later, and later still *Moonrise, Moonset* in which section dedicated to the author of *Journey* is the most powerful piece in which he acknowledges the regime. The system which he strongly believed was responsible for Dygat’s death.

Above all, Konwicki believed that art had an invigorating effect on people (even politically engaged art). Towards the end of his life, he wrote a peculiar postscript to

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<sup>21</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>22</sup> Ibidem, p. 123.

<sup>23</sup> Lubaś-Cunnelly, op. cit., see n. 5.

his earlier portrayals of Dygat in which he recalled that his Master also believed in the sense and ethos of art:

Aside from everything else, he placed enormous demands on himself as a writer. He respected the word. Staś [diminutive form of Stanisław – P.K.] might have felt embarrassed, had he heard this. He had respect for the function of a word, for its aesthetics, for its particular power. [...] He had a talent which was partially made up of aesthetic demands he had placed on himself.<sup>24</sup>

Translated by Zofia Sochańska

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<sup>24</sup> Tadeusz Konwicki, *W pośpiechu* [In a Hurry], in conversation with Przemysław Kaniecki, Wołowiec: Czarne, 2011, p. 210.



Zbigniew Kloch

***De amicitia: A Few Comments  
about the Term and Its Usage  
in Culture***

F		K		JURKU
R	PSI	ADSI	UEA	I U
I	N	E		N AMICA
JERZY	N	PODRUGA	P	
N	F	G	U	E C
D	PRZY	JACIEL		KLOCH
	Z	O M L		U
	B	U I L	BARAT	AMI
V	R	E U	A	
E	I	END	FILOS	
N	G	D DRUG	I	O
		O S	POT	
	JAN	S	K	JAN
		TOMODASHI	E	
	KLOCH	I U	D	DRUH
J	O	Z T	B	
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Zbigniew Kloch

## *De amicitia*: A Few Comments about the Term and Its Usage in Culture

I intend to talk here about friendship, the word, not the phenomenon it denotes. About the meanings and understandings that shaped the sense of the word in various times and languages, rather than about what is friendship in general, what is meant by this concept, how people understood it and when. Still, words model the image of the world, name the reality in a determined manner; speaking about meanings, necessarily, we say something about the mentality of the users of the language, about this *ego* which is part of what is said. I wish then to talk about the word *friendship* from the perspective of semantics, about selectively observed usages of the word, primarily in Polish, and in various periods, but also in other European languages, in their contemporary varieties. In any case, my exploration of the word will be quite incomplete, rather intentionally selective: may the reader forgive me.

### I.

I am not certain whether friendship is a universal experience but intuitively, I would favour such a claim. Surely, the phenomenon is very old, discussed as it was by philosophers and orators: Aristotle, Cicero, and others. Friendship was considered as a virtue (Aristotle) and was debated in moral categories. Latin *amicus* implies a particular and for that reason exceptional relation between people. Aristotle argues in *Nicomachean Ethics*, book 8, that we could be friends only with someone we know, while we could be favourably inclined also towards people we do not know. Friendship implies then a certain awareness in the relations with the Other, with someone else, it also assumes a form of contact.<sup>1</sup> Friendship defines relations with a person based on experiencing and giving something good; a person who only takes cannot be a friend. Aristotle views friendship as ontologically necessary in the sense of defining our humanity: it provides us, to a significant degree, with our identity. Love does not require the same symmetry

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<sup>1</sup> See Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, with in an English transl. by Harris Rackham, Cambridge, Mass.–London: Harvard University Press (Loeb), 1999, book VIII, pp. 450–515.

of reasons as friendship, even though it remains quite incomplete without it; friendship on the other hand, when deprived of symmetry, simply fails. Their nature is different: “It seems that love is a passion and that friendship is a habit.”<sup>2</sup> In spite of clearly identified differences, the ancient, Roman understanding of friendship (*amicitia*) shares the semantic component also present in the term *love*, but absent in the majority of European languages today. To be someone’s friend, according to Aristotle, means in a sense, to love. Stereotyped representations of friendship seem to confirm such claim: to maintain friendly relations with someone imply a very close relationship. Internet semiotizations of the word *friendship* found in Wikipedia (a source of knowledge popular today<sup>3</sup>) present images of people shown in close proximity (paintings by Louise Catherine Breslau, Herman Keran, Jerry Weiss, photographs of girls playing at the seashore, of young men watching a sports game). The concept of friendship covers friendliness and proximity as a relation symbolically represented with simple visual means. At the same time, the relation appears disinterested.

In his treatise *De amicitia*, Cicero argues that being “an expression of innate tendencies in people of cognate characters,”<sup>4</sup> it must not be based on benefits. It is an agreement in all matters, a form of community, being together, an existence of two people as a unity: “What is sweeter than to have someone with whom you may dare discuss anything as if you were communing with yourself?”<sup>5</sup>

Friendship establishes the concept of community that provides people with identity. Community in a similar meaning to that of Zygmunt Bauman who used this concept to describe relations between people belonging to communities of long ago, which in principle do not exist anymore. Community, co-existence in this meaning relates to archaic awareness and from the point of view of communication appears also pre-established: it is a kind of understanding occurring outside of verbal explanation:

Understanding on which relies community, precedes all agreements and disagreements. Such understanding is not a finish line but a starting point of any connection. This “reciprocal, binding emotion” – a proper and true will of those who proceed together; and because of such and only such understanding, people in a community “remain in principle in agreement in spite of all divisive moments.”<sup>6</sup>

Accordingly, friendship establishes community, a particular co-existence, exceptional or one of its varieties, co-existence implemented in space or in another possible manner.

<sup>2</sup> Arist. *Eth. Nic.* 8.5.1157b28–29, quoted in the translation from Paul Schollmeier, *Other Selves: Aristotle on Personal and Political Friendship*, Albany, N.Y.: State University of New York Press, 1994, p. 42.

<sup>3</sup> See <http://pl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Przyja%C5%BA%C5%84> (consulted April 1, 2015).

<sup>4</sup> See the Polish translator’s preface to the treatise in: Marcus Tullius Cicerone, *Pisma filozoficzne*, vol. IV, *O przyjaźni*, transl. Wiktor Kornatowski, comm. Kazimierz Leśniak, Warszawa: PWN, 1963, p. 61.

<sup>5</sup> Cicero, *De senectute, De amicitia, De divinatione*, with an English transl. by William Armistead Falconer, Cambridge, Mass.–London: Harvard University Press (Loeb), 1996, p. 131.

<sup>6</sup> Zygmunt Bauman, *Wspólnota: w poszukiwaniu bezpieczeństwa w niepewnym świecie*, Polish transl. Janusz Margański, Kraków: Wydawnictwo Literackie, 2008 (ed. pr. orig. 2000 UK, 2001 USA), p. 17.

These elements of meaning occur also in the semantics of friendship in different, often far removed languages. Dictionaries of the Polish language, older and more recent, demonstrate it clearly.

2.

*Słownik staropolski* [Dictionary of Old-Polish] records the concept of friendship as being together, feeling together, an exceptional union of people; a friend is someone “who favours another, is well intentioned towards another, loyal, makes sacrifices for another, offers friendship with devotion.”<sup>7</sup> This dictionary and several other old dictionaries recording meaning of words by now modified in the case of friendship also quote Aristotle about a friend being “a single soul dwelling in two bodies.” A friend – *przyjaciel* in Polish – is someone who is favourable – in Polish *sprzyja*: it appears that the old etymology survived here including the same semantic element, as in the words “accept,” “receive” – in Polish *przyjąć, sprzyjać, być przyjmowanym* – “to be received.” In this dictionary, an alternate meaning of “friend” is “someone who has a passion for something, a lover.” More recently and even today, we would say rather – fan, amateur (of art, literature). The link between “friendship” (*przyjaźń*) and “being favourable” (*sprzyjanie*) is highlighted by Halina Zgółkowska (Polish linguist) as an etymological connection.<sup>8</sup> If that is so, and this tendency is recorded in many dictionaries, the semantics of the word “friendship” (*przyjaźń*) include primarily elements of meaning describing a relationship, action for someone’s good not against it, as in the case of the word “hate” (*nienawiść*). Old-Polish lexicographer Samuel Linde quotes “friendliness” (*przyjacielskość*) as a word connected to “friendship,” in the sense of “friendly inclination” (*przyjacielska przychylność*). In Jan Karłowicz’s, Adam Kryński’s and Władysław Niedźwiedzki’s (famous Polish lexicographers) dictionaries, a friend is defined fairly typically: “a person favourable to someone, living with someone in friendship, a companion” [“człowiek sprzyjający komuś, żyjący z nim w przyjaźni, druh”].<sup>9</sup> Mirosław Bańko, contemporary lexicographer, on the other hand (blog posted on November 14, 2011) says that etymologically “companionship” (*družba*) “[...] means ‘friendship,’ and also ‘a group of people linked by friendship.’”<sup>10</sup> This second meaning generated a third: “friend” – *druh*, later acquiring a narrower meaning of “friend of the groom in a wedding ceremony, the best man.”<sup>11</sup> Definitions are often

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<sup>7</sup> *Słownik staropolski*, vols. 1–11, ed. Stanisław Urbańczyk, Wrocław et al.: Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich, 1953–2002, [www.rcin.org.pl/publication/39990](http://www.rcin.org.pl/publication/39990) (consulted June 1, 2015).

<sup>8</sup> *Praktyczny słownik współczesnej polszczyzny*, vol. 34, ed. Halina Zgółkowska, Poznań: Kurpisz, 2001, p. 233.

<sup>9</sup> See *Słownik języka polskiego*, vols. 1–6, ed. Samuel Bogumił Linde, Warszawa: Drukarnia XX Piątów, 1807–1814, s.v., see also *Słownik języka polskiego*, ed. Samuel Bogumił Linde, Warszawa: PIW, 1951 (third, photo-offset edition), pp. 638–639; *Słownik języka polskiego*, vol. V, eds. Jan Karłowicz, Adam Kryński, Władysław Niedźwiedzki, Warszawa: Nakładem prenumeratorów i Kasy im. Mianowskiego, w drukarni “Gazety Handlowej,” 1912, p. 294.

<sup>10</sup> See [www.sjp.pwn.pl/szukaj/przyja%20C5%BA%20C5%84.html](http://www.sjp.pwn.pl/szukaj/przyja%20C5%BA%20C5%84.html) (consulted June 1, 2015).

<sup>11</sup> *Ibidem*.

tautological, depending on the rationale of the dictionary, the time it was compiled, but the semantic elements of words from the group “friendship” usually highlight the same features of meaning.

*Słownik polszczyzny XVI wieku* [Dictionary of Sixteenth-Century Polish] provides an abundant documentation of the discussed word and of its many derivatives. The whole entry takes up thirty odd pages, from 222 to 254; it lists inflexions of the Polish language of that time assembled in the dictionary, sources of documentation, definitions, and references to those earlier ones, e.g. from Linde’s dictionary.<sup>12</sup> A cursory search on the Internet of the usage of the word in old dictionaries confirms the belief that it was then used frequently; it formed phraseological connections, many of which survived until today. It was also productive in metaphorical constructs; it described relations of nearness, relations between relatives but also between nations, states: “[...] to consider someone a friend of the Republic.”<sup>13</sup> *Słownik polszczyzny XVI wieku*, describing inflexive constructs in use at the time, notes the following: “[...] in the vocative case (often expresses familiarity towards people of lower rank or younger; sometimes used as a conventional polite address): *Sir, friend (panie przyjacielu)* [...]”<sup>14</sup> The word functioned already at that time in various situations of expression to which it was closely or loosely connected; the word “friendship” was not only a permanent element of linguistic competency of Polish speakers but also of their communication competency. Since then, a clear functionalization of meaning has been achieved, more about it below. The same dictionary records also the noun *przyjacielstwo* (“friendship,” “a group of friends”) surely still in use but rarely, as well the existence of the feminine form – *przyjaciółka* (“friend” of the feminine gender). Derivative words were also in use, such as *przyjazność* (“friendliness”) and *przyjaźliwość* (“display of friendly behaviour,” “friendliness”),<sup>15</sup> the former still being used, the latter rather absent from today’s usage. *Przyjaciel* (“friend”) is a word relating to a determined system of values, reflecting a desirable image of the world. A friend is someone who, as we said, *sprzyja* (“has good intentions”), who is needed, not only in a broad meaning of the word, but in its everyday usage.

A dictionary is a cultural text in the sense of being a message addressed to various target groups within society and also to future generations. The function of dictionaries as cultural texts intensifies in certain historical periods, when either the culture itself, or the language are threatened. It was the case during the times of partitions of Polish territory among the three neighbouring states, when Polish intellectual élite distracted itself playing the “game of synonym.”<sup>16</sup> A dictionary is a cultural text being a certain

<sup>12</sup> *Słownik polszczyzny XVI wieku*, vols. 1–36, eds. Stanisław Bąk et al., Wrocław et al.: Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich, 1966–, [www.kpbc.umk.pl/publication/17781](http://www.kpbc.umk.pl/publication/17781) (consulted June 1, 2015).

<sup>13</sup> *Ibidem*, vol. 33, p. 230.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 224.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 234.

<sup>16</sup> I discussed this in the book *Spory o język* [Debates about Language], Warszawa: IBL, 1995, as well as the question of dictionaries as cultural texts. Dr. Ewa Rudnicka also wrote a paper about dictionaries as cultural texts for meetings of the group “Laboratory for Semiotics” at the Faculty of “Artes Liberales” in March 2015. I would like to express my thanks for her help in using online versions of dictionaries I discuss in the present paper.

collection of names related to the world, indicating also a reality of values: some meanings are highlighted, others passed over, or restricted. Dictionaries record a certain state of linguistic and social awareness. A dictionary is also a text understood as a normative message, it provides words (at least for a time) with a canonical version of meaning. And language – according to Émile Benveniste – is an “interpreter” of society,<sup>17</sup> i.e. it allows the community to recognize itself and to communicate in a specific manner. Dictionaries may have different structure, may use different definitions and refer to a different pool of examples. A dictionary allows to determine with reasonable accuracy who could be considered friend at the time of its publication, what could be expected from a friend. A dictionary not only reflects awareness but it models it and reconstructs a certain linguistic image of the world, proposing it at the same time.

3.

Linguistics centred on semantics assume that the manner in which a language categorizes the world reflects the culture of the nation using that language. Anna Wierzbicka believes that semantics constitute the core of linguistics. They are also a source of knowledge about ethnography and psychology of speech and of knowledge about culture. We may also add here sociolinguistics that point to the linguistic categorizations of social awareness of groups creating different cultural styles. Every ethnic language and its cultural variations categorize the world in a specific manner, manifested also in providing words with specific semantic features characteristic for the national culture reflecting its traits in the language.

There are key-words opening mentality, national culture and defined by its rules of interpersonal relations; analysis of these words allows to grasp the character of the culture and language where the words occupy a special place corresponding to the cultural awareness manifested in the language. No single ethnic language enjoys the monopoly for a universal categorization of the world because each of them introduces semantic elements providing its nation with a cultural identity. Wierzbicka analyzes from precisely this point of view models of “friendship” coded in English, Russian, Australian English, and Polish.<sup>18</sup> I summarize, interpret, and comment the results of research conducted by this author.

The contemporary English uses a series of linguistic categories to describe interpersonal relations corresponding to the concept of “friendship.” The basic among them is “friendship” and the word “friend” connected to this lexical unit. There are also expressions “close friends,” “true friends” – marginally also “dear friends” or “dearest friends.” Each of these expressions displays a specific semantic tone, strictly linked to

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<sup>17</sup> See Émile Benveniste, *Problème de linguistique générale*, vol. 1, Paris: Gallimard, 1966; about the image of the world in language see: Jerzy Bartmiński, *Językowe podstawy obrazu świata*, Lublin: Wydawnictwo UMCS, 2007.

<sup>18</sup> Anna Wierzbicka, *Understanding Cultures through Their Key Words: English, Russian, Polish, German, and Japanese*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997, pp. 32–124.

the model of culture propagated in a concrete variety of the English language. None of these meanings may be treated as a non-culture specific, universal description of what should be considered as “friendship.” Argues Wierzbicka, repeatedly denying the existence of ethnocentrism of the English language:

But it is not true that ‘throughout cultures’ ‘friends’ have been recognized as an important social or psychological category. Taxonomies of human relations are just as culture-specific, and language-specific, as are taxonomies of emotions, or of speech acts, and the concept encoded in the present-day English word ‘friend’ has no privileged status in them. It certainly does not represent a constant, a human universal. In fact [...], even within English the meaning of the word ‘friend’ has changed in the course of the centuries, thus reflecting a profound change in the conceptualization of human relations and in the patterns of those relations themselves.<sup>19</sup>

The Australian English produced a different expression, *mate*, semantically similar (but not identical) to the Russian word *tovarišč*, describing people who for some reason do the same things in the same space and time, and existing because of that in a specific relation. The concept *mate* does not as a rule imply the necessity of mutual confidences, a semantic component present in the traditional understanding of the word *friend*, a certain type of intimacy, *friend* on the other hand includes in the older meaning such semantic components, as well as elements of meaning indicating expectations of willingness to help and a strong emotional connection.

Wierzbicka’s subtle analyzes specify precisely semantic nuances of different usages of the word *friend* in contemporary English and its regional varieties.<sup>20</sup> I would like to stress that in the older meanings of the word *friendship* existed a semantic element pointing to the exceptional character of the relationship, its emotional character: the meaning of the word *friendship* included an element similar semantically to the word *love*. Today, in the majority of European languages, *friend* has no such connotation. It is someone – in the casual usage – who wants to be with another person in a determined situation, for that reason the word *friend* in contemporary English may be used to describe someone with whom one may play golf, barbecue, collaborate at the workplace. Obviously, as Wierzbicka pointed out, there is a number of adjectives modifying and modelling the meaning of the word. Wierzbicka’s conclusions allow to understand (a man of my age) how is it possible that a user of social media asked about the number of his friends may answer: “I have 1243,” referring to the number of his “views” or “likes.” It is the meaning of the word identified by the author as *friend* (2) and paraphrased with formulas: “I know this person well,” “I want to be with this person often,” “I want to do

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<sup>19</sup> Ibidem, p. 33.

<sup>20</sup> Wierzbicka provides a complete set of semantic nuances of the word *friend* in various languages, op. cit., pp. 120–124. The book written in English is easily accessible and I see no need to quote Wierzbicka’s analyzes in detail.



certain things with this person often.”<sup>21</sup> This meaning is modelled by the conventions of casual, contemporary English.

*Friendship* in Russian has a completely different semantic range and cultural references. Here, the pattern of friendship is exceptionally semanticized – this is connected, at least in part, to a categorization and attribution of values to interpersonal relations in this culture (I continue here to report and interpret Wierzbicka’s linguistic research). In Russian there are many categorizations of interpersonal relations closer or more remotely connected to friendship: *drug*, *prijatelj*, *tovarišč*, *rodnyje*, *znakomyj*; these correspond approximately to English “close friend,” “friend,” or to the word *znajomy* (“close acquaintance,” “someone familiar”) in Polish. The word *podruga* creates a rather particular semantic situation, indicating emotional links between women.<sup>22</sup> Polish equivalent would be possibly *psiapsuła*, *kumpela* (Wierzbicka does use this semantic paraphrase of the meaning). The semantic description of the word *drug*, besides elements occurring also in other languages to define a friendly relationship, includes meanings absent elsewhere. Semantics of the word *drug* include “intense and intimate face-to-face communication and readiness to help.”<sup>23</sup> I will add: always and everywhere, no matter what. A friend in the Russian culture is someone exceptional and the relation of people who call themselves friends is exceptional, it provides them with identity, it is an existentially constitutive relation.

The Polish word *przyjaciół* also includes meanings indicating relations of intimate understanding and expectation of assistance. And yet, *przyjaźń* may be broken, its promise may be unfulfilled but the consequences would not be as dire as in the Russian culture. Other words from this semantic group, such as *znajomy* (“close acquaintance,” *rodzina* – “family”), indicate, so to say, a certain loosening of the friendly relation, or replace it by specifying family connections. And Wierzbicka concludes:

[...] Polish culture places a greater emphasis on different types of interpersonal relations than Anglo culture but does not go quite as far in this direction as Russian culture. This is consistent with the implications of the different systems of expressive derivation of names, with both Polish and Russian systems being much more highly developed than the English one, but with Russian having an even more elaborate system than Polish.<sup>24</sup>

Lexis, vocabulary, dictionaries describe the world using names. Yet language is not nomenclature, a set of labels put on reality, because each of ethnic languages names the world in its own manner; Ferdinand de Saussure, Edward Sapir, and Benjamin Lee Whorf<sup>25</sup> knew about it long time ago. Reality is constantly changing, its linguistic names

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<sup>21</sup> Ibidem, p. 124.

<sup>22</sup> Ibidem, p. 65.

<sup>23</sup> Ibidem, p. 61.

<sup>24</sup> Ibidem, p. 85.

<sup>25</sup> See Ferdinand de Saussure, *Cours de linguistique générale*, 5ème édition, Paris: Payot, 1955; Edward Sapir, *Language: An Introduction to the Study of Speech*, New York, N.Y.: Bartleby.com, 2000; Benjamin

specialize, broaden or narrow meanings. Appear and disappear. Remain in the realm of passive vocabulary even when they are used but rarely. It seems that this is also the case of the word *przyjaźń* in today's mediatic discourse.

#### 4.

Polish media rarely discuss friendship. It does not qualify as *news*, so it does not appear a newsworthy topic. In its classical sense, friendship is a process that builds relations between people, it does not appear suddenly, unless in the form of a verbal declaration. It requires corroboration (if it is in the old style), it must have a duration, in order to exist. In the Polish media today, friendship is discussed occasionally. Websites, press of a certain kind are full of information about someone who “dał plamę” (“compromised himself”), “miał wpadkę” (“put his foot in it”), “pokazał zbyt dużo” (“has shown too much of himself” – usually “herself”). The world of disposable information colourful on the surface and empty inside treats friendship either as something evident, or obsolete, a non-fashionable word, or possibly even – useless. Friendship is mentioned when someone's words are reported: Vladimir Putin declared at a press conference that Russia acts for the cause of friendship and peace and in principle has no enemies.

Friendship between brother-nations was an important element of propagandistic communication during the times of People's Republic of Poland. Already then, there was a significant dissonance between the use of the word “friendship” in the official party discourse and in casual speech. The Polish researcher of the Newspeak Michał Głowiński in his comments on the words used at that time, quotes a fragment of a conversation pointing to the way the word “friendship” functioned in propaganda and in everyday language, in the context of shortage of butter in grocery stores:

The woman said, there is no butter because friends must have taken it from us. The boy immediately made it more concrete saying that the ‘Ruskis ate it,’ and then added: ‘If they are indeed friends, not only they shouldn't gobble what is ours but rather give us when we need something.’ [...] I was fascinated by [...] the use of the word ‘friends,’ the opposite of meaning given to the word by propaganda. Casual irony makes it possible to talk about friends in contexts requiring rather the word ‘foes.’<sup>26</sup>

Media today luckily do not practice this brand of loyalist rhetoric. If friendship is discussed, it happens in the context of individual, personal events, that someone considers someone else a friend, or that he had many friends. As for example, in a programme dedicated to Władysław Bartoszewski and his many friendships in Poland and abroad,

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Lee Whorf, *Language, Thought, and Reality*, ed. John B. Carroll, New York: Wiley, 1947.

<sup>26</sup> Michał Głowiński, *Marcowe gadanie. Komentarze do słów 1966–1971*, Warszawa: PoMost, 1991, p. 154.

broadcast by the channel TVN24, on April 24, 2015; friendships that characterized the great and outstanding personality of the Professor. A look through several recent issues of *Wysokie Obcasy* [High Heels] (a weekly supplement to the daily *Gazeta Wyborcza*) confirms that the word occurs infrequently. This in a weekly often discussing emotions and interpersonal relations. A search in dictionaries presenting vocabulary of the twentieth century leads to similar conclusions. Witold Doroszewski's dictionary uses the word *friendship* less often than the older dictionaries, the Polish dictionary published by Andrzej Markowski also does not include an elaborate record of the word.<sup>27</sup>

I am not suggesting that the category of friendship became today something marginal or unimportant. Such conclusion would be hasty and erroneous, in any case, there are no simple, isomorphic relations between language and social awareness, between style and ways of speaking and personality.<sup>28</sup> I merely propose, in view of the rare occurrence of the word *friend* in casual linguistic awareness and in the casual usage combined with the fact that the word's online representations indicate stereotyped imagination – to conclude that this level of interest in interpersonal relations is not located in the centre of attention of popular culture where media belong. And when the word does occur, it is most often used in the sense close to today's expressions “dobry, bardzo dobry znajomy” (“good, very good acquaintance”) and to the meaning of the English *friend* (2) rather than to the description of the relations between people forming a community, in Bauman's sense. But in today's casual understanding “friendship” still assumes being together, liking, and acting for someone, at times for the Other, even if under certain aspects this type of relationship is far removed from the ideals of Aristotle and Cicero. In the majority of cases, the word *przyjaciół* remains close to the meaning of the English *friend* (2). In an interview with the son of a former Polish Prime Minister from the times of “socialism with a human face,” we read: “I realized already a few times what my friends were worth” (a clear element of irony modelling the primary meaning of the word), and: “My spouses, two have already passed away, remain my close friends”<sup>29</sup> (friendship as a marker of interpersonal relations).

Semantic changes within the word *friend* in the English language can be surely typical for today's popular culture. Similar to those described by Wierzbicka, semantic changes concern also in part the manner of speaking characteristic for certain social groups in Poland, for young people, they could also be observed in contemporary Italian.<sup>30</sup> Attempting some possibly hasty generalizations, I shall say that today's public discourse about friendship and friends occurs most of all in narratives, in stories designed to highlight the rank, the social position of the speaker. A fictional example but adequate

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<sup>27</sup> See *Słownik języka polskiego*, vol. VII Pri–R, ed.-in-chief Witold Doroszewski, Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN, 1965; *Nowy słownik poprawnej polszczyzny* PWN, ed. Andrzej Markowski, Warszawa: PWN, 1999.

<sup>28</sup> See Émile Benveniste, *Problème de linguistique générale*, vol. 2, Paris: Gallimard, 1972; Edward Sapir, *Culture, Language, and Personality: Selected Essays*, Berkeley–Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1949.

<sup>29</sup> See Maciej Stańczyk, *Spowiedź “czerwonego księcia”*, interview with Andrzej Jaroszewicz, [www.wiadomosci.onet.pl/prasa/andrzej-jaroszewicz-spowiedz-czerwonego-księcia/rt4h6t](http://www.wiadomosci.onet.pl/prasa/andrzej-jaroszewicz-spowiedz-czerwonego-księcia/rt4h6t) (consulted May 15, 2015).

<sup>30</sup> Information about contemporary Italian was provided by Piotr Salwa, an Italian literature scholar.

to the claim: “I’ve known Bronek for years and he has been my friend for ever” (about Bronisław Komorowski, President of the Third Polish Republic). The word *friend* has been also used in situations of public speaking, when, for some reason, it is deemed important to highlight the relations with the person with whom we are in that situation, e.g.: “Dear Jerzy, my friend, I think you’re wrong,” or: “We are not arguing here, Jerzy and I have been friends for a long time.” This type of pronouncement indicates a long-standing, close relationship which we wish to underline as an important element of the public situation of communication. Wierzbicka says that “in English, when the phrase ‘my friend’ is used as a form of address, its use is ironic, sarcastic, or patronizing. One does not address a real friend in this way.”<sup>31</sup> Older dictionaries quoted earlier indicate that already in the sixteenth century, the word *przyjaciół* in the vocative case was used exclusively to people of a lower social rank; my linguistic practice shows that in today’s Polish, such addresses occur, are possible, in a situation when the speaker wants to underline his relations with the person whom he addresses; still, it is usually not done in public. A third typical situation occurs when the use of the discussed word is connected to a declaration or an affirmation of fact, as in: “be my friend,” “but we are friends.”

Semantic evolution of the word *friend* (and *friendship*) in casual and recorded usage in Polish, today and earlier, undoubtedly points to significant changes in the image of the world seen by the users of the language. In today’s educated – high – Polish, friendship displays connotations similar to those in the times of Aristotle and Cicero, it is a relation responsible for community thinking, as proposed by Bauman, but jointly with a whole set of such connotations, it also constructs stereotyped visions of what a friend should be. In casual and community usage (e.g. among Internet users) the meaning of the word *friend* is often modelled by the imagination fuelled by mass culture, popular culture, and semantic templates of English treated as representative of universal concepts and meanings without alternatives.

Warsaw, June 26, 2015

Translated by Elżbieta Olechowska

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<sup>31</sup> Wierzbicka, op. cit., pp. 62–63.

Przemysław Kordos

## **A Friend from Outer Space**



## A Friend from Outer Space

I have never understood people who dismissed science fiction and fantasy literature right away. Yes, SF&F literature has always had a questionable track record. And not without reason: its rare jewels, these extraordinary and unique fantastic stories, are well hidden among hordes of rubbish, pop, feeble texts: poorly written, simplistic, and kitschy. In addition, most SF&F writers, even the distinguished ones, have been quite prolific, choosing surely quantity over quality. It all makes any research into fantastic themes dull, as one has to read through a lot of junk in order to find anything of value. But it is surely worth an effort – the best of SF&F texts exercise our imagination and are in a way a mental lesson in defining fundamental questions as well as in looking for their answers.

Some themes are of course more popular than others. It is relatively easy to speak about and find arguments to discuss such key SF features as “First Contact,” “Faster-Than-Light Travel,” “Alternate History,” or – especially lately – “Zombie Apocalypse,”<sup>1</sup> but my intention was to find a proof that “Interspecies/Interstellar Friendship” exists. And it was far more difficult than I had anticipated. Extra-terrestrials seldom come to us in peace: they conquer, abduct, annihilate. There is rarely any understanding between us and them – they are just too alien – and any initial understanding is later undermined by misunderstandings. Or hidden ulterior motives they have. The resulting relationship is more often that not unequal: it is defined rather as prey-victim, master-slave, or mentor-tutee configuration. Aliens rarely appear as individuals, they seldom have individual names and it all stands in the way of forming friendships.

Fortunately, such instances exist, especially when one broadens the scope and takes into consideration not only hard SF, but also other “fantastic” genres, all the way to fantasy. And beyond literature, to film. Then the list becomes in fact quite long. One can start with Tolkien’s Gimli and Legolas, an elf and a dwarf, representatives of two hostile races, who, after all their adventures, became friends for life. Or – staying in the Middle-earth: Merry and Pippin form a friendship with the ent Treebeard; and

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<sup>1</sup> These terms come from the wonderful and inspiring site TV tropes: <http://tvtropes.org> (consulted July 29, 2015).



Gandalf – who, let us remember, is not human, but one of the Maiar – has countless human and non-human friends, namely elves, dwarves, hobbits, but also eagles (Gwaihir the Wind-Lord) or skin-changers (Beorn).<sup>2</sup> Harry Potter and his circle become friends with Dobby the house-elf,<sup>3</sup> while the Terry Pratchett’s city watch of Ankh-Morpork, with every *Discworld* instalment, diversifies its group of friends, to include humans, dwarves, a troll, a werewolf, a gargoye, an Igor,<sup>4</sup> and a golem, to name just a few.<sup>5</sup>

Humans sometimes become friends with various sentient animal species, like dinosaurs (James Gurney’s *Dinotopia*)<sup>6</sup> or dragons (Anne McCaffrey’s *Dragonriders of Pern*).<sup>7</sup> These friendships clearly explore the rider-steed relationship.

Moving on to “space” examples, we may start with Ransom, the main protagonist of *Out of the Silent Planet* by C.S. Lewis. Ransom befriends Hyoui who is a *hross* and looks like a bipedal otter. Then Ransom is acquainted with a humanoid *sorn* named Augray.<sup>8</sup> An iconic friendship is that between *Star Wars*’ Han Solo and Chewbacca,<sup>9</sup> but the most popular or significant are friendships between aliens and children. *E.T.*<sup>10</sup> comes to mind immediately but it is only one of many examples. In *The Day the Earth Stood Still*<sup>11</sup> a benevolent alien Klaatu befriends a boy named Bobby. This relationship changes positively the way Klaatu perceives the Earth. In Disney’s *The Iron Giant* (1999)<sup>12</sup> the nine-year-old Hogarth domesticates an alien military robot. In the end his mechanical friend sacrifices himself detonating an A-bomb in the orbit, thus saving Hogarth’s city from nuclear destruction. Similarly in *Earth to Echo* (2014)<sup>13</sup> a group of teenagers helps a robot-like entity, persecuted by NASA-type specialists, to come back home. The message here is simple – children are more compassionate than adults, naturally more open and tolerant and they strike friendships much easier. It is both a message to children – do not lose your childlike abilities – as well as to adults – remember who you once were. A lot of messages conveyed through SF&F works borders on spiritual kitsch. These films can also be interpreted in yet another way: it does not matter that you are different – it will not stop you from finding a friend under most improbable circumstances. Being different is therefore not a life sentence as it does not mean necessarily being lonely forever. Such message can be also found in super-hero comic books and in films based

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<sup>2</sup> J.R.R. Tolkien, *The Hobbit*, London: George Allen & Unwin, 1937; J.R.R. Tolkien, *The Lord of the Rings*, London: George Allen & Unwin, 1954–1955.

<sup>3</sup> J.K. Rowling, *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets*, London: Bloomsbury, 1998 (and the other *Harry Potter* novels).

<sup>4</sup> Igor is a hunchback minion servant to a mad genius or a vampire.

<sup>5</sup> Terry Pratchett, *Guards, Guards!*, London: V. Gollancz, 1989 (and other *Discworld* novels that follow City Watch story).

<sup>6</sup> James Gurney, *Dinotopia: Journey to Chandara*, Kansas City: Andrews McMeel Publishing, 2007.

<sup>7</sup> Anne McCaffrey, *Dragonflight*, New York: Ballantine Books, 1968 (and other books in the *Dragonriders of Pern* series).

<sup>8</sup> C.S. Lewis, *Out of the Silent Planet*, London: John Lane, 1938.

<sup>9</sup> *Star Wars*, dir. George Lucas, Lucasfilm Ltd, 1977.

<sup>10</sup> *E.T.*, dir. Steven Spielberg, Universal Pictures, 1982.

<sup>11</sup> *The Day the Earth Stood Still*, dir. Robert Wise, 20<sup>th</sup> Century Fox, 1951.

<sup>12</sup> *The Iron Giant*, dir. Brad Bird, Warner Bros., 1999.

<sup>13</sup> *Earth to Echo*, dir. Dave Green, IFC / Walt Disney Entertainment, 2014.



on them, which are now very much in fashion. Geeks and nerds, the original super-hero audience, once synonymic with loners, losers, and weirdoes, are now in the very centre of pop culture: “geek is the new sexy,” as they proudly proclaim on their T-shirts. But these remarks should be developed in a separate text.

Coming back to more adult-themed extra-terrestrial friendship, there is *Enemy Mine*,<sup>14</sup> a retro film about a friendship between two representatives of species who are at war: humans and reptilian Dracs. Stranded at an alien planet they overcome the hatred and eventually embrace each other’s cultures. Here the inter-species situation is more of a pretext in the lesson about the possibility of mutual understanding regardless of initial differences. Critics point out that the setting is not unlike the one presented in *Hell in the Pacific*,<sup>15</sup> where a Japanese and an American soldier cooperate in spite of the ongoing WWII.

Paradoxically one can find more examples of romantic connections between people and aliens (or other sentient races). Isaac Asimov<sup>16</sup> and Tanith Lee<sup>17</sup> explore for example the girl-loves-robot theme. Countless other instances occur in various SF&F universes: *Harry Potter*, *Star Wars Expanded*,<sup>18</sup> *Twilight*...<sup>19</sup> An extreme one is maybe the one presented in China Miéville’s *Perdido Train Station*,<sup>20</sup> where Isaac Dan der Grimnebulin, the main protagonist, has an insect-woman (*kherpi*) lover: a crimson-coloured female body with a scarab in place of her head.

One of the best examples of interstellar friendship I encountered, a friendship not unlike a platonic love, is described in the short story “Kyrie” (1967) by Poul Anderson.<sup>21</sup> It is a brief story with multiple threads, focusing on physics of supernovas and black holes. Equally interesting is the vision of a lunar-based convent of St. Martha of Bethany. Traditionally, the nuns pray for those who got lost in space and they take care of those who were rejected by space. One of these nuns is Eloise Waggoner, who joined the order after a traumatic experience during a scientific expedition to a supernova. She was not a scientist, but a telepath whose only role during the journey was to communicate with an alien named Lucifer. Her companion belonged to a race called Aurigeans or “Flames,” deep-space entities who were living plasma vortices. He was adventurous and curious and that is why he decided to accompany the human ship on its way to a distant supernova that exploded just few years earlier. Eloise was the only one able to communicate with Lucifer and obviously during these conversations a deep connection developed and flourished between them. They listened together to classical music they

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<sup>14</sup> *Enemy Mine*, dir. Wolfgang Petersen, King Road Entertainment, 1985. I would like to thank Katarzyna Marciniak for bringing up this example.

<sup>15</sup> *Hell in the Pacific*, dir. John Boorman, Selmur Pictures, 1968.

<sup>16</sup> Isaac Asimov, *The Robots of Dawn*, Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1983.

<sup>17</sup> Tanith Lee, *Silver Metal Lover*, New York: Spectra, 1999.

<sup>18</sup> *Star Wars Expanded Universe* is a fictional, “virtual” world that is used as a setting for various films, games, toys, and books. The world is consistent with the story told in the six instalments of *Star Wars* “saga.”

<sup>19</sup> Stephanie Meyer, *Twilight* series, New York: Little, Brown and Company, 2005–2008.

<sup>20</sup> China Miéville, *Perdido Train Station*, London: Macmillan 2000.

<sup>21</sup> Poul Anderson, “Kyrie,” in: eiusdem, *Going for Infinity: A Literary Journey*, New York: Tor Books, 2002, pp. 344–354.

both adored. Through her thoughts, dreams, and memories Lucifer understood what it was to step on a firm ground, what a flower was, what was a sky or a planet. She, on the other hand, experienced through him moving in outer space and tackling energies and fields. They started to be able to connect without words nor concepts, but through feelings and sensations. Eloise observed that their communication began to resemble a bond between close friends or even lovers.

The rest of the crew considered her an outsider. They did not comprehend her gift and that was why they were slightly afraid of her. For them, she was just a tool, a living mechanism to communicate with their out-worldly companion, who whirled and orbited around the space just outside of their ship's hull. They did not understand Lucifer either. For them he was something unthinkable. Almost abominable.

When the ship, in company of Lucifer, jumped out of hyperspace in the proximity of the supernova's remnants, they immediately noticed an incoming deadly danger – a large portion of immensely hot matter on a collision course with the ship. Lucifer decided to avert the catastrophe and through manipulations of the gravitational field changed the matter's trajectory. However, the process depleted his forces; unable to pull out he became entangled in it and fell in the direction of the “naked nucleus” – the remnants of the supernova.

Eloise was devastated, even more so, as Lucifer was sending her his pleas for help. He died promptly – in our time – but in his time, due to the time-matter distortion, his agony was endless. And, as the narrator stated at the end of the story, she was going to hear his desperate pleas forever, as telepathy is not bound by time or distance.

Readers generally praise Anderson for this short piece of prose. Moreover, it was commended by James Gunn, an important SF critic, the author of the influential, multi-volume anthology *The Road to Science Fiction*.<sup>22</sup> Now, half a century after the original publication, the readers sometimes smirk at the seriousness of scientific explanations, outdated and inaccurate, they giggle over the ending, full of unbearable pathos, but they admit that the core of the story remains standing. The friendship, the feeling between so different entities seems possible – or to be more accurate – imaginable, when we recognize that friendship precedes all else and is really the foundation and not a derivative. Anderson points out something else: Lucifer proved his affection in the ultimate way, sacrificing his life for others. “He was more than human,” remarked the ship's captain. For Eloise it is no consolation: a real friendship may be boundless, but its loss is equally infinite and will accompany her forever.

Nick Aires in *The Greenwood Encyclopedia of Science Fiction and Fantasy*<sup>23</sup> rightly states that “[...] friendship is the foundation of humanity, as reflected in innumerable works of science fiction and fantasy. One's species, race, language, sex, or home worlds do not matter, for friendship transcends all.”<sup>24</sup> Of course, when talking about interspecies

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<sup>22</sup> James Gunn, *The Road to Science Fiction*, voll. 1–6, New York–Stone Mountain, GA: New American Library-Wite Wolf, 1977–1998.

<sup>23</sup> Nick Aires, “Friendship”, in: Gary Westfahl, ed., *The Greenwood Encyclopedia of Science Fiction and Fantasy: Themes, Works, and Wonders*, Westport, CT: Greenwood, 2005. pp. 318–320.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 320.

or interstellar friendship, or indeed about extra-terrestrial contact, the word “humanity” suddenly sounds excessively anthropocentric. Such friendship would have to transcend humanism, reaching to... as of now, I cannot think of a better, broader term.



Alicja Lasota-Moskalewska

**Dog and Man –  
Friendship as Old as the Hills**



## Dog and Man – Friendship as Old as the Hills

**D**og is the first animal domesticated in the history of mankind. Dog was domesticated in the upper Palaeolithic period, when humans (*Homo sapiens*) were hunting and gathering. Humans did not know that when the Ice Age receded, the style of living would change, humans would domesticate many animals, would start to live sedentary life, would begin to cultivate land. Man did not know that domesticated animals would provide him with new opportunities: motive power, manure, milk, wool, and fast transport. In upper Palaeolithic period man lived like his forefathers for over a million years, he did not produce food. He had many opportunities, because big animals still populated Earth; mammoth was there, straight-tusked elephant probably was there, too. But life depended on medium-size mammals, such as deer and reindeer. Small carnivores, belonging to the family of *Canidae*, were hunted in areas where forests were scant. For example, at Wilczyce archaeological site, in Sandomierz region, dated for around 13,000 years ago, most animal remains belonged to the Arctic fox. Wolf was not hunted.<sup>1</sup> And probably not because the animal was away, as it lives in the same ecosystem. Opportunities to all the animals belonging to the family *Canidae* are the same, because they have similarly developed senses and locomotion. However, the wolf is large, very strong, and the most aggressive. So maybe it was avoided, as an animal dangerous for hunters.

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Initially, archaeologists did not know that wolf was the ancestor of dog. Great zoologist, Konrad Lorenz, the creator of ethology, Nobel Prize winner, thought that it was the golden jackal, also belonging to the family *Canidae*, smaller than wolf, living in North and East Africa and in Middle and South Asia.<sup>2</sup> In Europe, golden jackals live in the

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<sup>1</sup> Alicja Lasota-Moskalewska, "Fauna Remains," in: Romuald Schild, ed., *Wilczyce: A Magdalenian Winter Hunting Camps in Southern Poland*, Warszawa: Institute of Archaeology and Ethnology, Polish Academy of Sciences, 2014, pp. 105–117.

<sup>2</sup> Konrad Lorenz, *I tak człowiek trafił na psa*, transl. into Polish Anna Maria Linke, Warszawa: Grupa Wydawnicza Foksal, 2013 (ed. pr. in Polish 1976; ed. pr. in German orig. *So kam der Mensch auf den Hund*, 1960).



Balkan Peninsula, reaching up North to Romania and Hungary. This range is important, because jackals did not live in Middle and North Europe or West Asia. And this is where the early remains of dogs were found. It is interesting to note that right now the jackal expands its reach North; it reached Poland.

Skeletal system of dog is most similar to the one of wolf; this applies to all the diagnostic features. Since 1997, studies on mitochondrial DNA of hundreds of dogs of different breeds, hundreds of wolves, coyotes, and jackals were undertaken. Review of this work and of the results is described in the paper by David Grimm in 2015.<sup>3</sup> It was found beyond all doubt that wolf, with its geographical variation resulting from broad distribution, is the ancestor of dog.

Let us look at the image of wolf. Withers height is 85–95 cm, weight 30–75 kg, the body is covered with thick coat.<sup>4</sup> Excellent olfaction and hearing are the characteristic features. Plus the strength and speed. Wolf is a chasing hunter, it hunts in a group, does not quit and will catch the prey even if it chases a big deer or moose. Although wolf is not as fast as cheetah, it is more persistent, it chases for hours and most often it succeeds. Wolves live in groups with distinctive social structure, they hunt together, and share the prey between all the members of the group, respectively to their rank. The group is organized according to a hierarchy; the strongest male is the leader, other members of the group are subordinated. Conflicts are neutralized by acts of subordination of animals standing lower in the hierarchy. This requires laying on the back and showing the belly and gorge. At that time aggressor starts to contain its aggression. Reproduction is only possible in the case of high-level hierarchy animals. This is especially obvious during the times of food deficiencies. Members of the group recognize each other, and sometimes like each other. When hunting in a group, they are perfectly organized, each animal knows, what is its role. Wolves are very intelligent, and their life is one of the highest forms of social organization. We can assume that men had a lot of respect for wolf. First of all, man was afraid of wolf, especially of hungry winter packs. In Mediaeval Europe people organized wolf hunting, and killing a beast was rewarded. In ancient times the idea of werewolf was born; it was believed that some men turned into wolves. Herodotus wrote about this, when he quoted Scythians saying that the Neuri, people living North of Scythians, turn into werewolves for a few days each year (Hdt. 4.105).

Wolves lived all over Europe, in Asia, North America, from the Arctic tundra to forest-steppe and steppe. Now, because of wolf-killing, the distribution has been limited mainly to the mountains in the North. In the case of primary distribution man knew wolf from three continents, and if he had decided to get familiar with the animal, he could domesticate it in all these areas. In the remains, we find confirmation of polytopic domestication in the area of Europe and Asia. Time scope of these primary domestications is rather broad. If we recognize this process based on morphological features, then the oldest dog (but not wolf) bone found up-to-date is a mandible from a man's

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<sup>3</sup> David Grimm, "Down of the Dog," *Science* 348 (2015), pp. 274–279.

<sup>4</sup> Kazimierz Kowalski, Adam Krzanowski, Henryk Kubiak, Barbara Rzebiak-Kowalska, Lucjan Sych, *Mały słownik zoologiczny. Ssaki* [Small Zoological Dictionary. Mammals], Warszawa: Wiedza Powszechna, 1978.



grave located in Bonn-Oberkassel in Germany. The grave was dated to the Magdalenian culture, to around 12,000 years BC. The grave contains a twenty-five-year old woman and a fifty-year old man, and dog's mandible as a sacrifice.<sup>5</sup> The mandible bears marks of domestication: pulling together of teeth and shortening of the mandible. Both of these characteristics occur as a result of natural selection of animals, which favours survival and well-being of animals with shortened muzzle. That is because the food they get from man is often thermally-processed and soft. If wolves had muzzles like dogs, they would be always hungry, because muscles responsible for biting and tearing the meat into pieces would be too weak. Underfed animals do not reproduce and live shorter lives, consequently, such morphological form is eliminated from the population. Shortening of the muzzle is also one of the basic characteristics of other domesticated animals, e.g. cattle and pigs. Placement of dog's mandible in the grave of two humans is also a suggestion of a relation between the deceased and the dog. But this is not a proof of domestication, because in the prehistoric period wild animals were sometimes buried in graves.

A grave of a woman with a pup in her arms was found in the area of Israel, and was dated to around 10,000 years BC. A man and two carnivores, probably dogs, were buried nearby. During a slightly younger period, Mesolithic era, part of the Holocene epoch, dogs were buried in the area of North Europe and Asia.<sup>6</sup> In the territory of Poland, two graves of dogs from the turn of Mesolithic and Neolithic eras were found in Dudka.<sup>7</sup>

To sum up, we think that the bones of dogs with visible signs of domestication can be found in Europe and Asia starting 12,000 years BC, when other domestications were not yet attested.

Periodically, genetic studies brought earlier dates for the parting between wolves and dogs, i.e. between 30,000 and 25,000 or between 19,000 and 15,000 years BC. But these dates cannot be confirmed. A.G. Drake et al.,<sup>8</sup> based on 3D analysis of discovered skulls of wolves and dogs, calculated that the process of domestication started around 15,000 years BC. Also Grimm reports that morphologic methods are currently reintroduced, with performance of hundreds of measurements on the scans of skulls of dogs and wolves. Results are expected soon.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Günther Nobis, *Aus Bonn, das älteste Haustier des Menschen. Unterkiefer eines Hundes aus dem Magdalenigrab von Bonn-Oberkassel*, Bonn: Das Reinische Landesmuseum Bonn, 1981, pp. 49–50.

<sup>6</sup> Norbert Benecke, "Studies on Early Dog Remains from Northern Europe," *Journal of Archaeological Science* 14 (1987), pp. 31–49.

<sup>7</sup> Piotr Florek, *Dwa pochówki psów z cmentarzyska w Dudce, gm. Wydminy, woj. Warmińsko-Mazurskie*, BA thesis in the Institute of Archaeology of the University of Warsaw archive, 2001; Witold Gumiński, "Environment Economy and Habitation during the Mesolithic at Dudka Great Masurian Lakeland, NE Poland," *Przegląd Archeologiczny* 43 (1995), pp. 5–46.

<sup>8</sup> A.G. Drake, Michael Coquerelle, Guillaume Colombeau, "3D Morphometric Analysis of Fossil Canid Skulls Contradicts the Suggested Domestication of Dogs During the Late Paleolithic," *Nature Scientific Reports* 5 (2015), Article Number 8299, DOI:10.1038/srep08299, available at: [http://referenceworks.brillonline.com/entries/supplementum-epigraphicum-graecum/chios-alexander-the-great-and-chios-334-330-bc-49-1136-a49\\_1136](http://referenceworks.brillonline.com/entries/supplementum-epigraphicum-graecum/chios-alexander-the-great-and-chios-334-330-bc-49-1136-a49_1136) (consulted Nov. 24, 2015).

<sup>9</sup> Grimm, "Down of the Dog," pp. 274–279.

Morphological and genetic methods base on different rules. In genetics, we estimate how many generations of dogs passed, until they reached the current variety of DNA. Morphologic methods base on the skeleton, and look for new features, introduced in the degree allowing occurrence in other animals of the same species. New features occur in the result of selection caused by different living conditions appearing after domestication. Such changes span the whole organism, its structure and functioning. Changes that we see in bones, may occur later than the changes elusive to us, like flappy ears or colour of the coat. From the experience of zoological gardens we know that the first morphological changes occur after 50–100 generations of living and reproducing in captivity.<sup>10</sup>

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Broad range of wolf's distribution allowed domestication in different areas and at different time periods. How did man domesticate the wolf? Konrad Lorenz, whom we mentioned before, in his book on domestication of the dog, presents an idyllic image, whereby a horde of jackals follows a group of humans, sits behind men around the fireplace and waits for food scraps. This image is quite likely, but it explains taming, not domestication. Besides, jackal has never been domesticated. If that were wolf, it could have been domesticated this way. This image supports also a spectacular theory, that it was wolf that domesticated man, by following him until the moment, when man accepted its company. Those, who love this theory, should remember that this may apply to taming, but not domestication.

Taming is an important step to domestication, but after taming, comes a difficult threshold of reproduction in captivity. Wild animals living under man's care as tamed animals rarely reproduce, because they live in constant stress. A chain of offspring results from those which do reproduce. Offspring would be subjected to natural selection, or breeding. In the effect of long-lasting selection, animals better adapted to the new life, or showing domestication features, would survive.

Domestication of dog started with frequent letting into the household (whatever kind it was) of wolf puppies, their taming and subordination. Then, some of those tamed wolves reproduced. The offspring was getting food from man, usually thermally-processed food. Wolf did not have to kill, because man did this instead. Quite comfortable life depended only on staying with the owner and surviving all the limitations and requirements that he imposed. After around one hundred generations, dogs looked so different from wolves, that an archaeozoologist can identify them buried in the ground or drawn by man on the rock.

Are there any features that allowed domestication of animals? Within a species there should be big morphological, physiological, and psychical variances. Among a differentiated group there are also animals that are more plastic, have lower distance to

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<sup>10</sup> Achilles Gautier, "Fauna Domesticated," in: K.A. Bard, ed., *Encyclopedia of the Archaeology of Ancient Egypt*, London: Routledge, 1999, pp. 300–306.

man and a weaker territorial behaviour. From among different species, those which live in social groups and have the need of hierarchy are the most prone to domestication. Wolves and men have the same meat diet; men eat meat and wolves scraps and bones. When they have to, they also eat plants. And the most important trait: wolves live in groups, forming best-organized societies in the world of wild mammals. Organization is so clear that every animal in the group has its position and role. No wonder that in a new environment they look for a guide and leader. This role is easily performed by man, especially the one who appeared early in an animal's early age. Wolves fulfil all the requirements of easy domestication, so for the process to start, only good will of man was needed. But when started, did it continue and was carried over from generation to generation?

It did not have to be this way. In the beginning of domestication wolves/dogs could have abandon man, when they met a pack of wild animals. They could have been stranded, because humans died. Such dogs became wild again. In order to return to the wild, dogs had to be physically similar to wolves, in order for the pack to accept them, and had to survive in natural environment, which required effective food hunting. Such dogs, gone wild again and called dingo, live in Australia. There are also pariah dogs living in South Asian and Egyptian cities. Australian dingoes come from domesticated dogs brought to Australia by the European settlers. They live in holes, form small groups hunting together, they eat carrion and do not bark. They interbreed with dogs, producing fertile offspring, but they do not like dogs. Konrad Lorenz, breeding dogs in his house in Austria, did an experiment, giving a young dingo puppy to the bitch, which had offspring of the same age. He succeeded, but only after many efforts attempting to give the dingo the same smell as dog puppies. The bitch was pushing away the puppy each time it came to the nest, as it was identified as a differently smelling stranger.

Ever since dog domestication process progressed so far that different breeds were produced, dog's returning to the wild became impossible. Purebred dogs cannot be accepted by the wolves, and cannot survive alone. People who leave their dogs in the forest should remember that.

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During the time of early domestication, dogs were similar to themselves and to the wolf. They were, however, smaller than the wolf, had shorter muzzle and up-winding tail. They looked like spitz. Such dogs are found in cave paintings and in petroglyphs. We do not know whether early morphological differences were inherited and when they became permanent. Thus, we do not know when breeds in the current meaning were created and for how long there were only morphological types. It seems that clear types (or maybe breeds) occurred in the area of Central Europe already in the Neolithic era. From Polish excavations we know that Neolithic dogs were 35 to 65 cm in height,

they had different proportions of paws and head.<sup>11</sup> We can easily establish that some were chasing dogs, hunting large animals, while others could only catch rodents. A dog buried in the second half of Neolithic era in Wilczyce is worth mentioning here. The dog was much taller than other dogs of that time, it had long paws and a long muzzle. It looked like a pointer.<sup>12</sup>

Morphological variety of dogs in Egypt, during the Old Kingdom times, is well confirmed. Figural representations show that at that time there were 12–13 types/breeds, and among them representatives of sighthounds, hounds, spitzes, dachshunds, molossers.<sup>13</sup>

A few breeds were known in Greece. Aristotle mentioned big shepherds' dogs coming from Egypt, hunting molosser dogs from Molossia, Laconian dogs bred in Sparta, Cyrenaican, Egyptian, Indian, and Maltese dogs. Joachim Boessneck, who studied domestication process in Greece, thought that domestication did not happen in Greece and that full bred dogs were brought from different parts of the world.<sup>14</sup>

Romans knew Greek breeds and those that occurred in subjected lands. During the Modern Era, Western Europe started to “produce” pure breeds, display them at exhibitions, give medals, and create the whole structure around breeding. From the point of view of dogs this meant misery. Breeds of little monsters, with too small skulls, too short paws, and disproportionate vertebral columns, were created. Because of in-breeding (breeding with related animals), tens of thousands of dogs owe their gene pool to a few dozen animals. Such dogs live a short life and suffer from many diseases. This was revealed in a documentary broadcast by BBC and described in a Wikipedia article *Pedigree Dogs Exposed – Three Years On*.<sup>15</sup>

We should ask ourselves a question, whether we know why man domesticated wolf, what was his interest; it is rather unlikely that man dreamt of having a friend. During the whole process of domestication of farm animals there was only one rule: I am going to have meat at hand, I will be able to kill when I want to, and not chase a running herd and undertake difficult hunting. This aim may be formulated briefly in the following manner: I will never be hungry. Did the same apply to dog? Probably not. The earliest discoveries of dog bones come from graves and do not bear signs of consumption of dog meat. Putting dogs into graves signifies that dogs were sacrificed for gods or for the deceased. In those early times (Palaeolithic and Mesolithic era) dog was the main sacrificial animal. Thus, one could suppose that it had special position in life and beliefs of people. But besides this reasoning, we should also consider another interpretation: maybe man matured in his cultural development enough to give sacrifices to gods and

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<sup>11</sup> Joanna Piątkowska-Malecka, Jacek Gubernat, “Pies w neolicie na ziemiach Polski,” *Światowit* 5 B (2003), pp. 207–241.

<sup>12</sup> Kamil Niemczak, Tomasz Boroń, Alicja Lasota-Moskalewska, *Pochówek psa kultury ceramiki sznurowej z Wilczyca*, manuscript, 2015. It will be published in a monograph edited by the Institute of Archaeology and Ethnology of the Polish Academy of Sciences.

<sup>13</sup> Joachim Boessneck, *Die Tierwelt des Alten Ägypten*, München: Verlag C.H. Beck, 1988.

<sup>14</sup> Joachim Boessneck, “Die Tierreste aus der Argissa Magula vom präkeramischen Neolithikum bis zur Mittleren Bronzezeit,” in: Vladimir Miložič, Joachim Boessneck, Maria Hopf, eds., *Das präkeramische Neolithikum sowie die Tur- und Pflanzenreste*, Bonn: Habelt, 1962, pp. 27–99.

<sup>15</sup> See [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pedigree\\_Dogs\\_Exposed](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pedigree_Dogs_Exposed) (consulted Oct. 2, 2015).

dog was the most likely animal to be buried because it was prone to domestication, it was kind and warm-hearted. Whichever version is true, we can always assume that since the Palaeolithic era, the position of dog in the life of man was very important and was connected with spiritual life. In later millennia the position was maintained, although dog was not the only sacrificial animal anymore. Man put all groups of mammals in graves, and in some cultures also birds, reptiles, fish, or even mussels. Dog sacrifices were frequent again in Przeworsk culture, in the area of Poland, where dogs were used for sacrifice not only in graves, but also as a sacrifice buried in the foundations under the huts in order to protect the inhabitants from evil (foundational deposits<sup>16</sup>). Anatomically abnormal dogs were chosen for this, deformed and crippled. Also, deformation could have been caused, so dogs' paws were broken, teeth were sawn, skulls were cracked open. Then man waited for the wound to heal. At that time the sacrifice was to gods' liking. From our perspective this was cruelty, which clearly goes beyond the limits of friendship, but one can also reason that people were helping nature to turn an ordinary dog into one liked by gods.

In the Mediterranean countries dogs were treated differently. In the spiritual life they were most important in Egypt. They were the subject of zoolatry, or animal cult. After death, they were often embalmed, and in order to honour them, the owner shaved his hair and eyebrows.

In Greece dog had strange functions; it was the helper of god the healer and it accompanied the deceased to Hades. Dogs kept in the temples of Asclepius (Athens, Knidos, Epidaurus) were taught to lick the wounded. Healed patients would bring a rooster as an expression of thanks and would leave a grateful inscription.

In Rome, dog was respected and loved. It was a hunter, which Romans greatly appreciated, it was a shepherd of herds and a protector of the house. Varro (*Rust.* 2.9.2) suggested that a house should be protected by two dogs, and in the case of herds, each shepherd should have one dog. Because dog is attached to man, not to sheep. Varro reminds the owners to remember this, when they sell sheep with the dog. The same author tells a story of a dog, which came back to a shepherd, after having run for 400 km. Another agrarian writer, Columella (7.12.1–3), talks about dogs with great sentimentalism. He writes: "What servant is more attached to his master than is a dog? What companion more faithful? What guardian more incorruptible? What more wakeful night-watchman can be found? Lastly, what more steadfast avenger or defender?"<sup>17</sup> Columella introduced rules for dog management in a kennel. Those were very caring rules, for example puppies left by the mother should be fed with goat's milk; in order to protect a dog from flies it should be covered with ground nuts. He has even a method for fleas: cumin and hellebore.

In different areas and in different times, dogs were used as means of transportation. In Rome they were attached to small carts used in races. But that was rare. In the early

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<sup>16</sup> See Alicja Lasota-Moskalewska, *Archeozoologia. Ssaki*, Warszawa: Wydawnictwa Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego, 2008, pp. 21–23 and p. 229.

<sup>17</sup> Lucius Junius Moderatus Columella, *On Agriculture. Books V-IX*, edited and translated by E.S. Forster and Edward H. Heffner, Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press (Loeb), p. 307.

Middle Ages, in Central and Eastern Europe, winter transport required dogs, because hoofed animals could not wade through high snow or icy swamps. Al-Marwazi wrote about the inhabitants of Bulghār (area near Kazan) that they “travel [...] carrying goods such as clothes, salt, and other products, on implements drawn by the dogs on fallen snow.”<sup>18</sup> Those implements were skates or skids made of radial bones of horses, sometimes cattle. During the Modern era, in other parts of Europe, there were even rentals of harnessed dogs. Special draft breeds were maintained, for example Belgian dogs. Even now, without dog sleds, in the far North of Europe, Asia, and America everyday transport and communication would be impossible. Amazing malamutes live in freezing cold, without a roof above their head; they feed on carrion and scraps left by man. In order to eat, they hunt marine creatures, like mussels and crabs. They are very hardy, both in everyday life and at work. They can draw a sled for many hours without rest, running at 10 km per hour. From the position of the owners of sofa dogs one might think that life of Northern dogs is hard labour. But they live in close relations with their owners and we can even find reports of heroic salvages of dogs by men and man by dogs, when the ice cover melts.

In ancient times dogs were used for fighting. We know from the works of Pliny that Colophonians and Castabalans (in Cilicia) had large groups of fighting dogs. Those dogs fought in the first row and never failed. Pliny calls them aiding troops which do not get their pay (*NH* 8.142–147).

Dog’s teeth were used as adornment, they were turned into necklaces and charms. Fangs and incisors were especially good for this purpose. Such adornments were produced most often during the Stone Age. They were found in the area of Poland in Wilczyce and Żłota at Wawer. Dog’s coat was turned into wool, used to weave garments, like gloves. There is still a sensitive question: were dogs eaten? The oldest evidence for dog eating come from Neolithic Poland. This applies to funnelbeaker culture and Rzucewo culture (data collected in the study by Joanna Piątkowska-Małecka and Jacek Gubernat<sup>19</sup>). Dog bones bear signs of filleting, but it seems that the brain had particular value. Sometimes we find skulls with signs of opening at skull base and frying at the calvaria. Maybe man was not looking to quench his hunger, but to gain dog’s features, such as good locomotion in terrain. Dog was eaten by the Celts. Janina Rosen-Przeworska, while describing their beliefs, writes about the son of god Lugus, who, for some reason, for all his life could not eat dog meat and only tasted it at deathbed.<sup>20</sup> In Modern times dog meat was eaten on Polynesia and in Africa, and until contemporary times in China and Korea. In pre-Columbian Mexico, a naked breed was established which, as it had no thermal insulation, developed an additional fat layer under the skin. This gave exceptional taste to the meat of these dogs. These dogs, before they were eaten, fulfilled the role of a hot-water bottle, because they had different thermoregulation

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<sup>18</sup> Tadeusz Lewicki, “Łyżwy kościane północno-wschodniej Europy w świetle notatki średniowiecznego pisarza arabskiego Al-Marwaziego (ok. r. 1120),” *Przegląd Archeologiczny* 9.23 (1951–1952), pp. 392–395.

<sup>19</sup> Piątkowska-Małecka, Gubernat, “Pies w neolicie...,” pp. 207–241.

<sup>20</sup> Janina Rosen-Przeworska, *Tradycje celtyckie w obrzędowości protosłowian*, Wrocław et al.: Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich, 1964.



and were warmer. Modern Europe also was not free from such taste. In the middle of the nineteenth century a German botanist travelling through East Sudeten Mountains observed in many villages butcher's stalls with dog meat.

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We already have the image of cohabitation of dogs and men. Unfortunately, perforce, this is an image of abuse of dogs in all possible domains of life. We do not know much about man's feelings towards these animals, because emotions do not leave material traces. Some light is shed by Roman mosaics, written sources, and dog mummies from Egypt. It seems that universal use of dogs, their omnipresence in man's life, their sacrificial role, evidence a particular feeling man had for dogs. Was this feeling inspired by interest? Probably not always. Creation of breeds not suitable for hunting, guarding, or fighting, short-pawed breeds with little body, mascot-breeds, breeds living with man at home or palace prove that man needed dog to quench its longing and need for love.

The other side, dog served man in all roles, in which it was cast. Dog was always reliable, willing, and faithful. It even fulfilled aesthetic and prestigious role, taking part in exhibitions and getting medals. Dog had a lot of fun being with man, it liked going hunting, pointing out prey, warning against intruders; it liked to participate in competitions, liked to help with rescue operations, travelled through snowy lands, tracked using its sense of smell, liked to be stroked and praised. On top of that, dog understood man, the tone of his voice, expression on the face. Because after domestication, dog reached the ability to inherit behavioural traits. From among 21 domesticated mammals, this was only possible in the case of dog and horse.<sup>21</sup> During the last several years, observations on the significance of oxytocin for the creation of relation between dogs and between dog and its master, have been published.<sup>22</sup> Oxytocin is a neuropeptide synthesized in the hypothalamus of mammals, and is popularly called the happiness hormone. In further studies, a Japanese researcher of animal behaviour, Takefumi Kikusui and his colleagues,<sup>23</sup> found more biological evidence of the friendship, even love, between the dog and its master. Full of dedication eye contact with the master, increased oxytocin level in master's urine, increased his attachment to dog and resulted in oxytocin level increase in the organism of the animal.

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<sup>21</sup> S.N. Bogolubski, *Pochodzenie i ewolucja zwierząt domowych*, Warszawa: Państwowy Zakład Wydawnictw Rolniczych i Leśnych, 1968.

<sup>22</sup> Miho Nagasawa, Kazutaka Mogi, Takefumi Kikusui, "Attachment Between Humans and Dogs," *Japanese Psychological Research* 51 (2009), pp. 209–221; Teresa Romero, Miho Nagasawa, Kazutaka Mogi, Toshikazu Hasegawa, Takefumi Kikusui, "Oxytocin Promotes Social Bonding in Dogs," *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences/PNAS* 111 (2014), pp. 9085–9090.

<sup>23</sup> Miho Nagasawa, Shouhei Mitsui, Shiori En, Nobuya Ohtani, Mitsuaki Ohta, Yasuo Sakuma, Tatsushi Onaka, Kazutaka Mogi, Takefumi Kikusui, "Oxytocin-Gaze Positive Loop and the Coevolution of Human-Dog Bonds," *Science* 348 (2015), pp. 333–336.

However, the balance of friendship or even love is not equal. Professor Konrad Lorenz found the best summary:

The fact that my dog loves me more than I love it, is undeniable and always fills me with shame. The dog is always willing to give its life for me. If a lion or tiger attacked me, all my dogs [...] would not hesitate even for a moment to start a ruthless fight, to extend my life for a few more seconds. And me?<sup>24</sup>

Translated by Jarosław Józwiak

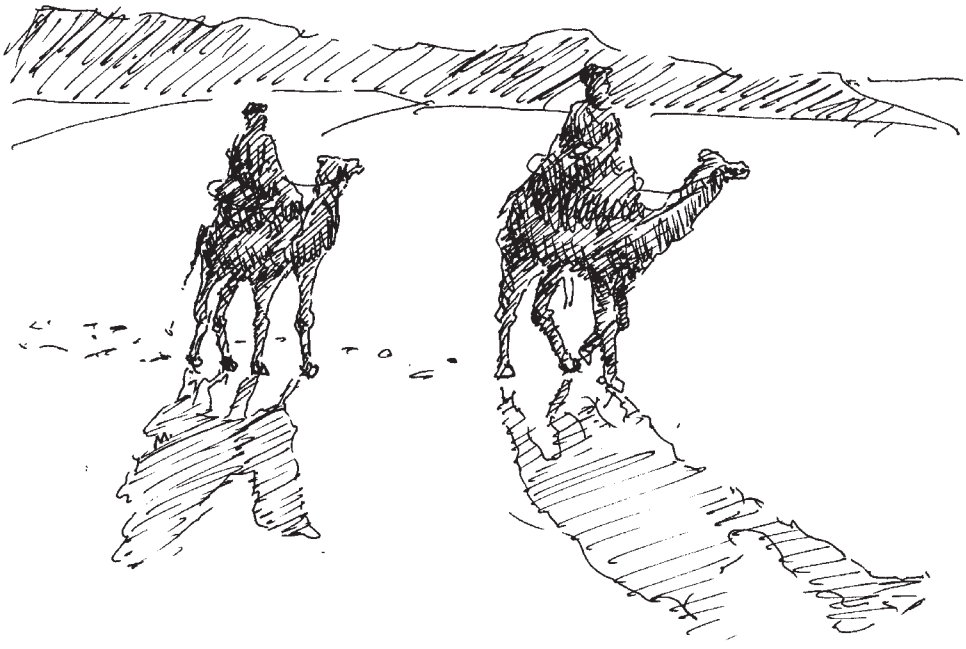
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<sup>24</sup> Lorenz, *I tak człowiek trafił na psa*, p. 129.



Ewa Łukaszyk

**Friendships of the Desert:  
The Europeans in Arabia**



Ewa Łukaszuk

## Friendships of the Desert: The Europeans in Arabia

The interior of the Arabic Peninsula, never colonized nor directly controlled by any European power, has always constituted a tempting attraction for numerous European travellers and adventurers. First explored as early as the beginning of the sixteenth century and described in the *Narrative and Voyages of Ludovicus Vertomannus, Gentelman of Rome*, printed in Italy in 1510, still remained a mystery at the time of Richard Burton. Even nowadays, several decades after the oil boom, the central Arabia, a region where nearly a half of the population actually consists of immigrants, including numerous Westerners, is often seen as an alien, dangerous, and impenetrable reality, the only heart of darkness that remains from the time of the colonial explorers. Like any sanctuary, actually far too fragile to survive.

The intent of coming back to the adventurous era of Lawrence of Arabia is thus a nostalgic one. On the other hand, speaking of friendship in such a context clashes not only against the Huntingtonian vision of the world, but also against the deconstructing tradition established by Edward Said and his followers. The analysis contained in the third part of *Orientalism* accentuates the shortcomings of the vision represented by the “Oriental experts,” such as Thomas Edward Lawrence, David George Hogarth, or Gertrude Bell, who allegedly encountered not living beings capable of friendly feelings, but an immutable, abstract entity, “the Arab.” Nonetheless, “agents of empire, friends of the Orient” is how Said qualifies them:

They formed a “band” – as Lawrence called it once – bound together by contradictory notions and personal similarities: great individuality, sympathy and intuitive identification with the Orient, a jealously preserved sense of personal mission in the Orient, cultivated eccentricity, a final disapproval of the Orient. For them all the Orient was their direct, peculiar experience of it. In them Orientalism and an effective praxis for handling the Orient received their final European form, before the Empire disappeared and passed its legacy to other candidates for the role of dominant power.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Edward Said, *Orientalism*, London: Penguin, 2003, p. 224.

In these optics, the abstract concept of “the Orient” is neither a territory to occupy nor a problem to tackle, but a personified object of all kinds of affects, going from fascination, friendship, love, till “the final disapproval.”

As an autobiographical work that invites an immediate and simple-minded reading, *The Seven Pillars of Wisdom* (1922) actually brings about several quite convincing images of friendship, including the relationship between the author and Auda Abu-Tayi. Yet the requirements of post-colonial analysis are particularly severe on such a point. Following their school of suspicion, A. Clare Brandabur and Nasser al-Hassan Athamneh comment:

Indeed the self/other relationship common to all autobiography is complicated in the imperial model by the disparity of power, which is further distorted by what Fanon called the imperialist’s requirement not merely for submission, but, perversely, for love from the subordinate. *The Seven Pillars* adds the ultimate twist to this relationship: an Oriental expert who comes to see himself as inferior to those he had presumed to dominate. In Lawrence’s admission that he saw in himself no such heroism as that of Auda Abu-Tayi, we have essentially Kipling’s less elegant “You’re a better man than I am, Gunga Din.”<sup>2</sup>

The post-colonial way of deconstructing the relations of power and dominance, schematic as it is, works for most contexts. Nonetheless I have always had a controversial, yet persistent impression that the Arabs, especially those uncolonized Arabs of the central Arabia, the “pure” ones,<sup>3</sup> constituted an exemption in the mental framework of the colonial era. They were something else, nobler, more admirable, not in the humble sacrifice of the water-bearer saving the life of the white soldier,<sup>4</sup> but in quite a different, yet specific meaning: perhaps even placed in the position of a secret, non-revealed *superego* of the Western man. In any case, desired friends among colonial servants. This positive, even if muted prejudice in favour of the Arabs might be a distorted echo of a very distant past, perhaps of the exquisiteness, reinforced in legends, of the Islamic civilization in the Middle Ages, of which the Europeans got merely glimpses in Spain and at the time of crusades. Curiously, the English seem particularly prone to the Arabian charm, but they are by no means the only Europeans to do so.<sup>5</sup> Be as it may, it is

<sup>2</sup> A. Clare Brandabur and Nasser al-Hassan Athamneh, “Problems of Genre in *The Seven Pillars of Wisdom: A Triumph*,” *Comparative Literature* 52.4 (Autumn, 2000), p. 322.

<sup>3</sup> Said deconstructs also the myth of this supposed Arab purity and refinement as a part of the orientalist syndrome, “associated with Arab perdurability, as if the Arab had not been subject to the ordinary process of history” (*Orientalism*, op. cit., p. 230).

<sup>4</sup> Gunga Din is a Bhishti, an Indian water-bearer who saves the white soldier’s life in Kipling’s poem written in 1892. As Gunga Din is shot and killed, the Englishman regrets the abuses committed against him and recognizes his superior humanity revealed in the act of sacrificing his own life to save the other. Nonetheless, neither the sacrifice nor the regret contributes to modify the general framework of colonial relations.

<sup>5</sup> The limited space of this essay forces me to skip many interesting cases, such as the Dutch scholar and explorer Christiaan Snouck Hurgronje, whose photographs of Mecca would add a parallel thread to the analysis of the visual documents which is attempted here. For a presentation of this figure, see Ziauddin Sardar, *Mecca. The Sacred City*, London–New Delhi: Bloomsbury India, 2014, pp. 277–280. In Sardar’s

probably incorrect to level the Arab with any Indian companion of the Englishman, no matter how dear they might seem to the colonial childhoods. First of all, Arabia is an adult's dream. It plays a particular role as a powerful, appealing alternative in relation to Western social and cultural environment. Penetrating deep into the wilderness, the Europeans found their *alter ego*, the point of extimacy, to use the Lacanian-Žižekian vocabulary, sort of counter-intimate relationship, an inverted closeness encountered at the maximal distance. No wonder why Mecca became, as we will see, a crucial point also in their imaginary geography.

## I.

The vogue of “becoming an Arab” had persisted for more than a century in the aristocratic milieux all over Europe, having left behind an important archive of such materials as painted, engraved, and photographic portraits in Arab garb, produced both by the adventurers and those who merely posed for their pictures in comfortable ateliers in Europe, without bothering to travel to the Middle East. This pleasure of wearing Arabian has no equivalent in any other ethnic attire of the colonial world. It accompanies the tendency to stretch the limits of the dream till the brink of transforming it into the reality. In many cases, the fashionable eccentricity is also at the brink of social alienation and perhaps of sheer madness.

Wacław Rzewuski, who by 1820 was still one of the first Europeans to boast of having reached the central Arabia, became a figure celebrated in the Polish Romantic consciousness that tended to take him more seriously than he deserved. As we see him today, confronting his narration with what we know about the history of the Arabian Peninsula, he seems a case coming dangerously close to monomania. Like Anne Blunt later on, he travelled for the reputed Arabian horses, or at least chose the horses for his excuse. For sure, at least in the Polish case, the Arabian horse was not a novelty; it had arrived with the Turks. Already in 1778, Franciszek Ksawery Branicki founded a stud in Szamrajówka that soon excelled in breeding those horses. No wonder that it was also the time of the legendary expeditions in search of the finest specimens: firstly by Kajetan Burski working for the family Sanguszko and secondly by Rzewuski. But in the latter case the interest in buying horses was merely a cover for a megalomaniac cultivation of his own legend as “the emir of all the Arabs” or allegedly the leader of the influential Anizah confederation which was to produce Ibn Saud's dynasty several decades later. Of course, nothing was true in this story narrated back at home. No wonder thus that in spite of his alleged position in local politics, Rzewuski seems to pay so little attention to the human reality of the region. The content of his Arabian journal-treatise (written

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appreciation, his photographs of Mecca are quite opposite of the stereotype of picturesque Oriental chaos, showing “a well-planned city nestling in a valley between mountains, with handsome, evenly distributed houses surrounding the Sacred Mosque. The Meccans, mostly sitting and in formal dress, look serious but elegant. The pilgrims, photographed in groups and in their national costumes, appear tired, but happy to be photographed” (p. 279).

in French and profusely illustrated with watercolours) corresponds to its title: *Sur les chevaux orientaux et provenant des races orientales*.<sup>6</sup> If one admits that Rzewuski actually reached as far as Najd and Jabal Shammar, fact of which we cannot be sure, he did not invest too much time and attention in the detailed description of those unexplored regions. He concentrated obsessively on the horse, scarcely commenting on folklore and tribal structures. He was one of those early alienated travellers, taking Arabia for an opportunity to dream. To dream about dominating the Bedouin, to rule over them, not to become friends with them.

The time of the Romantic adventures was undoubtedly an era of solitary, megalomaniac fantasies. Yet this situation was to change in the decades to come, with the explorers determined to penetrate not only the physical, but also the mental and spiritual spaces of Arabia. A place apart in this story going beyond the usual colonial patterns is reserved to women, such as Anne Blunt, Evelyn Cobbold, and several others, for whom, as for the politically disinherited Polish aristocrat in times of the partition of Poland, the Orient constituted not necessarily the playground of imperial interests, but first of all a parallel world offering a perspective of evasion. Half a century after Rzewuski, the horses were still an excuse for the grand-daughter of Byron. Anne Blunt, having travelled to Arabia with her husband, Wilfrid Scawen Blunt, founded the famous stud Crabbet, contributing for the translation of the Arabic concept of *asil* into the European notion of a pure-bred horse. The archives conserve of her the photographic testimony of “becoming the Orient.” The portrait of Anne Blunt with her favourite mare Kasida, produced by unknown photographer around 1900, shows the aristocrat in Bedouin attire, garbed in a heavy, plain, yet extremely ample *abaya*, a headdress and a double *aqal* (headband). Curiously, this is clearly a male costume. Again, curiously, the horse does not wear Arabian: the bridle and the saddle we can see on the photograph belong to the efficient, minimalistic, perfectly Western type. Blunt’s fascination with clothes, male clothes, and perhaps her naïve belief that wearing them is an efficient way of “becoming the Orient,” derives from the external vision of Arabia, reflected in her journal, *A Pilgrimage to Nejd* (1881), where “each tribe seemed so readily recognized by their fellows, and [...] each has certain peculiarities of dress or features well known to all.”<sup>7</sup> But once again, this external vision was to change into the interplay of intimate persuasions and soon the time had come when the way of “becoming the Orient” started to pass through religious conversion.

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<sup>6</sup> Fragments of Rzewuski’s manuscript, treasured in the Polish National Library under the no. 6475 II, had been published for the first time in Polish translation by Teofil Rutkowski as “Wiadomość o rasach koni arabskich,” *Biblioteka Warszawska*, vol. 4, 1866. Cf. also Tadeusz Majda, *Podróż do Arabii: o koniach kobejlanach, beduinach i przygodach w Arabii (na podstawie rękopisu Wacława Seweryna Rzewuskiego „Sur les chevaux orientaux et provenant des races orientales”)*, Warszawa: Biblioteka Narodowa, 2004.

<sup>7</sup> Anne Blunt, *A Pilgrimage to Nejd, the Cradle of the Arab Race*, vol. 1, London: John Murray, 1881, p. 163.

2.

Lady Cobbold – or Lady Zainab, as she preferred to call herself – roughly contemporary to much more celebrated figures such as T.E. Lawrence or St. John Philby, remained for a long time in their shadow. As a daughter of a relatively less affluent Scottish aristocrat, Charles Adolphus Murray, Seventh Earl of Dunmore, she used to spend her winter vacations in a villa situated not far from Algiers, frequently escaping the control of her nurses to learn Arabic and to visit the nearby mosques in the company of local children. Her unexpected declaration that she was a Muslim, pronounced on the occasion of an audience in the Vatican during her Italian trip, might have been just an eccentricity or a clever way of escaping an awkward question (was she a Catholic?). Yet during the travels throughout North Africa her affiliations became more and more clear. There were friendships in the background, too; a series of her letters to Arab friends in Egypt and Syria in 1914–1915 were written in Arabic.

One might remain sceptical about the seriousness of the Scottish aristocrat's unexpected conversion. Yet in the contemporary Saudi Arabia she is a rather well known and cherished figure. While Lawrence of Arabia suffers from ill reputation, being remembered either as a spy or a traitor, Lady Cobbold is celebrated as “the first British-born Muslim woman to perform the pilgrimage to Mecca” and a contributor to “the literature of the *Hajj*,”<sup>8</sup> namely with her travelogue of the journey to the Holy Cities, *Pilgrimage to Mecca*, published in 1934.

In 1933, Cobbold's journey was indeed an event very far apart from the earlier European tentative penetrations into the holy space. Eighty years earlier, Richard Burton had carefully hidden his identity. His widow, Lady Isabel, boosted the legend, writing in the preface of the Memorial Edition of his *Pilgrimage to Al-Madinah and Meccah* (1855) on the extreme difficulty and risk of the Meccan adventure:

My husband had lived as a Dervish in Sind, which greatly helped him; and he studied every separate thing until he was master of it, even apprenticing himself to a blacksmith to learn how to make horse-shoes and to shoe his own horses. It meant living with his life in his hand, amongst the strangest and wildest companions, adopting their unfamiliar manners, living for nine months in the hottest and most unhealthy climate, upon repulsive food; it meant complete and absolute isolation from everything that makes life tolerable, from all civilization, from all his natural habits; the brain at high tension, but the mind never wavering from the role he had adopted.<sup>9</sup>

Quite unlikely, Lady Evelyn's journey did not require to shoe her own horses, unless in a metaphorical sense. It was arranged by the Saudi ambassador in London, Sheikh Hafiz Wahba, who obtained the official permission of the king and later on wrote the

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<sup>8</sup> William Facey, “Mayfair to Makkah”, *Saudi Aramco World* 59.5 (2008), p. 18.

<sup>9</sup> Isabel Burton, “Preface to the Memorial Edition,” in: Richard F. Burton, *Personal Narrative of a Pilgrimage to Al-Madinah and Meccah*, vol. 1, Toronto: General Publishing Company, 1964, p. xviii.

preface to her travelogue. Once in Jiddah, she could count on the assistance of a similarly minded British couple, namely Philby and his wife Dora.

Harry St. John Bridger Philby, who converted to Islam in 1930 adopting the name of Sheikh Abdullah, was indeed a complex personage. Intelligence officer and alleged traitor to the British Crown, adviser to Ibn Saud implicated in the biggest oil deals in the history, he contributed to ornithology as well, having studied the Arabian woodpecker (called *Dendropicos doraë* to celebrate his beloved wife) and Philby's partridge (*Alectoris philbyi*). He arranged for Cobbold the travel by car to Madinah and then to Mecca, the accommodation there, as well as some prominent social contacts, including a tea with the prince Faisal. The emir, as she pointed out in her diary, arrived punctually at five o'clock.

It would be misleading to imagine Lady Cobbold according to the contemporary stereotype of the insipid and submissive female convert to Islam. She has indeed much more in common with the line of adventurers going from Burton to Lawrence of Arabia. Great traveller and hunter, she is known to have excelled in deerstalking. After the separation from her husband, John Dupuis Cobbold, from whom she received the deer forest of Glencarron in the Scottish Highlands, she spent her time as much on field sports as on religious studies. Also in her Arabian travelogue she mentions as much the motor drives in the desert and diving in the coral reefs as her pious recollections. Perhaps the common denominator among her various fascinations is the longing for the unattainable she often talks about in her diaries. Her *hajj* (the pilgrimage to Mecca) undoubtedly differed not only from the secretive adventure of Burton, but also from the experience of the other pilgrims. Once in Arabia, she regained all the benefits of her privileged social status. She was treated with deference by the Saudis who had just started the oil negotiations with American and British engineers. She dined with the wives of the negotiators. She travelled by car – a rare luxury at this time – on the road that usually takes ten days on a camel and up to three weeks on foot.<sup>10</sup> She also appears to have taken quite a mundane pleasure in her Arabian clothes, switching between black veils and the white garb of the pilgrimage, perhaps moved as much by the religious exaltation as by the thrill of “becoming the Orient.”

Nonetheless, her gender positioning in the Orient differs from the games of Anne Blunt in her male Bedouin attire. On a photograph taken in Jiddah right before Cobbold's depart for Mecca, her costume might easily hurt contemporary sensibilities. She is garbed in white, wearing an Afghan-looking kind of veil that completely covers her face, with only several tiny holes letting the air in. Nonetheless, the emancipation of women is the topic she chooses to discuss with her Arab friends:

The sheikhs show some amusement, tempered with admiration at the methods adopted by the Western woman to win herself a place in the sun; their sympathy is all on the side of the ladies. Though I occasionally caught a twinkle in

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<sup>10</sup> Even if the Hijaz railway was to shorten the distance between Damascus and Madinah, the project of connecting Mecca directly to the modern communication system had been suspended for a while.



the eye of Sid Ahmed, and both the sheikhs often smiled, I never heard them give way to loud laughter...<sup>11</sup>

In the meanwhile, still concerned with her feminine condition and unconscious of the fact, Lady Cobbold is already sharing the privilege of the Western women in many traditional contexts: they acquire a particular status as a trans-gender, neither male nor female, closer to the first than to the second. How else could the Arabs treat a deerstalker, alone on the *hajj*?

3.

The experience of the Orient fits the most exasperated egotisms; indeed, it is often an alienating one. T.E. Lawrence rightly confesses in the introduction to his *Seven Pillars of Wisdom*: “In these pages the history is not of the Arab movement, but of me in it.”<sup>12</sup> Lawrence of Arabia as a participant of the Arab movement stands far from the complete, fearful, yet voluntary isolation of Richard Burton. His intent of seeing himself in the mirror of the otherness still seems to preclude any possibility of authentic encounter. Nonetheless, the process of erosion of identities and loyalties is very clear. The history of Arabia is full of double agents, only too daft as manipulators, but uncertain of where their actual loyalties were. Philby, while he was still on the British intelligence’s payment roll, had allegedly passed military secrets to Ibn Saud. It was also his idea to provoke a rivalry among the oil investors that ultimately resulted beneficial for the Arabs. It has even been suggested that the Arabian career of Philby was a personal revenge on the British government. Be as it may, the tactics of “me in the history” are close at hand. Those “agents of empire, friends of the Orient” are much more the latter than the former. Cultivated eccentricities are befriended by the Arabs that tame them precisely by acknowledging and flattering their *non serviam*, be it a male egotism or a frustrated ambition of female emancipation.

Desert friendships and affinities are built on incommunicable, untranslatable, and first of all unshared experiences, such as the *hajj* of Lady Cobbold, travelling by car among the barefooted pilgrims. They require a non-human mediation, a third element to triangulate the incommensurable cultural contexts. This might explain the importance of the animals, be it horses or Philby’s partridges, in the Arabian adventures. Yet the search for transcultural friendship continues in the highest registers and progressively acquires intellectual depth. Outside the Najd and the Hijaz, the focal points that bind together this essay, the Sufi perspective of friendship with God had tempted yet another convert, Titus Burckhardt (or Sheikh Ibrahim Izz ud-Din) who, having embraced Islam in 1934, occupied a special place as the first eminent university scholar in this ambiguous gallery. In the meanwhile, again in the inner Arabia, the step towards the complete immersion in

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<sup>11</sup> Evelyn Cobbold, *Pilgrimage to Mecca*, London: Arabian Publishing, 2009, p. 288.

<sup>12</sup> T.E. Lawrence, *The Seven Pillars of Wisdom: A Triumph*, New York: Doubleday, 1991, p. 24.

the Orient had been given by a representative of *Mitteleuropa*, Leopold Weiss, a Galician Jew who, after his conversion, adopted the name of Muhammad Asad (“the lion,” just to render in Arabic his original name, Leo). His extensive autobiography, *The Road to Mecca* (1954), offers yet another testimony on the process of merging with the Orient. Similarly to the case of Lady Cobbold, the book gained high consideration across the Islamic world, becoming a contemporary religious bestseller. For sure, Asad is much more considerate in his choices than Cobbold, and his book is rather a deeply thought, spiritual apology than a travelogue. He traces back the spiritual and intellectual way that conduced him first from Eastern Europe to the Middle East, where he worked as a journalist, and then straight into the heart of Arabia. Travelling on foot or on a camel, all this time, not by car.

*The Road to Mecca* is dedicated to “his Majesty King Faisal of Saudi Arabia in commemoration of forty-five years of friendship” – the very same emir who arrived punctually at five o’clock for Lady Cobbold’s tea. Asad records with exalted gratitude the cordial encounters in the Meccan royal reception room. In 1951, after an absence of eighteen years, he does not expect to be recognized:

I stopped before him and said, ‘Peace be upon thee, O Long-of-Age! Thou wilt have forgotten me...’ He looked up, and stared at me blankly for a fraction of a second; then his eyes lit up, and he stretched out both his hands and exclaimed, ‘Ahlan wa-sahlan: thou hast come to thy family, and may thy step be easy! How could I have forgotten thee!’ And then he took me by the hand and, as his father had so often done in bygone years, walked with me, slowly, up and down the long gallery, always holding me by the hand [...]; and it was easy and simple to talk to him as if we had parted but yesterday: for simplicity of manner and modesty of behaviour have always been the most obvious traits of Faisal’s personality.<sup>13</sup>

In the hard times before the oil revenues actually started to flow, friendship was the hard currency of the desert, permitting to repay people like Philby and “Leopold of Arabia,” who also occasionally played the role of a secret agent. The skillful creation of this home-feeling seems to be a direct, very well-felt response to the poetic ejaculation of Byron: “Oh! that the Desert were my dwelling-place” (*Childe Harold*, canto iv, stanza 177). The paternal figures of the Saudi rulers complete the European dream of the Arabian home.

Burton went as far as to circumcise himself in order to reach Mecca. In spite of the awful climate and repulsive food, as his wife attests, “he liked it, he was happy in it, he felt at home in it.”<sup>14</sup> Nonetheless he never lost the overwhelming sensation of being a stranger, an alien element; he never merged with the crowd of the pilgrims, never thought it might actually be possible. Similarly, Lawrence of Arabia attests the same incapability of “becoming an Arab.” In 1918, he confessed in a letter to V.W. Richards:

<sup>13</sup> Muhammad Asad, *The Road to Mecca*, Kuala Lumpur: Islamic Book Trust, 1996, p. 377.

<sup>14</sup> Isabel Burton, “Preface to the Memorial Edition,” p. xviii.

I know I am a stranger to them, and always will be; but I cannot believe them worse, any more than I could change to their ways.<sup>15</sup>

In the opening chapter of *The Seven Pillars...*, he repeated similar statements:

The efforts for these years to live in the dress of Arabs, and to imitate their mental foundation, quitted me of my English self [...]. At the same time, I could not sincerely take on the Arab skin; it was an affectation only.<sup>16</sup>

Nonetheless, not only the idea, but also the persistent longing of “changing to their ways” and “taking on their skin” was already there. Burton visited Mecca as a European in disguise; later on the very same clothes lost such a status. The Arab garb had been tried on, judged unfitting for a moment, but soon it became the cosiest dress of the European. The identities, liquefied by the modernity, ultimately merged – encountering, on the other end, the Arabs in European garb, of which those emirs who never come late for the tea were an early incarnation. This particular situation of encounter is at the foundation of the contemporary Arabia, a reality *sui generis*, apparently incoherent in its ultramodern conservatism. Similarly, as Victoria Carchidi says, in those desert biographies – of which Lawrence’s *The Seven Pillars...* is the most celebrated example – the only coherence is incoherence:

And it is precisely that excess, that resistance to order, that has led to the endurance of his fame. [...] His autobiography throws practically everything into doubt – not just class, race, gender, but even the very idea of truth and representable realities. [...] Lawrence casts into chaos the very approaches we take to defining ourselves, our values, and our worlds.<sup>17</sup>

The adventures in Arabia, including that of Arabian friendship, brought a decisive outcome that was to be found nowhere else in the colonial experience of the Europeans, leading them out of the interplay of essentialist definitions of identity into completely new horizons of “becoming the Other.”

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<sup>15</sup> T.E. Lawrence, *The Letters of T.E. Lawrence of Arabia*, ed. D. Garnett, New York: Doubleday, 1938, p. 244.

<sup>16</sup> T.E. Lawrence, *The Seven Pillars of Wisdom*, p. 30.

<sup>17</sup> Victoria Carchidi, “Creation Out of the Void: The Life and Legends of T.E. Lawrence,” in: *Mapping the Self: Space, Identity, Discourse in British Auto/Biography*, ed. Frédéric Regard, Saint-Étienne: Publication de l’Université de Saint-Étienne, 2003, pp. 270–271.



Katarzyna Marciniak

***Catilina de amicitia*, or Cicero's Homage  
to Rebels (63 BC–2016 AD and Beyond)**



MARCUS  
TVLLIVS

Katarzyna Marciniak

## *Catilina de amicitia*, or Cicero's Homage to Rebels (63 BC–2016 AD and Beyond)

In the Encyclical Letter on Christian love, *Deus caritas est*, by Pope Benedict XVI we read:

[...] amor numquam “finitur” et completur; in vitae decursu mutatur, maturescit ideoque sibi ipse fidelis manet. *Idem velle atque idem nolle*, quibus verbis antiqui germanum amoris sensum definiebant: cum alter alteri assimilatur, id volendi cogitandique perducit ad communitatem.<sup>1</sup>

[...] love is never “finished” and complete; throughout life, it changes and matures, and thus remains faithful to itself. *Idem velle atque idem nolle* – to want the same thing, and to reject the same thing – as recognized by antiquity as the authentic content of love: the one becomes similar to the other, and this leads to a community of will and thought.<sup>2</sup>

“To want the same thing, and to reject the same thing” – what a poignant definition for a perfect union. The English rendition in the Encyclical Letter of the Apostolic See does not, however, fully bring out the original meaning. For in Latin, as is typical of this ostensibly concise language, the message is much broader. It refers not only to the concept of love as a sentiment joining two beings in an inclusive relationship, but also as a general attitude towards our neighbors (“germanus” meaning not only “authentic,” but reverberating also with “brotherly”). In turn, the title of the Letter evokes one of the highest theological virtues: the all-encompassing, altruistic type of love – *caritas* – so highly praised by St. Thomas Aquinas (*Summa* 2.2.23) and other Church Fathers.<sup>3</sup> We

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<sup>1</sup> Benedicti PP. XVI Summi Pontificis Litterae Encyclicae *Deus caritas est* episcopis presbyteris et diaconis viris et mulieribus consecratis omnibusque Christifidelibus laicis de Christiano amore, 1.17, at: [http://w2.vatican.va/content/benedict-xvi/la/encyclicals/documents/hf\\_ben-xvi\\_enc\\_20051225\\_deus-caritas-est.html](http://w2.vatican.va/content/benedict-xvi/la/encyclicals/documents/hf_ben-xvi_enc_20051225_deus-caritas-est.html) (consulted April 5, 2016).

<sup>2</sup> See [http://w2.vatican.va/content/benedict-xvi/en/encyclicals/documents/hf\\_ben-xvi\\_enc\\_20051225\\_deus-caritas-est.html](http://w2.vatican.va/content/benedict-xvi/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_ben-xvi_enc_20051225_deus-caritas-est.html) (consulted April 5, 2016).

<sup>3</sup> Donna Lynn Orsuto, “The Harmony of Love: *Idem velle atque idem nolle*,” in: Livio Melina and Carl A. Anderson, eds., *The Way of Love: Reflections on Pope Benedict XVI's Encyclical 'Deus Caritas Est'*, San

also meet this praise in that most important source – the Bible, and specifically in the Latin version of the *Hymn to Love*, as the most famous chapter of St. Paul's First Epistle to the Corinthians is called (1 Cor. 13).

“To want the same thing, and to reject the same thing” is a definition that, however, dates decades back before Christ's birth. Pope Benedict XVI shortened the original text to adjust it to the Encyclical context (*Deus caritas est*), while the whole sentence regards a particular type of affectionate liaison – namely, friendship: “Idem velle atque idem nolle, ea demum firma amicitia est,” the words go, no less poignantly and beautifully in their full articulation.

The Pope's reference to the pagan past is not anything unusual. For the Church Fathers (whom St. Jerome had paved the way for, risking his own salvation for the then forbidden pleasure of reading Cicero's treatises<sup>4</sup>) referred often to the Greek and Roman heritage of BC-times, where quite a number of *animae naturaliter Christianae* could be identified. Nonetheless, the author of the definition cited by the Pope surely did not count among them. The online edition of the Encyclical Letter provides the readers with the following footnote on the source text: “Sallustius, *De coniuratione Catilinae*, XX, 4.”<sup>5</sup> Those who have studied Latin and Roman history may well realize the weight behind this bibliographical address. The act of quoting this definition of friendship in a Church document, albeit by a Pope famous for his unconventional open-mindedness, is exceptional indeed. For the definition reported by Sallust is attributed to one of the worst villains of Classical Antiquity – Lucius Sergius Catiline (108–62 BC). Not at all a parenetic example for the adherents of whatever confession you choose... Or maybe he is? In fact, this particular case of reception inspires us to reflect on the complex texture and routes of the transmission of our ancient heritage. For how was it possible that the words of the most dangerous felon of Rome found their way into the sublime homage paid by the Head of the Catholic Church to the love of neighbors and God and to the value of friendship? This gives all the greater pause as Benedict XVI's Encyclical Letter is not the only Christian text where Catiline's famous definition reverberates with the power of the highest authority. Is it really possible that words so beautiful were born in such a criminal mind?

Reception Studies deal with Classical Antiquity understood as a cultural experience allowing us to see in its distant mirror the reflections of subsequent epochs, including our own. Thus, this field of scholarship does not display much interest in attempts to discover or reconstruct the “true” version of the past. What really matters are its uses, re-uses, and abuses as markers of the worldviews of ever new heirs of the ancient legacy. However, sometimes it is worth reversing the perspective and looking anew, that is – through the reception phenomena – at times long past. Such an approach may encourage us to re-read the sources and thereby may allow us to comprehend more of history and,

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Francisco: Pontifical John Paul II Institute for Studies on Marriage and Family, Ignatius Press, 2006, p. 278 (via books.google, consulted April 5, 2016).

<sup>4</sup> See Hier. *Epist.* 22.30.

<sup>5</sup> The footnote 9 on the website with the English text (see above, n. 2).



in consequence, of our present and maybe future, too.<sup>6</sup> In this paper, inspired by the compelling document published in the only state in the world where Latin is still an official language (along with Italian), I wish to take the readers on a journey backwards through time. Firstly, we will come to better know Catiline as presented in texts from the twentieth and twenty-first centuries through focusing on the concept of friendship they present. Then, stimulated by those findings, we will travel back to Classical Antiquity to re-read the texts by his archenemy Cicero in a search for traces of... redemption for Catiline – indeed, in the name of friendship. Finally, we will return to our century, meeting some learned men from Mediaeval times on our way. This journey will permit us to better understand how the words of the most horrible delinquent of Roman history found their way into the most noble Christian learning.

### The Bad Boy's Charm

Catiline was a sacrilegious murderer and wanton monster, ready to destroy his own country to satisfy his greed and that of his notorious companions. That, at least, is the view of Cicero, Catiline's greatest opponent, whose objectivity may of course be called into question. However, it was also the view of Sallust, from the other side of Rome's political stage, who condemned Catiline no matter how strongly he admired his mind and body and sought to undermine Cicero's role in suppressing the conspiracy. Sallust did not give credence to the stories about Catiline and his companions drinking blood from human sacrifices as a rite of their group, although he did report such gossip – an excellent show of his rhetorical mastery in *praeteritio* as a tool of criticism. Taking into consideration Sallust's place in school curricula across the centuries, and especially the position of Cicero and his *Catilinarian Orations* – the “must have” components of every Latin course – Catiline's black PR is hardly surprising. A significant shift in the judgement on his actions took place in the nineteenth century, which turned out to be a particularly favourable period for the Roman conspirator. Barbara Levick, in her study *Catiline*, published in 2015 in the Bloomsbury series “Ancients in Action,” mentions E.S. Beesly, Professor of History at the University of London, as the scholar who meaningfully contributed to the change in our reception of the ancient villain, depicting him in *Catiline, Clodius, and Tiberius* of 1878 as a passionate social reformer. Professor “Beestly,” as he was called, was a friend of Karl Marx.<sup>7</sup>

In fact, Beesly voiced in his scholarship the idea expressed at least three decades earlier by artists who responded to the tensions of the People's Spring in Europe.<sup>8</sup> The political and social transformations of that time enhanced their interest in the

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<sup>6</sup> As Prof. Jan Kieniewicz is fond of saying: “The essence of a historian's vocation is to look into the future.”

<sup>7</sup> Barbara Levick, *Catiline*, London–New York, Bloomsbury, 2015 (Kindle, loc. 1810).

<sup>8</sup> See Hermann B.G. Speck, *Katilina im Drama der Weltliteratur. Ein Beitrag zur vergleichenden Stoffgeschichte des Römerdramas*, Leipzig: Max Hesses Verlag, 1906. Among earlier authors interested in the conspiracy it is worth mentioning Ben Jonson, Crébillon, and Voltaire.

Catilinarian conspiracy, and its unequivocal analysis by Sallust opened a field for new interpretations.<sup>9</sup> The ancient villain became the spokesman for rebels all over Europe. His negative portrayal by Cicero yielded to the image from Henrik Ibsen's tragedy (1849) – a Catiline surrounded by his friends who “will follow him outright,” while he aims at “nobler things” than at seizing the consulate:

My plan was greater and comprised much more  
Than means like these would point to.  
Civic freedom,  
The welfare of the state – these were my aims.<sup>10</sup>

In our times, after still more difficult encounters with History, scholars look at Catiline *sine ira et studio*, trying to do justice to both sides of the Catilinarian conspiracy.<sup>11</sup> It is, however, interesting to observe that Catiline's charm affects political activists – and today even more strongly than ever before. In *Catiline, the Monster of Rome: An Ancient Case of Political Assassination* (2014), Francis Galassi, a senior economic advisor with the Labour Program in the Canadian Ministry of Employment and Human Resources,<sup>12</sup> presents the protagonist as a man who “tried to reform government and society in Rome and return them to an original equilibrium, however impossible and mythological we may think it was.”<sup>13</sup> And Massimo Fini, called the *enfant terrible* of Italian journalism, in his *Catilina. Ritratto di un uomo in rivolta* (1996), portrays the conspirator as a victim of Cicero – a mean reactionary plagued by an inferiority complex, whom he juxtaposes with certain Italian politicians.<sup>14</sup> Inspired by Fini's interpretation, Mario Farneti wrote an alternate history, *Il Fondatore. Ucronia* (2005), in which he enabled Catiline to win with Cicero and then to establish a brand new world. The motif of friendship is of particular importance here. Catiline is loyal to his people and he befriends them without any sort of prejudice – this even concerned a freedman, something highly uncommon in Rome, for one of the prerequisites of friendship was, as Lisa Maurice observes in her

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<sup>9</sup> However, always the local character of a given act of reception of the Catilinarian conspiracy needs to be taken into account. For example, Poland has always been “pro-Ciceronian,” but at the same time, the Poles – as forced to become rebels so many times in history – have respected Catiline as well, and much earlier before the People's Spring, see Jerzy Axer, “Cicero's Orations *In Catilinam* as a Component of Modern Historical Memory. A Reconnaissance,” *Eos* 90 (2003), pp. 319–328.

<sup>10</sup> Henrik Ibsen, *Catiline*, transl. Anders Orbeck, in *Complete Works of Henrik Ibsen*, on-line edition Delphi Classics, 2013.

<sup>11</sup> See the excellent scholarship of Charles M. Odahl in *The Catilinarian Conspiracy*, New Haven: College and University Press, 1971, republished as *Cicero and the Catilinarian Conspiracy*, London: Routledge, 2010; Ann T. Wilkins, *Villain or Hero: Sallust's Portrayal of Catiline*, New York: Peter Lang, 1994. See also the early paper by Walter Allen Jr., “In Defense of Catiline,” *Classical Journal* 34.2 (1938), pp. 70–85.

<sup>12</sup> See <http://www.zoominfo.com/p/Francis-Galassi/-1994749419> (consulted April 6, 2016). See also Maurizio Blondet, *Elogio di Catilina e Berlusconi*, Rimini: Il Cerchio, 1995.

<sup>13</sup> Francis Galassi, *Catiline, the Monster of Rome: An Ancient Case of Political Assassination*, Yardley, PEN: Westholme Publishing, 2014 (Kindle, loc. 146).

<sup>14</sup> See also Martin Putz, *Antikenrezeption in der italienischen Gegenwartsliteratur (1985–1999)*, Berlin: Köster, 2002, pp. 317–318.

study on Plautus, the equal status between the two parties in a relationship. Catiline's "idem velle atque nolle" reverberates in this analysis, too:

[...] a relationship between a man and his slave, or indeed between a man and a woman, is not true idealised friendship. This is an extension of the belief that a friend is like 'another self,' an idea frequently found in philosophical discussions on friendship. [...] The resultant implication of this is that a true friend wants for his friend what that friend wants.<sup>15</sup>

It should be remembered that in Rome it was none other than Cicero who was known for his "subversive" attitude to friendship. Though he did not cross the line of manifesting it in his treatises, his friendship with Tiro, his slave and later freedman, lasted their whole lives – not an entirely "standard" relationship, according to Roman views. In Farneti's short story, however, we know nothing of Cicero's friendly attitude to anybody (it is a common practice to belittle the Orator when one praises Catiline, and vice versa), but we can observe the development of Catiline's friendship with the said freedman – Spurius Faesulanus – who, on top of all else, at the climax of the narration, turns out to be Cicero's illegitimate and rejected son. The value of friendship and Catiline's nearly religious willingness to sacrifice himself for the welfare of his neighbors lead him and his friends to the victory that opens a new chapter in the history of this alternate world.

Farneti made use of the genre of uchronia to put Catiline on a pedestal. However, as early as 1930 the American author Paul L. Anderson, in his historical young adults novel *A Slave of Catiline*, had shown that it was not an easy task to judge the two main actors of the events. The novel is dedicated to Cicero whom Anderson defines as his "valued friend." But at the same time, Catiline is a sublime character, too. The young protagonist Tiberius at a certain point becomes a gladiator and he is forced to fight to the death with his best friend Pugnax. The spectators bet on who will win, but Catiline explicitly condemns the fight: "I will not pay to see friend slay friend."<sup>16</sup> When Tiberius triumphs against his will, he faces a crowd demanding that he kill Pugnax. The young men are saved by Cicero as a consul who shows mercy against the will of the angry public. From this single scene we may discern how complex the novel is: both Cicero and Catiline give proof of independent (and very similar!) thinking – moreover, they evince personal courage and respect for friendship, which they find can flourish also at the bottom of Rome's social hierarchy, i.e., among gladiators. Anderson is aware of his "unorthodox" portrayal of Catiline in regard to the ancient sources he knows his readers are familiar with from their school education. Hence his appeal to be granted *licentia prosaica*, if only for the following reason: "[...] an unsuccessful rebel against constituted authority is always a traitor; if successful, he becomes in the eyes of history a noble and high-minded patriot."<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> Lisa Maurice, "Amici et sodales: An Examination of a Double Motif in Plautus," *Mnemosyne* 56.2 (2003), p. 165.

<sup>16</sup> Paul L. Anderson, *A Slave of Catiline*, New York: Biblo and Tannen, p. 43.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 255.

Through Catiline's complex image Anderson makes his young readers realize that the world is not black-and-white. In our times, we find many shades of grey in Catiline's portrait in Steven Saylor's *Catiline's Riddle* (1993) – book 3 from the series “Roma sub rosa.” Even though today's readers can rarely boast a thorough classical education, they appreciate Saylor's excellent background in history and, above all, his avoidance of facile judgements. Asked by his son – a soon to be member of the conspiracy – whether Cicero is a bad man, the novel's protagonist Gordianus responds: “Better than most. Worse than some.”<sup>18</sup> As for Catiline, he defines him as “a hard man not to like at first sight.”<sup>19</sup> Catiline is also able “to see into other men's hearts,”<sup>20</sup> interested in his people, brave, and compassionate. In sum, we may state that he is a truly adequate hero to express one of the most beautiful definitions of friendship: “idem velle atque nolle...”

### *Lector in bivio*

Nonetheless, it is Cicero, and not Catiline, who became the “official” authority on friendship, both in scholarship<sup>21</sup> and in popular culture. Clifford Meyer, the author of *Betrayal: A Novel of Rome*, puts the following words into the mouth of one of the protagonists of his book:

I am sure you recall the occasion I gave you a copy of Cicero's treatise, *On Friendship*, an edition Atticus had presented to me, in which Scipio's friend Gaius Laelius and Cicero's law tutor Quintus Mucius Scaevola, discuss the nature of friendship. Read it again, you may find the time well spent. (Kindle, loc. 173)

In fact, Cicero's treatise *Laelius de amicitia* is, to quote Craig A. Williams, the author of the study *Reading Roman Friendship* (2012), an “appealing combination of theoretical

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<sup>18</sup> Steven Saylor, *Catiline's Riddle*, New York: Ivy Books-Ballantine, 1994 (ed. pr. 1993), p. 30.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 92.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 317. Other popular authors of Cicero-Catiline novels, like Taylor Caldwell or Robert Harris, present negative portrayals of the conspirator, which, however, result from their particular narrative strategies: Harris is focused on Cicero's career as a mirror of the world of politics today and Caldwell – on the eternal fight between Good and Evil, hence the clear polarization of the protagonists is needed.

<sup>21</sup> Among the most recent studies see, e.g., Marc Mayer i Olivé, “Definiendo al amigo. Algunas consideraciones sobre el *Laelius de amicitia* de Cicerón,” in: José Antonio Beltrán Cebollada, Alfredo Encuentra Ortega, Gonzalo Fontana Elboj, Ana Isabel Magallón García, Rosa María Marina Sáez, eds., *Ortium cum dignitate. Estudios en homenaje al profesor José Javier Iso Echegoyen*, Zaragoza: Universidad de Zaragoza, 2013, pp. 305–318; Constant J. Mews, “Cicero on Friendship,” in: Barbara Caine, ed., *Friendship: A History*, New York: Routledge, 2014 (via books.google, consulted April 6, 2016); Marina Münkler, *Gespräche über Freundschaft: die Konstitution persönlicher Nahbeziehungen bei Platon, Cicero und Aelred*, Göttingen: Wallstein, 2015; François Prost, “Amor et Amicitia dans la correspondance d'exil de Cicéron,” *Vita Latina* 191–192 (2015), pp. 7–35.

reflection and practical advice.”<sup>22</sup> Cicero too: he quickly became a model friend himself. Not without reason did Gaston Boissier entitle his book about the Arpinate *Cicéron et ses amis* (1865).<sup>23</sup> Among many relationships, like the aforementioned one with Tiro, the most famous is Cicero's friendship with Atticus, to which he leaves this beautiful testimony in one of his letters:

Postremo non labor meus, non requies, non negotium, non otium, non foren-  
ses res, non domesticae, non publicae, non privatae carere diutius tuo suavissi-  
mo atque amantissimo consilio ac sermone possunt. (Cic. *Att.* 1.17.6)

In short, neither my work nor rest, business or leisure, affairs at the forum or  
at home, public or private, can long do without your sweet and loving advice  
and conversation.<sup>24</sup>

But Catiline had friends, too, even though the sources, probably also for the reasons mentioned by Anderson, do not give him justice in this respect. It is above all Cicero who is most careful not to use the term “friend” or “friendship” in regard to the (in)famous conspirator and his followers. Instead he bestows on them a great deal of sophisticated epithets of criminal tint: “Lucius Catiline with his council of nefarious men” (“L. Catilina cum suo consilio nefariorum hominum,” *Mur.* 39.83), “such a society” (“tanta societas,” in reference to Catiline and Lentulus, *Sull.* 5.16), “those men who were near to this crime” (“hosce ipsos homines qui huic adfines sceleri fuerunt,” *Sull.* 25.70), “Catiline's aid-de-camp” (“armiger Catilinae,” *dom.* 5.13), “Catiline's pet” (“Catilinae delicias,” *dom.* 24.62), “Catiline's whole herd” (“totus ille grex Catilinae,” *Att.* 1.14.5).<sup>25</sup> However, Plutarch calls their relationship simply one of friendship (“διὰ φιλίαν τοῦ Κατλίνα,” Plut. *Cic.* 15.3, though from Crassus' side), and even Cicero let it slip out that Catiline was in fact defended by his friends (“defendebant amicum” *Sull.* 29.81). He also (*nolens volens*) observes that Catiline enjoyed a kind of “cult status” after death: his grave was visited and covered with flowers. He immediately adds that these visitors were “audacious men and enemies of the country” (“sepulcrum L. Catilinae floribus ornatum hominum audacissimorum ac domesticorum hostium conventu epulisque celebratum est,” *Flac.* 38.95); however, his mention of the adoration at Catiline's tomb matters not less for this, but even more.

It should be admitted that Cicero had good reason to choose his words carefully in dealing with the Catilinarian conspiracy. As specialists on Roman rhetoric observe, the

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<sup>22</sup> Craig A. Williams, *Reading Roman Friendship*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012, p. 2. Williams observes also (p. 32) that *amicitia* is a truly Roman value, impossible to be easily translated as *φιλία*.

<sup>23</sup> By the way, Boissier wrote also *La conjuration de Catilina* (1905).

<sup>24</sup> Quotation after David Konstan, *Friendship in the Classical World*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997, pp. 124–125.

<sup>25</sup> Cicero is keen on using the term “friendship” in Catiline's context only in his defence of Caelius who, as he admits, had some sympathies towards the (in)famous conspirator, and Cicero stresses the direction of those emotions not from Catiline to Caelius, but from Caelius – an *adulescens* of warm heart – to Catiline.

references to the value of friendship were very important for Catiline as a part of his *captatio benevolentiae* towards the citizens. Namely, by generating – or at least projecting – a broad circle of friends, Catiline tried to convince the Romans that he was trying to rebuild the Commonwealth and not to demolish it with his *de facto* illegal actions – indeed, “idem velle atque nolle” perfectly suited his aim.<sup>26</sup> Cicero obviously wanted to destroy that strategy, and thus to deny Catiline all right to appeal to the concept of friendship. And he was no doubt successful. In fact, the Arpinate’s skills exerted an impact even on a nineteenth-century commentator of Sallust’s monograph, in which Catiline’s famous definition is quoted (and bear in mind – this was a century favourable for the conspirator). The scholar found those words outrageous in the mouth of such a criminal (“Sed Catilina conspirationem malorum amicitiam vocat, suae serviens causae”).<sup>27</sup> Last but not least, Cicero had also a personal motive in refusing Catiline the very term of friend. At a certain stage of their careers the two Romans were in a kind of relationship – at least an alliance, if not a political friendship – and Cicero even pondered defending Catiline *de repetundis* in 65 BC.<sup>28</sup> As consul, he needed to cut off any thread of association with his now archenemy and at the same time he wanted to anticipate any accusations of breaking friendly bonds between them. Thus, he strongly contrasts Catiline’s “society of crime” (“societate sceleris,” *Sull.* 18.52) and the “true”, i.e., his own – Cicero’s circle of friends. It is owing to his friends that Cicero is saved from the assault by Catiline and Autronius’ army (“ego tectus praesidio firmo amicorum Catilinae tum et Autroni copias et conatum repressi,” *Sull.* 18.51), while the conspirators wind up going so far as to violate the sacred law of friendship the Arpinate displayed towards all co-citizens by admitting them to his home:

[...] tum tuus pater, Corneli, id quod tandem aliquando confitetur, illam sibi officiosam provinciam depoposcit ut, cum prima luce consulem salutatum veniret, intromissus et meo more et iure amicitiae me in meo lectulo trucidaret. (*Sull.* 18.52)

Then your father, Cornelius, as he at long last admits, complaisantly demanded for himself the responsibility for murdering me in my bed when he came at dawn to pay his respects to the consul and had in accordance with my custom and the rights of friendship been admitted.<sup>29</sup>

In Cicero’s fight against Catiline the creation of a united front of Roman citizens was of crucial importance. The Arpinate, as if in defiance of his archenemy, was build-

<sup>26</sup> William W. Batstone, “Catiline’s Speeches in Sallust’s *Bellum Catilinae*,” in: D.H. Berry, Andrew Erskine, eds., *Form and Function in Roman Oratory*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 232–233. These speeches may be the basic source for positive portrayals of Catiline in later epochs.

<sup>27</sup> C. Crispi Sallustii *Opera omnia ex editione Gottlieb Cortii*, Londini: A.J. Valpy, 1820 p. 420 (*Notae variorum in Bellum Catilinarium*, via books.google). Apparently 1820 was too early for a positive judgement.

<sup>28</sup> See Cic. *Att.* 1.2.

<sup>29</sup> Transl. C. Macdonald, in: Cicero, *In Catilinam 1–4. Pro Murena. Pro Sulla. Pro Flacco*, Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press (Loeb), 1996, p. 367.



ing a group of those who “wanted and rejected the same things,” too. He expected the members of this group, though they belonged to different classes of Roman society, to be joined by the noble ideas of faith in and sacrifice for the Republic. Indeed, united they were. However, not as Cicero would have dreamt. They did not share an idea, but a fear – the fear of Catiline in power. So they supported Cicero, but only for a moment in History. As the alliance based on shared terror cannot be called friendship at all, it hardly surprises us that Cicero's “*concordia ordinum*” turned out to be ephemeral and its architect paid dearly for his actions. He was punished with exile. A perfect test for his friends, by the way: in fact, only a few of them supported him in that hardships and worked towards his *revocatio*.

Once back, Cicero made use of the “social capital” he had conjured up with his oratory, aiming to create a “*consensus omnium bonorum*,” for only the “boni,” i.e., good and honest men, as he believed, could be trusted with the joint mission of saving the Republic. Those on the other side of the political barricade of Rome were to be deprived of the right to any positive values, friendship included. This approach of Cicero's is evident in his campaign against Clodius and Gabinius, both compared by their companions to Catiline, which, by the way, proves the existence of a positive stream of the conspirator's reception nearly a decade after his death – a fact usually overlooked in general scholarship.<sup>30</sup> As in 63 BC, however, so in 56 BC does Cicero refuse to grant these men the name of “friends” (“*quem isti satellites tui [Clodii] ‘felicem Catilinam’ nominant,*” *dom.* 27.72). Additionally, what a few years earlier would have seemed impossible, he declares Gabinius to be even more audacious than Catiline (“*eaque dixit, quae, si eius vir Catilina revixisset, dicere non esset ausus,*” *red. sen.* 5.12) – no greater offence was conceivable in Cicero's mind and he apparently thought Gabinius “worthy” of it. However, life was soon to bring Cicero a terrible change of views. A new enemy arose and the name of Catiline and the theme of friendship returned in Cicero's greatest fight – a fight to the death, a fight he lost in 43 BC.

### Keep Calm and Rebel

Cicero's relationship with Antony was longer and more evident than his presumed alliance of 65 BC with Catiline. During Caesar's dictatorship, they exchanged some favours, even if mainly on a purely diplomatic level.<sup>31</sup> Still, in May 44 Cicero wrote to Tiro that he wanted to maintain – he used the exact word – the friendship with Antony (“*Ego tamen Antonii inveteratam sine ulla offensione amicitiam retinere sane volo,*” *fam.* 16.23.2). Thus, their spectacular rupture only a few months later (*First Phillippic* of Sept. 2, 44) was very painful for Cicero, and on a very important level. Indeed, his moral authority was called into question by Antony, who accused him of betraying their

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<sup>30</sup> See, e.g., the interesting remark by Gabriele Thome, *Vorstellungen vom Bösen in der lateinischen Literatur*, Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 1993, p. 27, n. 39.

<sup>31</sup> See Williams, *op. cit.*, pp. 235–237.

friendship (“Cui priusquam de ceteris rebus respondeo, de amicitia quam a me violatam esse criminatus est, quod ego gravissimum crimen iudico, pauca dicam,” *Phil.* 2.1.3).<sup>32</sup> An attack on Cicero’s persona could debilitate his position as a politician and the leader of the republicans. In response, Cicero did his best to shift the conflict from a personal issue to one impinging on the public sphere. He presented Antony as the biggest enemy of the Republic, thus making any kind of individual relationship with him impossible. So in the *Philippics* Cicero “granted” Antony an impressive palette of the most insulting epithets: *hostis externus*, *archipirata*, *dux latronum* – the personal term *inimicus* appeared as the one of lesser importance in this series.<sup>33</sup> Moreover, Cicero accused Antony of an attempt on Caesar (*Phil.* 2.29.74).<sup>34</sup> The Arpinate’s aim was to discredit Antony as a false friend of the Dictator with no moral rights to act as his successor. In short, Cicero would not applaud Shakespeare’s Antony, who opened his famous speech with the address: “Friends, Romans, Countrymen...”

In the *Philippics* the name of Catiline strikes back, as well. And again, the implications of Cicero’s use of it will surprise us, if only we are able to go beyond the stereotypes and open up to the meaning transpiring from the speeches. For it seems that Catiline enjoyed a “cult status” in the eyes of Cicero’s contemporaries and he evoked positive associations, at least in certain circles of Rome, even 20 years after his death! That is a decade after the Orator’s attacks on Clodius and Gabinius, during which we have identified clear evidence of Catiline’s positive *post-mortem* reception. In fact, Antony boasted to be similar to Catiline (“se similem esse Catilinae gloriari solet,” *Phil.* 4.6.15), and he certainly would not have done that, had he not counted on a favourable reaction on the part of quite a significant group of Romans.

Cicero takes up the challenge and he continues this simile; however, he makes it devastating for Antony. From a range of Catiline’s complex character traits (some of them impressive, indeed) he chooses the most negative ones. First of all, he makes Antony seem more audacious than Catiline (“audacior quam Catilina,” *Phil.* 2.1.1). However, while we know this line of accusation from his fight against Gabinius, Cicero presses further: Antony is to be on a par with Catiline in crime, but he is less diligent (“scelere par est illi, industria inferior,” *Phil.* 4.6.15). In this way Cicero strips the simile which was to Antony’s liking from all possible appealing elements of Catiline’s imagery. The consequences reach far: Antony is no real friend, neither is he an industrious officer. What is left is only felony and Catiline’s plan to destroy Rome that Antony wishes to carry out in his wicked audacity with no higher aim in mind but a love affair. Cicero’s choice of vocabulary in the speech – “was it for this that you disturbed the city by nocturnal alarms, and Italy with fears of many days’ duration” (“urbem terrore nocturno, Italiam

<sup>32</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>33</sup> See Konstan, op. cit., p. 126. See also Costanza Novielli, *La retorica del consenso. Commento alla tredicesima Filippica di M. Tullio Cicerone*, Bari: Edipuglia, 2001.

<sup>34</sup> See John T. Ramsey, “Did Julius Caesar Temporarily Banish Mark Antony from his Inner Circle?,” *Classical Quarterly* (2004), pp. 161–173 (esp. 162–163). Ramsey (161, n. 2) adds that Cicero also suggests that Trebonius attempted to recruit Antony in a plot to murder Caesar in 45 – the scholar assumes “the incident is almost certainly invented by Cicero.”



multorum dierum metu perturbasti,” *Phil.* 2.31.77)<sup>35</sup> – is a clear hint at the Catilinarian conspiracy. Cicero brings back the old fears, making them more terrible, because their source is an extremely audacious and ignorant man – a traitor to his friends. At the same time, Cicero declares his readiness to repeat the efforts he made during the conspiracy to save the State and his co-citizens (*Phil.* 2.46.119).

Thus, we can see that, with the passage of time, Cicero's attitude towards Catiline evolves, and not only because the conspiracy was the catalyst of Cicero's greatest triumph.<sup>36</sup> First of all, Cicero painfully starts to feel the relativity of History. Compared to Antony, Catiline no longer seemed to be such a horrendous monster; indeed, he displayed a certain greatness – noticed by Sallust – his followers were lacking in. Ironically, Cicero became a rebel, too. Proscribed, with no support in his beloved laws, by making Antony worse than Catiline, Cicero-the-Rebel pays homage to the dying Republic. For Catiline was an enemy against whom he could fight – a worthy adversary. Antony not – for he was guided by no higher idea like friendship or freedom (let alone in their wicked versions), and he had at that time two companions on his side who declared “idem velle atque nolle.” As the triumvirs, they created a brand new world, in which there was no place for *caritas* or for *amicitia*. Their ephemeral union drenched Rome in blood.

But the idea of friendship survived, owing paradoxically to both Cicero and Catiline, whom Sallust made proclaim one of friendship's most beautiful definitions. From pagan Rome, it made its way to the Encyclical Letter by Pope Benedict XVI, where indeed, it caused consternation in those who know its origin. In her commentary on the Papal text, Donna Lynn Orsuto mentions that “idem velle atque idem nolle” had previously been said by an “enigmatic Roman politician” to his “troops and fellow conspirators”; however, she is careful not to go into details about the bloody plot. Instead she adds that this definition was quoted by the Church Fathers, including St. Thomas Aquinas in the *Summa*.<sup>37</sup> However, if we read the relevant fragment, we will see that – as Orsuto notices, too – the Aquinate attributed the definition in question to... Cicero:

Et propter hoc inter amicabilia unum ponitur identitas electionis, ut patet in IX Ethic.; et Tullius dicit, in libro de amicitia, quod amicorum est idem velle et nolle. (*Summa* 2.2.29.3)

Hence it is reckoned a sign of friendship if people ‘make choice of the same things’ (Ethic. ix, 4) and Tullius says (De Amicitia) that friends ‘like and dislike the same things.’<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>35</sup> Transl. C.D. Yonge, in: M. Tullius Cicero, *The Orations of Marcus Tullius Cicero*, London: George Bell & Sons, 1903 (via Perseus Project). See also John T. Ramsey, “Did Julius Caesar Temporarily Banish Mark Antony...,” p. 166, and idem, “Did Mark Antony Contemplate an Alliance with His Political Enemies in July 44 B.C.E.?” *Classical Philology* 96 (2001), pp. 253–268.

<sup>36</sup> On this issue see also my *Pro Cicerone poeta. Poezja Marka Tulliusza Cyncerona na przestrzeni stuleci*, Warszawa: Instytut Badań Interdyscyplinarnych “Artes Liberales,” 2008.

<sup>37</sup> Orsuto, “The Harmony of Love,” 278.

<sup>38</sup> Translation from <http://www.newadvent.org/summa/3029.htm> (consulted April 5, 2016).

Is this misplacement of Cicero and Catiline a simple factual error of no importance or does it guide us towards a new interesting direction, as is often the case with mistakes by eminent people, provided we do not neglect them, but give them a chance to speak to us?<sup>39</sup> This is of course a rhetorical question.

The idea of a close relationship that makes two people nearly one human being is also at the roots of Cicero's definition of friendship ("est enim is, qui est tamquam alter idem," *Lael.* 21.80; "paene unum ex duobus," *Lael.* 21.81; "unus quasi animus fiat e pluribus," *Lael.* 25.92).<sup>40</sup> The Arpinate also gladly resorts to the noun *consensio* to express the concept of friends sharing desires, opinions, and wishes ("voluntatum sententiarum studiorum summa consensio," *Lael.* 4.15). But the sole *consensio* is not enough. Friendship should be characterized by goodwill and love – note that Cicero uses the term taken later up by Christianity – *caritas*:

Est enim amicitia nihil aliud nisi omnium divinarum humanarumque rerum cum benevolentia et caritate consensio. (*Lael.* 6.20)

Friendship is nothing other than agreement in all matters, divine and human, joined with goodwill and affection.<sup>41</sup>

Having reconsidered all these elements, it does not surprise us that Laelius, the protagonist of Cicero's *De amicitia*, attests solemnly that he had never heard from his best friend Scipio anything that he would not have approved himself: "**nihil audivi ex eo ipse quod nollem**" (*Lael.* 27.103). If this sounds familiar, let's have a closer look at Cicero's oration in defense of Gnaeus Plancius who, as the quaestor of Macedonia, had helped him during his exile of 58/57 BC, when Cicero had been outlawed with no civic status and rights, the right to Roman friendship included. Plancius remained a devoted friend to the Arpinate in this dark hour (in contrast to the propraetor of the province, Lucius Apuleius Saturninus who had turned his back on Cicero, though at least he did not block Plancius' actions) and they both were on warm terms to the end of their lives.<sup>42</sup> In 54 BC Cicero stood up for Plancius in a process *de sodaliciis* (a malpractice in the elections). Friendship is a recurring theme in the speech, all the more so as the accuser was a friend of Cicero, too. Even without delving into the details, the following fragment will immediately catch our attention:

Vetus est enim lex illa iustae veraeque amicitiae quae mihi cum illo iam diu est, **ut idem amici semper velint**, neque est ullum amicitiae certius vinculum

<sup>39</sup> See Jerzy Axer, "Z Horacjusza," in: Stanisław Makowski, ed., *Cyprian Norwid – interpretacje. Materiały sesji, Warszawa, 21-22 kwietnia 1983 r.*, Warszawa: Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe, 1986, pp. 59–70.

<sup>40</sup> See Jörg Spielvogel, *Amicitia und res publica*, Diss., Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 1993, p. 8, on Cicero's interest in friendship in his youth (Cic. *inv.* 2.166). See also Williams, op. cit., pp. 15–19.

<sup>41</sup> Transl. from Williams, op. cit., p. 20. Konstan, op. cit., p. 130, calls this definition by Cicero's "a commonplace" and to prove his point he evokes Catiline's "idem velle atque nolle."

<sup>42</sup> See Cic. *fam.* 4.14; 4.15.

quam consensus et societas consiliorum et voluntatum. (*Planc.* 2.5)

For it is an old principle of genuine and real friendship, such as subsists between him and me, that **friends should always have the same wishes**; nor is there any surer bond of friendship than an agreement in and community of designs and wishes.<sup>43</sup>

It does not need much concentration to notice the striking parallelism of these words with the famous definition of friendship by Catiline. Cicero's testimony permits us to conclude that the conspirator did not invent it from scratch – the idea behind his definition was popular in Rome (“*vetus est enim lex illa*”), only its wordings could slightly differ.<sup>44</sup> At this point it is worth mentioning that Sallust, who was writing after Cicero's death, with many a text of the Arpinate at his disposal, sometimes made use of Cicero's words or phrases to mock him and deflate a bit of the Orator's persona, and to wink at his learned readers.<sup>45</sup> If this was also the case with the definition of friendship he had put in Catiline's mouth, it is impossible to prove, however, the mischievous suggestion of a similarity of Catiline and Cicero had to be very appealing. All the more so that the Arpinate was accused of tyranny by his adversaries (including the mysterious Pseudo-Sallust) and he even found it necessary to ensure his audience that he was not “the other Catiline”:

An [ut] ego, qui Catilinam haec molientem sustulerim, everterim, adfixerim, ipse exstiterim repente Catilina? (*Phil.* 14.5.14)

Was it likely that I, who hoisted, overthrew, and dashed down Catiline when he made such an attempt, should suddenly reveal myself a Catiline?<sup>46</sup>

Furthermore, where friendship is concerned, Cicero stresses incessantly one *sine qua non* condition of this relationship – as if in defiance of any kind of associations between himself and Catiline, for this condition is a value his enemy did not possess – *virtus*:

[...] virtuti opera danda est, sine qua nec amicitiam neque ullam rem expetendam consequi possumus; ea vero neglecta qui se amicos habere arbitrantur, tum se denique errasse sentiunt, cum eos gravis aliquis casus experiri cogit. (*Cic. Lael.* 22.84)<sup>47</sup>

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<sup>43</sup> Transl. C.D. Yonge, in: M. Tullius Cicero, *The Orations of Marcus Tullius Cicero*, London: George Bell & Sons, 1891 (via Perseus Project, bold mine).

<sup>44</sup> Williams, op. cit., p. 14, mentions in this context also Ter. *Ad.* 802, Cic. *off.* 1.16.51, and Sall. *Iug.* 31.14.

<sup>45</sup> See Walter Allen Jr., “Catullus XLIX and Sallust's *Bellum Catilinae*,” *Classical Journal* 32 (1936–1937), p. 298.

<sup>46</sup> Transl. D.R. Shackleton Bailey in Cicero, *Philippics 7–14*, revised by John T. Ramsey and Gesine Manuwald, Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2010 (Loeb), p. 307.

<sup>47</sup> Mayer i Olivé, op. cit., pp. 305–318, enumerates also some later inspirations by Cicero's words.

[...] we must [...] give our attention to virtue, without which we can obtain neither friendship nor any other desirable thing; on the other hand, those who slight virtue and yet think that they have friends, perceive their mistake at last when some grievous misfortune forces them to put their friends to the test.<sup>48</sup>

This is why Cicero can be friends with the ever so different Atticus, who lives (at least in theory) *procul negotiis* in Epicurus' garden, but not with Catiline, Clodius, or Antony though – like Cicero – they were all devoted to a political career. The fact that both Cicero and Atticus were *viri boni*<sup>49</sup> almost naturally solves the dilemma of whether to help a friend in a dishonest action: between true friends such a problem simply does not exist, for no true friend would ask anything immoral (“Haec igitur prima lex amicitiae sancitur, ut ab amicis honesta petamus, amicorum causa honesta faciamus,” *Lael.* 13.44; “neque quicquam unquam nisi honestum et rectum alter ab altero postulabit,” *Lael.* 22.82).

Cicero's line of thinking was taken up by many early Christian authors who amply quoted the Orator's theses. St. Aelred of Rievaulx, only one century younger than St. Thomas, summed up their views in his famous treatise on friendship, stressing the importance of this “compatibility” in goodness: “[...] quod ait Tullius: amicitia est rerum humanarum et divinarum cum benevolentia et caritate consensio” (“[...] what Tullius used to say: Friendship is agreement in all matters, divine and human, joined with goodwill and affection”).<sup>50</sup> At the same time, also the dangerous aspect of the compatibility in Catiline's famous definition did not pass the attention of Christian minds. St. Augustine himself refutes the very name of friendship to the relationship between two people who are similar, but deprived of morality, thus compatible in crime only (“Sunt amici ex certa amicitia, quae nec amicitia dicenda est, quam facit mala conscientia. Sunt enim homines qui pariter mala committunt, et ideo videntur sibi conjuncti.”<sup>51</sup>). In result of intense reflection on this matter St. Aelred divides friendship into carnal, worldly, and spiritual<sup>52</sup> – the carnal one is created by “a conspiracy in vice” (“carnalem quidem creat vitiorum consensus”), and the members of this relationship do not perform honest actions (“non honesta procurans,” 41). The reference to the definition by Sallust's Catiline is made by St. Aelred explicitly:

[...] ut inito foedere miserabili, quidquid sceleris, quidquid sacrilegii est, alter agat et patiat pro altero; nihil quae hac amicitia dulcius arbitrantur, nihil

<sup>48</sup> Transl. William Armistead Falconer in: Cicero, *De Senectute. De Amicitia. De Divinatione*, Cambridge, Mass.–London, Harvard University Press, 1923 (Loeb), p. 191 (via Perseus Project).

<sup>49</sup> See also Cic. *Lael.* 5.18: “Sed hoc primum sentio nisi in bonis amicitiam esse non posse,” and 22.82: “Par est autem primum ipsum esse virum bonum, tum alterum similem sui quaerere.”

<sup>50</sup> St. Aelred, *De spiritali amicitia*, 11 (Caput II: *Inter quos sit amicitia vera*). See also above n. 40.

<sup>51</sup> Aug., *Hom.* 38.50. See also Cassian, *Confer.* 16.1 and Ambrose, *De fide* 4.7.74. More examples in Orsuto, op. cit., p. 278. See also Konstan, op. cit., p. 150.

<sup>52</sup> Chrysostomus in his *Homily on Saint Paul's Epistle to the Colossians* makes a similar typology in reference to friendship. See also Konstan, op. cit., pp. 149–173.

iudicant iustius; *idem velle et idem nolle*, sibi existimantes amicitiae legibus imperari. (40)

[...] once this degrading pact is struck, each will perform or endure for the other any possible crime or sacrilege. They consider nothing sweeter, they judge nothing more equitable than this friendship, for they think that *to wish and not wish the same things* is imposed on them by the laws of friendship.<sup>53</sup>

If, however, the people in such a relationship are good and honest, they experience spiritual friendship, which St. Aelred considers the only true one (“spiritualis et vera”). In such a case they indeed wish and do not wish the same things – the noble things:

Amicitia itaque spiritualis inter bonos, vitae, morum, studiorum que similitudine parturitur, quae est **in rebus humanis atque divinis cum benevolentia et caritate consensio**. [...] **Ubi talis est amicitia, ibi profecto est idem velle et idem nolle**, tanto utique dulcius, quanto sincerius; tanto suavius, quanto sacratius; ubi sic amantes nihil possunt velle quod dedeceat, nihil quod expediat nolle. (46–48)

So spiritual friendship is begotten among the righteous by likeness of life, habits, and interests, that is *by agreement in things human and divine, with good will and charity*. [...] **Where such friendship exists, wishing and not wishing the same things**, a wish that is the more pleasant as it is more sincere and the sweeter as it is more holy, lovers can wish for nothing that is unbecoming and fail to wish for nothing that is becoming.<sup>54</sup>

This friendship nurtures love to our neighbors, it strengthens us, and it frees us from fears and sordidness that mark human existence on Earth. Finally, we experience the fraternity of souls leading towards the Goodness or – in other words – God:

Ita inter nos amor crevit, concaluit affectus, caritas roborabatur, donec ad id ventum est, ut esset nobis cor unum et anima una, **idem velle et idem nolle**, esset que hic amor timoris vacuus, offensionis nescius, suspicione carens, adulationem exhorrens. (124)

So love between us increased, affection caught fire, and charity grew strong, until we came to the point where we had *one heart and one soul, wishing and not wishing the same things*, and this love was void of fear, unaware of insult, free of suspicion, and aghast at flattery.<sup>55</sup>

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<sup>53</sup> Transl. Lawrence C. Braceland, in: Aelred of Rievaulx, *Spiritual Friendship*, ed. Marsha L. Dutton, Collegeville, Minnesota: Liturgical Press, 2010 (Kindle), ad loc. (bold mine).

<sup>54</sup> Transl. Braceland (see n. 53), ad loc. (bold mine).

<sup>55</sup> Transl. Braceland (see n. 53), ad loc. (bold mine).

The power of classical reception filtered Catiline's definition of friendship, as recorded by Sallust, through Cicero's reflection, and then carried it further into its development at the hands of Christian writers, owing to whom it deepened its "divine" dimension. This is not surprising, given Cicero's fame as the author *par excellence* who wrote about friendship. And of course Catiline's reputation needed to be subordinated to Cicero's moral authority – hence St. Thomas' "natural" in this sense association of "amicorum est idem velle et nolle" only with the Arpinate. However, while in Alexandre Dumas and Auguste Maquet's tragedy (1848) Catiline says to Cicero somewhat ominously: "Je suis comme vous, Tullius,"<sup>56</sup> in the humanistic dialogue about friendship – although Cicero and Catiline never led it one with another – they become "ex duobus unum" without any sinister undertones and they attest in one voice to the beauty of this relationship. Even if the Papal chancellery gives this voice back to Catiline, it probably would not be here if not for Cicero, who saved Rome and his contemporaries in many different ways.

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A rebellion succeeds only if people who want and reject the same things support each other both in the brightest and darkest hour, on the condition that they are honest and virtuous, joined by ties of friendship. This relation – like the ties of *artes liberales* we accept willingly – is based on freedom and selfless love (*caritas*), because friendship is a matter of free will,<sup>57</sup> the surpassing factor defining the human being as much in pagan Rome as in Christian times. That is why true friendship has always been respected and desired. As Cicero said: "Besides wisdom, I think the immortal goods have given humanity nothing better" ("qua quidem haud scio an excepta sapientia nihil melius homini sit a dis immortalibus datum," *Lael.* 6.20).<sup>58</sup>

Although Cicero and Catiline did not go down in History as friends, both have been inspiring generations to rebel in the name of friendship and freedom, for only rebellion on such foundations makes sense, as History teaches us. And if friends who rebel are virtuous men, they sometimes succeed in creating – maybe not a world – but a haven where Ciceronian *artes liberales* reign, along with *caritas* in its broadest, both pagan and Christian meaning. In such a haven there would surely also be an asylum for the audacious Catiline who – as we are assured by Voltaire – would have become a Scipio, had Cicero been his tutor.<sup>59</sup>

I am inclined to suspect that in one particular haven of *artes liberales* created by two good friends at the University of Warsaw, Cicero and Catiline would even learn

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<sup>56</sup> Alexandre Dumas, Auguste Maquet, *Catilina*, in: *Théâtre complet de Alex. Dumas*, 9, Paris: Michel Lévy Frères, 1864, p. 105.

<sup>57</sup> Williams, op. cit., p. 16, observes that in this respect friendship "surpasses kinship." See also Konstan, op. cit., p. 1.

<sup>58</sup> Transl. from Williams, op. cit., p. 20.

<sup>59</sup> Cicero's very words: "Catilina lui-même, à tant d'horreurs instruit, / Eût été Scipion, si je l'avais conduit," in Voltaire's tragedy *Rome sauvée, ou Catilina* (1752), act V, scene III.

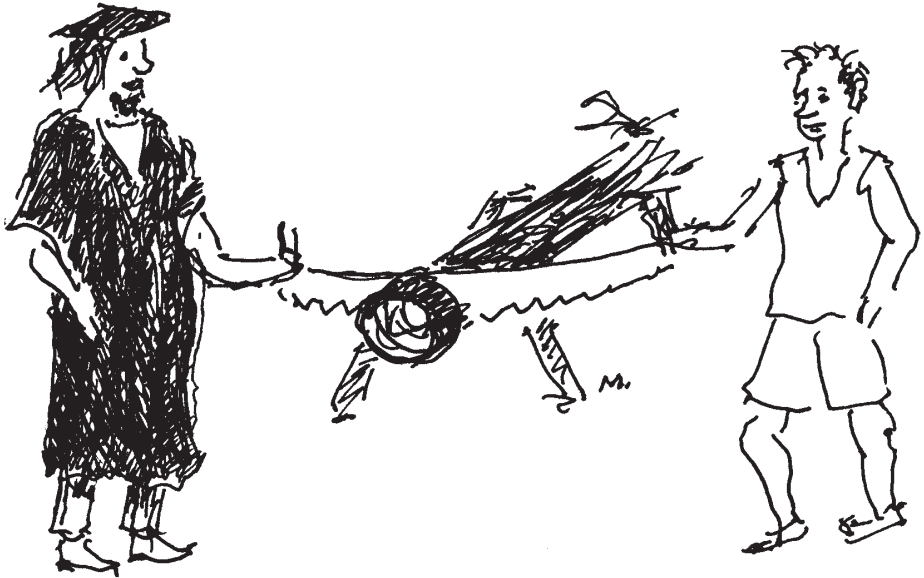
to co-operate and have classes with students in tandem (as in “co-tutelle,” not as in “quousque tandem”), encouraging new generations to make use of this haven to undertake bold expeditions in the name of friendship and freedom. *Gloria seditionem facere ausis!* Glory to the rebels!





Jan Miernowski

**Parrhesia and Teaching:  
Against the Master-Disciple Model**



Jan Miernowski

## Parrhesia and Teaching: Against the Master-Disciple Model

During the central scene of Pascal Quignard's *All the World's Mornings*, the master of the viola da gamba, Monsieur de Sainte Colombe reluctantly accepts Marin Marais as a disciple. His young student is very skilled technically and even quite ingenious in his musical improvisation – he will certainly make a very good living playing at court – but Sainte Colombe has no illusions: Marais will never be a true musician. Indeed, Marais's musical art is not the reason why Sainte Colombe agrees to be his teacher. It is the suffering conveyed by the boy's mutating voice no longer suited for the choir of the royal chapel that prompts Sainte Colombe to grant him his guidance.

*All the World's Mornings* may seem a historical novel about two famous French baroque composers and virtuosos. In reality, however, this central episode reveals the allegoric nature of the book and hints at its hidden meaning, namely, that true music dwells beyond social artifice, beyond articulated language, beyond technique, and even beyond learning, somewhere in the dark and mysterious depths preceding the rhythm of conception and following the last heartbeat. Quignard's novel suggests that a true musician, like Sainte Colombe and unlike Marais, is a shaman who plunges into the dark abysses of the earth, travels outside of life limited by sexuality and death, and conjures the voices of animals and the primordial rhythms of the maternal womb out of the wooden box that is his instrument.<sup>1</sup>

Quignard's allegorical novel is also a bildungsroman, the story of a failed educational endeavour. The relationship between the two main characters Sainte Colombe and Marin Marais perfectly illustrates a model of education which is often idealized by academics, especially in Poland and France, but which, in my opinion, would be harmful to research and to the scholarly development of university teachers and students if it were ever really put into practice. Let's call it the Master-Disciple model. This model is an idealized relationship between a student, posing as the pupil, and a professor, taking

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<sup>1</sup> Pascal Quignard, *Tous les matins du monde*, Paris: Gallimard, 1991; see also Quignard's *La leçon de musique*, Paris: Hachette, 1987, and *La haine de la musique*, Paris: Calmann-Lévy, 1996. See also Krzysztof Rutkowski, *Artes Liberales. O nauczycielach i uczniu*, Poznań: Wydawnictwo Poznańskie, 2014, chap. VI.

up the role of an intellectual guide. It is supposed to be a privileged bond defined by four characteristics.

First, the Master-Disciple education is a solitary endeavour. The Master voluntarily lives confined to a symbolic place removed from the noise of social life and worldly ambitions not unlike Saint Colombe whose old and modest manor is located outside of Paris, away from the turmoil of the town and of the court. The social acquaintances of the old master are equally limited, a few Jansenist *solitaires* who are reduced to inner emigration after several waves of persecutions from the absolutist power of Louis XIV. Conversely, Marais's ultimate failure to understand the essence of music will coincide with his worldly success as royal musician in Versailles. Translated into terms that are more familiar to contemporary academic life, the solitude of the Master confines him to an office encumbered with piles of books (with no Internet connection, if possible), somewhere in a secluded corner of a university campus, far away from the commotion of the globalized corporate world. The Disciple's solitude is the mirror image of her Master's eremitism, since, at least ideally, the Disciple is a Master in the making. Like her Master did before her, she also has to overcome many intellectual and ethical weaknesses in order to progress towards the goal which is common to both of them.

This goal – and this is the second characteristic of the Master-Disciple model – is the achievement of Transcendent Truth. Transcendent Truth can take the form of a body of knowledge, for instance a respected cultural tradition or a corpus of canonical texts. Less often, Transcendent Truth is a particularly difficult know-how but one that is never limited to a mere technical ability. Always synonymous with moral self-improvement, Transcendent Truth is in fact intimately connected to Ethical Value. The more knowledgeable the Disciple becomes, the more she grows morally, or, put in another way, in order to approach Transcendent Truth, one has to prove moral worth.

By definition, both Transcendent Truth and the correlated Ethical Value are, in the last resort, out of reach, or at least they are located on some Himalayan height of perfection which can be accessed only by a fortunate few after a life-long effort. From this intellectual and ethical Parnassus, flows the pristine spring of wisdom and goodness. In order to return to this archaic source, one has to wash away the filth of history and shed the concerns imposed by previous, faulty education. This is the reason why Marais, quite foreseeably, fails as Disciple. He is neither interested nor able to journey towards the primordial source of sound where the distinctions between time and eternity, life and death, human and animal have no bearing. His only goal is to steal Sainte Colombe's compositions in order to use them to advance his own career at court.

Thirdly, the learning process is a journey along a single path leading to Transcendent Truth. Since all Disciples advance along this path (with minor individual deviations which can be discarded if one takes the long view from the perspective of Transcendent Truth), they can be compared and their progress can easily be measured. This is why Disciples can be qualified as more or less "advanced" in learning, and unfortunately, also be judged "not up to the level" or even definitely unworthy of the Transcendent Truth they aspire to. By the same token, they are undeserving of the efforts deployed by the

Master. This negative assessment of the Disciples' progress towards perfection is all the more likely, given that perfection, by its very nature, is unattainable.

The fourth characteristic of the Master-Disciple model is a direct consequence of this scalability of progress along the path to Transcendent Truth: the privileged relation binding the teacher and the student together is, among other things, a relation of power. Obviously, this power is exercised by the Master who, like Sainte Colombe in regards to Marais, has the authority to assess the progress made by his Disciple, marvels at his student's ascension towards Transcendent Truth or, on the contrary, decrees her unworthiness. But it is also the power of the Disciple who has the unique capacity to confirm the Master in his or her Mastership, to rebel against the Master's teachings proving thus to be all the more worthy of the succession to the position of the father or mother figure of the teacher. The Disciple can also congregate with other pupils as a school, and thus not only testify to the wisdom and virtues of the Master, but indeed become the living witness of Transcendent Truth itself.

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Before I explain why I think the Master-Disciple model is detrimental for learning, I would like to propose an educational alternative that I will call the Cooperative-Team model. "Cooperation" has to be understood here in the specific meaning given to this term by Richard Sennett. His book *Together: The Rituals, Pleasures and Politics of Cooperation* explores what working together means for modern craftsmen, as well as Renaissance courtiers, Wall Street back-office employees, soldiers on the battlefield, blue-collar workers, and other people assembled into groups around a common task. What emerges from this philosophical reflection based on sociological field studies, historical analyzes, and psychological experiments is the understanding of cooperation as practical interaction between individuals who "have separate or conflicting interests, who do not feel good about each other, who are unequal, or who simply do not understand one another," yet who are meant to do something together.<sup>2</sup> Sennett's study of cooperation in the workplace may in fact help us envision the Cooperative-Team model as an alternative to the Master-Disciple model of university education.

First, already by its very name, the Cooperative-Team model envisions learning as a collective endeavour involving a group of people. It extends and complicates the exclusive and mainly bilateral bond between the teacher and the student which confines the Master and the Disciple to a solitary quest *à deux*.

Second, contrary to the Transcendent Truth of the Master-Disciple model, the goal of university education in the Cooperative-Team model is immanent to the activity of

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<sup>2</sup> Richard Sennett, *Together: The Rituals, Pleasures and Politics of Cooperation*, New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2012, p. 6. My thinking about the Cooperative-Team model of education has been inspired by Sennett's book, as well as my discussions with students and colleagues from the Faculty of "Artes Liberales" of the University of Warsaw, in particular Jerzy Axer, Piotr Wilczek, Jan Kieniewicz, and Krzysztof Rutkowski.

the group of people involved in collective intellectual work. We can call this new goal “Work Well Done.” Consequently, the ultimate cause of learning and teaching in the Cooperative-Team model does not lie beyond learning and teaching; it is not relegated to the archaic origin of things or to the inaccessible heights of perfection. It is well within reach since it consists of educative work itself. The expression “educative work” is worth stressing. Indeed, intellectual striving is simply a particular kind of work among others. In other words, intellectual work is specific, yet still comparable to a greater or lesser extent to the manual work of a craftsman, the trade of a merchant, the labour of a farmer, the service of a service provider, etc. It is not lay worship, ethical training, or spiritual illumination. As work, education conceived according to the Cooperative-Team model is subject to all the tensions, contradictions, and rewards that are inextricably associated with labour: the social and material conditions that determine it, the challenges of responding to economic pressures, the physical and psychological costs associated with performing specific tasks, and the need to inscribe it among other endeavours of the political community. Like the Master-Disciple model, the Cooperative-Team model is not deprived of an ethical dimension. However, this ethical dimension is differently located in each of these two models. In the Master-Disciple model, it takes the form of the dignity conferred upon or required from each of the participants of the educational process. In the Cooperative-Team model, the ethical dimension is attached to Work Well Done. Simply, the work ethic to which the participants of the cooperative team subscribe is a purely practical corollary of the high quality of work they perform.

But how, precisely, can we know that the work is “well done”? The answer lies in the third characteristic of the Cooperative-Team model which contrasts sharply with the assumption inherent in the Master-Disciple model that there is one, scalable path leading towards Transcendent Truth. Instead of such a single measure of progress of the educative process, the cooperative model relies on the multiplicity of dialogic voices which negotiate the direction, assess the evolution, and determine the value of collective work. “Dialogic” is the key word here: an authentic dialogue is the best way to preserve and cultivate the differences between the participants of a collaborative team, generate creative misunderstandings, formulate unexpected questions, and aim at unforeseen answers. Sennett is quite adamant in stressing that cooperation, as he understands it, relies on “dialogic skills.” This notion is inspired both by his reading of Mikhail Bakhtin and by Sennett’s former work as cellist and musical conductor. In Bakhtin, Sennett found the notion of polyphony, that is, the concert of divergent, if not frankly discordant, narrative voices that resonate in literary discourse. From his past artistic career as performer, Sennett draws on the conviction that what matters the most during a rehearsal is the capacity of each member of the musical ensemble to carefully listen to the other instrumentalists. Please note the difference between Sennett’s musical experience and Sainte Colombe’s (and indirectly Quignard’s) ideal of musical education. Sennett’s music is work of the small chamber ensemble, a collective “making” which consists of listening carefully to one’s musical companions and agreeing to disagree about the direction the performance should go. Quignard’s is the desperate attempts of the Master and his follower to formulate through the imperfect artifact of a wooden instrument the

primordial, unarticulated sounds of archaic nature. Listening, in these two cases means something radically different: Sennett promotes the attentive listening of people to each other, while Quignard values listening to the call of the Transcendent Truth of music.

Careful listening, according to Sennett, results in two kinds of conversations: the dialectic and the dialogic. The former plays out in the differences between people in order for them to gradually find common ground. A particularly skillful dialectician, such as Socrates, can detect what the opponent assumes even as it remains unsaid, restate the opinions formulated by the interlocutors in a way which both seems true to their first intentions and at the same time transpose those intentions in order to come closer to a common, positive solution of the issue under discussion. On the other hand, the dialogic does not necessarily result in agreement. The dialogic may not even seek any sense of closure at all. While Marais's Discipleship failed miserably because the young ambitious musician was able to feel neither the pain nor the existential depth of music sought after by his Master Sainte Colombe, the disagreement between and misunderstanding among the participants of the collaborative team are not proof of failure but, on the contrary, the source of renewed intellectual creativity. As noted by Sennett, "sometimes great performances of chamber music convey something akin. The players do not sound entirely on the same page."<sup>3</sup> *Work Well Done* may thus not – and probably should not – mean the same for each participant of the collaborative team. *Work Well Done* embodies the satisfaction of the artisan who looks with pride at the beauty of the product of her hands knowing well that each member of the collaborative team sees that beauty in a different way and appreciates it to a different degree.

This is why collaboration, according to Sennett, does not require sympathy, but empathy, among its participants. You do not have to feel like another person, but you should be open, attentive, listening to his or her voice in the concert of the collaborative work. We may add that such a listening, empathic attitude is not a relation of power, as is the case of the relationship in the Master-Disciple model. Instead, the bond between the participants of a collaborative team is a bond of responsibility. Moreover, such responsibility is mutual, contrary to the unilateral obligation that a conscientious Master feels towards the Disciple who has to be led, directed, and evaluated by the One who is more advanced on the path towards Transcendent Truth. The multidirectional and reversible character of responsibility in the Cooperative-Team model implies that instead of a formal hierarchy, the collaborative team is organized around dynamically changing roles which are successively fulfilled by different members of the group. Another implication is that the boundary of such an ensemble of co-workers is porous: newcomers can easily be coopted, the team can regroup, reconfigure, depending on the task to be accomplished. Where multilateral responsibility is required for learning and teaching, communication does not follow the vertical direction of top-down assignments of tasks and bottom-up reporting of results, but is rather a lateral exchange between co-workers who trade tips and give a hand to each other knowing full well that they are all equally in charge of the Work to be Done Well.

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<sup>3</sup> Sennett, *Together*, p. 19.

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And what is mutual responsibility if not love?<sup>4</sup> A phenomenological kind of love, sparked not by desire, but by an ethical sense of care directed at another person – at another person and not at a thing, even if that thing is the product of common work. A kind of love directed at another person as a person, not at a person as a thing, as would be the case with a conscientious teacher who considers his students as products of the education he has given them. The love which consists of mutual co-responsibility implies that the teacher considers the students to be co-workers whose intellectual well-being is dependent on the teacher's actions, or, even more, whose being is dependent on the teacher's being (and the other way around). "I care about you, not because of some Transcendent Truth and some absolute Ethical Value, not even because we have a common task at hand, Work Well Done to be accomplished, but because I care about you as people who are other, different than me. Period."

But, is it not properly indecent to say so? "Love is the infinite placed within the reach of poodles," said Céline, who did not hesitate to plunge into all sorts of obscenities in order to avoid, as much as he could, what he considered to be the supreme obscenity: talking about love. The same is true for many academics: we either avoid speaking about the love we have for our students, or if we do talk about it, we make sure that what we say meticulously hides the true nature of our love commitment. Such cover-ups are many, among the most common are the stress put on the sheer enjoyment of an activity (we love teaching like we love skiing or going to the opera but no, we do not love our students) and the psychoanalytic denial (in our classrooms we sublimate our most obscure erotic desires, but no, we do not love our students). How pitiful these intellectual fig leaves with which we try to hide the indecency of our ethical commitment to another person...

The Greeks were more outspoken – they conceptualized teaching in terms of *parrhesia*, frankness, the courage to say out loud the truth at the risk of displeasing or even being ostracized. Philodemus, a first-century BC Epicurean teacher from Herculaneum left a series of notes *On Frank Criticism*.<sup>5</sup> In this practical opus, he sketches out the art of admonishing students taking into account their particular sensibility, their intellectual capacities, and their behaviour within the group of their peers. Similarly to the art of a physician who purges his patient from bad humors without jeopardizing the balance of the organism with a treatment that is too lenient or too harsh, a good teacher has to dose caring admonishment without turning a blind eye to the student's errors nor resorting to an irony that crushes the character of the student.<sup>6</sup> Fine-tuning outspokenness is important not only for the student, but for the professor as well. Philodemus was in fact a household philosopher working for a potent patron, Calpurnius Piso, the father-in-law of Julius Caesar. Born in Syria, educated in Athens under Zeno of Sidon, he was

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<sup>4</sup> Józef Tischner, *Filozofia dramatu*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., Kraków: Znak, 2012.

<sup>5</sup> Philodemus, *On Frank Criticism*, introduction, translation, and notes by David Konstan, Diskin Clay, Clarence E. Glad, Johan C. Thom, and James Ware, Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, Society of Biblical Literature, 1998.

<sup>6</sup> Philodemus, *On Frank Criticism*, fragment 64.



one of those Ancient intellectuals who made their living by sharing their philosophical acumen with intelligent, wealthy men.<sup>7</sup> Philodemus' considerations on frank criticism are thus not a purely theoretical treatise on education. They are also an apology for Epicurean teaching, or more precisely, the personal defense of an Epicurean teacher who, although dependent on his student-patron for his own material well-being, claims to care deeply about the philosophical well-being of his patron-student. In other words, Philodemus wants to demonstrate that in teaching, as with friends, the teacher's actions are directed at the student's interest, namely the moral development of the student. This is why teaching relies on *parrhesia*. Contrary to flattery, true teaching is never selfish and deceiving: "[...] although many fine things result from friendship, there is nothing so grand as having one to whom one will say what is in one's heart and who will listen when one speaks."<sup>8</sup>

Piso may be Philodemus' patron, yet he is first and foremost his student, in other words, his friend. The philosopher needs to be outspoken both in his teaching and in his friendship.<sup>9</sup> Practicing *parrhesia* towards one's students not only means trying to find the appropriate dosage of harsh criticism and encouraging praise; it does not only mean trying to avoid mocking insults or obsequious compliments. Most importantly, practicing *parrhesia* means constantly questioning one's own intentions in order to track down one's own selfishness and pride. This is a daunting task even for the most subtle thinker. La Rochefoucauld used to say that "virtue would not go far did not vanity escort her."<sup>10</sup> Ancient Greeks seemed to be less discouraged and disappointed by the cunning of human egotism than the seventeenth-century French moralist. Yet they were not naïve. They knew well how easily the self-serving speech of the sycophant could take the appearance of responsible criticism selflessly offered by a true friend. Plutarch stresses that the flatterer is a perfect imitator with no character of his or her own, someone who has the astonishing capacity to take up any role in order to attend to the vices and weaknesses of his or her victim. This is why it is so hard to track down obsequiousness since it can hide under the guise of the most outspoken freedom of speech or even take the appearance of harsh criticism. Such protean cunning is possible because flattery stems from self-love blinding its victim. It is human *philautia* – La Rochefoucauld would call it *amour propre* – that makes the flatterer the enemy of the gods, especially of Apollo, since the sycophant always sets himself against the Delphic precept of knowledge of oneself.<sup>11</sup> The philautic flatterer is therefore the embodiment of what a humanist scholar should not be. Conversely, the *parrhesiac* teacher entering into

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<sup>7</sup> See Clarence E. Glad, "Frank Speech, Flattery, and Friendship in Philodemus," in: John T. Fitzgerald, ed., *Friendship, Flattery, and Frankness of Speech: Studies on Friendship in the New Testament*, Leiden: Brill, 1996, pp. 21–60.

<sup>8</sup> Philodemus, *On Frank Criticism*, fragment 28.

<sup>9</sup> On the classical and early modern philosophy and literature of friendship, see the fundamental work by Ullrich Langer, such as *Perfect Friendship: Studies in Literature and Moral Philosophy from Boccaccio to Corneille*, Geneva: Droz, 1994.

<sup>10</sup> La Rochefoucauld, *Maxims*, maxim 200.

<sup>11</sup> Plutarch, *How One May Discern a Flatterer from a Friend*, 1–4.

the dense network of mutual and indeed collective – Philodemus is very insistent on that point – responsibility is not only a skilled pedagogy, but also a true philosopher.

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I would argue that the Master-Disciple model of education is inefficient and ultimately wrong because it is incompatible with the frank criticism which, as demonstrated by Philodemus and by Plutarch, is an inherent feature of teaching and friendship. On the other hand, the Cooperative-Team model, which relies on the mutual responsibility of its members is, as I propose, best suited to practice *parrhesia* in education.

This thesis may seem at first counterintuitive or even outright paradoxical. Who, if not the Master, has all the means to be outspoken with his Disciples? In his eremitical solitude, he enjoys the necessary social and institutional independence. Having to respond to no one, he is only accountable to Transcendent Truth and the associated Ethical Value. His sovereign position gives him the power to assess the progress of the Disciple towards the goal of learning and thus makes him particularly able to formulate unfettered critiques and apparently disinterested praises. Yet I would suggest that it is precisely the Master's towering solitude, his resolute pursuit of an unreachable intellectual and ethical ideal, as well as his precious autonomy that make him incapable of engaging in a truly outspoken and free discourse. The main reason for this handicap is that all these prerogatives of the Master ultimately serve his own interests, as noble as they may be, and shield him from risk which is intimately associated with *parrhesia*.

To support my thesis, let me call upon Foucault's late philosophy and teaching. In his 1981–1982 and 1983–1984 series of lectures at the Collège de France, entitled, respectively, *The Hermeneutics of the Subject* and *The Courage of Truth*, the French philosopher explores the ascetic practices which aim at transforming the student into an active subject of true discourse, and he studies the ethical specificity of truth-telling. In doing so, he is particularly attentive to the Cynic and Epicurean traditions, and, among others, to Philodemus' notes *On Frank Criticism*.

At the same time in his own teaching at the Collège de France, Foucault tried – in vain – to put into practice a pedagogy which relies on the identification between the knowledge of oneself and the care of oneself. This heroic (given the French institutional context) attempt exposed him to two contradictory (again in the French context of that time) ways of teaching. On one hand, he fulfilled the role of the Master, speaking to scores of eager Disciples who overcrowded his desk with tape recorders. In doing so they enacted, at the dusk of twentieth century, the Ancient precept of silent memorization which Foucault presents in his lecture as the most appropriate response of Greek students to the *parrhesia* of their Epicurean teacher.<sup>12</sup> On the other hand, Foucault desperately

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<sup>12</sup> Michel Foucault, March 3, 1982 lecture, second hour, in his *The Hermeneutics of the Subject: Lectures at the Collège de France. 1981–1982*, ed. Frédéric Gros, transl. Graham Burchell, New York: Picador, 2006, pp. 365–377.

tried to break away from the tradition of great-hall public lecturing and attempted to set up a small interdisciplinary seminar in which a select group of students could engage in collaborative team work.<sup>13</sup> This desire to add a Cooperative-Team approach to the Master-Disciple model of teaching which he had practiced so far and which was the only one allowed by the Collège de France statutes was certainly dictated by Foucault's declared will to renew his research. It may, however, have been inspired as well by Philodemus' insistence on the benefits of *parrhesia* practiced in a team setting, namely the Greek philosopher's observation that the students' multilateral outspokenness engenders their mutual benevolence and friendship.<sup>14</sup>

Foucault's contradictions and his failed attempts to spark a group discussion among those who came solely to listen (and record) the Master's voice, have to be understood against the historical context of post-1968 Parisian intellectual life with its fashions, radicalisms, and most importantly, the seminars of Master thinkers infused with quasi erotic adulation and sectarian resentments.<sup>15</sup> Foucault's pedagogical troubles may also reflect some deeper link between, on the one hand, his megastar status (which he carefully cultivated) and, on the other, his philosophical evolution (from anti-humanist stands to intense work on subjectivation) that he underwent towards the end of his life. It is with this historical and personal background in mind that we should read Foucault's insistence on risk as ultimately the most distinct factor of *parrhesia*.

Outspokenness carries with it the risk of alienating the person to whom the *parrhesiast* directs his or her frank criticism. This is quite obvious in the political context where the right to *parrhesia*, the right to speak freely in the popular assembly, was limited to the citizens of the city.<sup>16</sup> But this is also clearly the case in the educational setting, where, as we are reminded by Philodemus, the *parrhesiastic* teacher faces the risk of stirring up the anger of the students. *Parrhesia* requires courage. Yet, and this is a point much stressed by Foucault, the courage required by free speech is bilateral.<sup>17</sup> To the courage of the *parrhesiast* is added also the courage of the one who is being admonished and who listens to an unsettling truth which, nonetheless, is meant to be put into practice.

Why would the courage to speak the truth to the face of a disconcerted and possibly angered student not be an attribute of the Master in the Master-Disciple model? Simply because in that model of education, the teacher does not take any risk even if he antagonizes the student by some harsh criticism. First, being locked in a power relation with

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<sup>13</sup> See the recording of the February 1, 1984 lecture in the second hour at 33:00 and on. L'Institut Mémoires de l'édition contemporaine, *Portail Michel Foucault*, <http://michel-foucault-archives.org/?Cours-au-college-de-France-1984-Le> (consulted July 30, 2015).

<sup>14</sup> Michel Foucault, March 10, 1982 lecture, first hour, in: *The Hermeneutics of the Subject: Lectures at the Collège de France. 1981–1982*, ed. Frédéric Gros, transl. Graham Burchell, New York: Picador, 2006, p. 389.

<sup>15</sup> See the remembrance of Roland Barthes's seminar by one of its attendees, Antoine Compagnon, "Le rêve éveillé d'un sujet aliéné," *Philosophie Magazine* 91 (2015).

<sup>16</sup> See Torben Bech Dyrberg, *Foucault on the Politics of Parrhesia*, London: Palgrave Pivot, 2014.

<sup>17</sup> Michel Foucault, February 1, 1984 lecture, first hour, in his *The Courage of Truth: Lectures at the Collège de France. 1983–1984*, ed. Frédéric Gros, transl. Graham Burchell, London: Palgrave Macmillian, 2012, pp. 39–89.

the Disciple, the Master dominates his pupil by his knowledge and wisdom. He can treat the Disciple with the utmost harshness (like Saint Colombe does with Marais) without being concerned that he will alienate his student who will submit obediently to this ritual of educational initiation or revolt. In the latter case, the student will either prove to be unworthy or, paradoxically, testify to the success of discipleship by symbolically killing the Master and taking up the role of the leader in the pursuit of Truth. Neither of those responses to the Master's frank criticism implies any risk nor requires any courage on the part of the Master, since even his demise under the assault of revolting Disciples would only confirm the success of his teaching: the Disciple tumbles down the old, weakened Master and becomes Master him or herself. Secondly, and most importantly, no risk and no courage is required, because, ultimately, the conflict and rupture of the relationship between the teacher and the student are completely indifferent to Transcendent Truth, the achievement of which is the goal of this educational model. Confined to some sublime realm beyond the reach of mortals – Masters and Disciples alike – the Transcendent Truth remains unaffected by the successes and failures of education.

Foucault would probably agree with this diagnosis. While distinguishing different historical modes of truth-telling, he hypothesized that the mediaeval university professor inherited some qualities from the Ancient sage and the Ancient teacher of technical skills (such as the gymnast, the teacher of rhetoric, etc.). Neither of the components of this classical cultural inheritance exposes the university professor to any real risk: the sage had a truth to defend, a truth that may have been risky to proclaim, but he could always withdraw, like Heraclitus, into silence and turn his back on the vulgar crowd of fools. The technical expert faced even less risk since his teaching was always about the transmission of a practical skill. In order to do so neither he nor his students had any interest in endangering the smooth transition of expertise from one generation of technicians to another.

The situation is drastically different in the case of people involved in Cooperative-Team education. In this model that I would like to strongly advocate for, outspokenness and frank criticism present the greatest risk. If *parrhesia* is poorly managed and the network of multilateral and reciprocal relationships is broken, no collaboration is possible and thus no Work Well Done can be achieved. Yet avoiding outspokenness would be equally damaging and ineffective. If, out of fear of antagonizing their collaborators, team members shy away from the free exchange of diverging opinions and frank criticism of their common undertaking, nothing can be achieved, because the dialogue of differences is compromised. This is why *parrhesia*, conceived as the courage to collaborate and the courage to expose oneself to the risk of failing the test of empathy and thus compromising Work Well Done, is the inherent attribute of the Cooperative-Team model of university education. Being the most intellectually courageous undertaking, it is certainly very demanding, but it is also the most rewarding.

Barbara Milewska-Ważbińska

**On Friendship, the Nicest Fruit  
of Moral Virtues**



AMICITIA, IUCUNDISSIMUS VIRTUTUM MORALIUM  
FRUCTUS

Barbara Milewska-Ważbińska

## On Friendship, the Nicest Fruit of Moral Virtues

*S*tudia humanitatis (studies of the humanities) in the early modern period provided not only effective knowledge of classical languages and literature, but also moral education. Therefore, students acquired the ability to speak Ciceronian Latin and developed their moral identity. Moreover, the contemporary rhetorical model of education was based on a practical application of obtained knowledge. One of the conditions for a successful completion of university studies was the submission of a written thesis. The second condition was passing academic exams, including a final assessment in the form of a discourse. According to a method of philosophical discussion, problems were presented in the mediaeval dialectical form of the *quaestiones disputatae*, i.e. “disputed questions.” It is worth noting, however, that the genre of disputation was practised already in ancient times. In the early modern period, disputations were an important part of university life and a form of communication in the academic environment. The discourse was held in Latin. During public discourse, the defender of a thesis defended it in front of a commission. In the seventeenth century, discussed topics were generally related to practical philosophy (*philosophia practica universalis*), especially to ethics.

Since the sixteenth century, the theses of academic disputations were announced in print and functioned as scientific messages.<sup>1</sup> At the beginning this was a one-page print with an engraving, and later a text was published as a book.

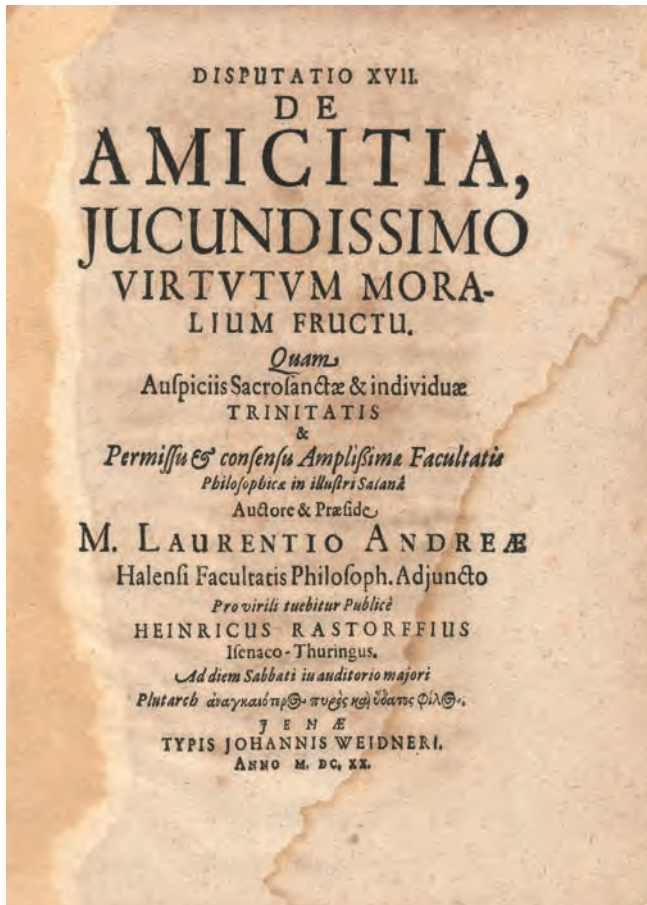
A large collection of these academic disputations, most from German universities, is held today at Leiden University. Below I would like to discuss one of the academic brochures that was published in Latin in 1620 in Jena (Germany) and of which I own a copy. This brochure was part of a volume containing the *quaestiones disputatae* of the Faculty of Philosophy at Salana University.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Joseph S. Freedman, “Published Academic Disputations in the Context of Other Information Formats Utilized Primarily in Central Europe (c. 1550–c. 1700),” in: Marion Gindhart, Ursula Kundert, eds., *Disputatio 1200–1800. Form, Funktion und Wirkung eines Leitmediums universitärer Wissenskultur*, Berlin–New York: Walter de Gruyter, 2010, pp. 89–128.

<sup>2</sup> This name of the University of Jena came from the river Saale, which runs through Jena.

In 1620, Heinrich Rastorff defended his thesis entitled *De amicitia, iucundissimo virtutum moralium fructu* [On Friendship, the Nicest Fruit of Moral Virtues].<sup>3</sup> Rastorff, future pastor in Tiefenort, was born in Eisenach in 1597 and died in Jena in 1635. In his pastoral activity he had without a doubt more than one opportunity to use his knowledge and skills acquired during his studies at Salana University. We know that he was the author of two printed funeral orations written in German.



Heinricus Rastorffius, *Disputatio XVII De amicitia iucundissimo virtutum moralium fructu*, Jenae: typis Johannis Weidneri, 1620 – title page, scan and property of B.M.-W.

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<sup>3</sup> Heinricus Rastorffius, *Disputatio XVII De amicitia iucundissimo virtutum moralium fructu*, Jenae: typis Johannis Weidneri, 1620.



It is worth noting that friendship since ancient times was an important part of an interpersonal relationship.<sup>4</sup> The theme of friendship was always present in the thought of ancient and modern philosophers. The ideal of friendship was based on Aristotle's and Cicero's treatises. "In the high Renaissance of the sixteenth century" – as Liz Carmichael says – "the classical friendship became for a time the preserve of scholars with pagan leaning, as a subject on which it was thought that Christianity, with its general love of neighbor, had nothing to say."<sup>5</sup>

The thesis, which Heinrich Rastorff defended, was placed in the aforementioned volume as the seventeenth text. It begins in a sublime style: "Magnifica et sapiens vox est illa Darii Regis Persarum, quam ad Histiaeum scribit apud Herodotum" ("Brilliant and wise is this sentence of Darius King of Persia that he wrote to Histiaeus at Herodotus").<sup>6</sup> A quotation in Greek from the *History* of Herodotus follows this Latin sentence.<sup>7</sup>

The whole quote is found here also in the following Latin version: "[...] hoc est omnibus thesauris preciosorem esse amicum" ("[...] it means that the most precious of all treasures is a friend"). There are added two other maxims with similar content; the first written in Greek is taken from the second book of Xenophon's *Memorabilia*.<sup>8</sup> This sentence is also translated into Latin: "Possessionum praestantissima omnium est et verus et bonus amicus" ("The most valuable of all possessions is a true and good friend"). The second fragment is excerpted from the *Bacchides* by Plautus:

Multimodis meditatus egomet mecum sum,  
et ita esse arbitror:  
homini amico, qui est amicus ita uti nomen possidet,  
nisi deos ei [nihil Rastorff] praestare.<sup>9</sup>

In many ways have I thought it over with myself, and thus I think it is; a man  
your friend, who is a friend such as the name imports – except the Gods –  
nothing does excel him.<sup>10</sup>

The author continues his considerations and exclaims, according to the first chapter of Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics*, that friendship is the most important in life.<sup>11</sup> Although a man has in his possession all other goods, he needs friends most of all. Then Rastorff says, evoking Cicero, that also in nature nothing is more necessary than friendship,

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<sup>4</sup> See some interesting articles in: Albrecht Classen, Marilyn Sandidge, eds., *Friendship in the Middle Ages and Early Modern Age: Explorations of a Fundamental Ethical Discourse*, Berlin–New York: Walter de Gruyter, 2010, passim.

<sup>5</sup> Liz Carmichael, *Friendship: Interpreting Christian Love*, London–New York: A&C Black, 2004, pp. 3–4.

<sup>6</sup> Rastorffius, op. cit., f. A2. All translations are mine, unless stated otherwise.

<sup>7</sup> Hdt. 5.24.3.

<sup>8</sup> Xen. *Mem.* 2.4.1.

<sup>9</sup> Pl. *Bac.* 385–387.

<sup>10</sup> Maccius Plautus, *Bacchides, or The Twin Sisters*, in: Henry Thomas Riley, ed., *The Comedies of Plautus*, London: G. Bell and Sons, 1912, vol. 1, p. 171.

<sup>11</sup> Aristot. *Nic. Eth.* 1155a.

both in happy and in bad times. He quotes a famous saying taken from Cicero's treatise *Laelius de amicitia*: "[...] itaque non aqua, non igne pluribus locis utimur quam amicitia" ("[...] neither water nor fire need any more than friendship").<sup>12</sup> After the introduction the author proves his thesis in forty points. He begins by considering the origin of the word *amicitia* (friendship) and finds out, among others, that "ab amando amicitiae nomen ductum est" ("the word 'friendship' is derived from 'love'"). Cicero referred to such an etymology in *Laelius...* (27.100) and *De finibus* (2.78). It is worth noting that recalling Cicero's writings in a thesis on friendship is most appropriate because the Roman author used the word *amicitia* more than 500 times in his works.

Rastorff devotes more room to the definition of friendship in his academic thesis. He considers the semantics of the word *amicitia* and pays attention to many different meanings of the concept of friendship. Moreover, Rastorff discusses the reasons why people enter into friendships. He quotes, among others, the opinion expressed by Aristotle in the first book of *Politics*,<sup>13</sup> where the Greek philosopher says that man is a social animal to a greater measure than bee or any gregarious animal.<sup>14</sup> In Rastorff's text we find a slightly shortened quote from Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics*, which says that friendship is most necessary in life.<sup>15</sup> This reflection, at the beginning in Greek, is developed further only in Latin: "[...] siquidem nemo est qui sine amicis vitam sibi optabilem esse ducat, etsi bonorum omnium copia circumfluat" ("[...] for no one would choose to live without friends, though he had all other goods").<sup>16</sup>

It turns out, however, that quotations from the works of Aristotle translated into Latin were taken from the writings of other authors, e.g. from the works of Dionysius Lambinus (Denis Lambin, 1520 or 1516–1572), who was one of the greatest scholars and editors of his age. Lambinus' translation of Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics* was published in Venice in 1558,<sup>17</sup> but the edition from 1582 became more popular and was more readily available.<sup>18</sup>

Rastorff also discusses the basis of friendship – which may be the same age, similar capabilities, customs, habits, or a relationship.<sup>19</sup> The characteristics of different types of friendship occur now in his text and at the end there is a mention of a toxic friendship, which means extreme subordination to another person (called from Greek *hyperphilia*) or the inability to have true feelings of friendship (*aphilia*).<sup>20</sup> After presenting all these points, the author considers problems formulated in the form of questions (*quaestiones*)

<sup>12</sup> Rastorffius, op. cit., f. A2v.

<sup>13</sup> Aristot. *Pol.* 1.1253a.

<sup>14</sup> Rastorffius, op. cit., f. A3v.

<sup>15</sup> Aristot. *Nic. Eth.* 1155a.

<sup>16</sup> Rastorffius, op. cit., ff. A2–A2v.

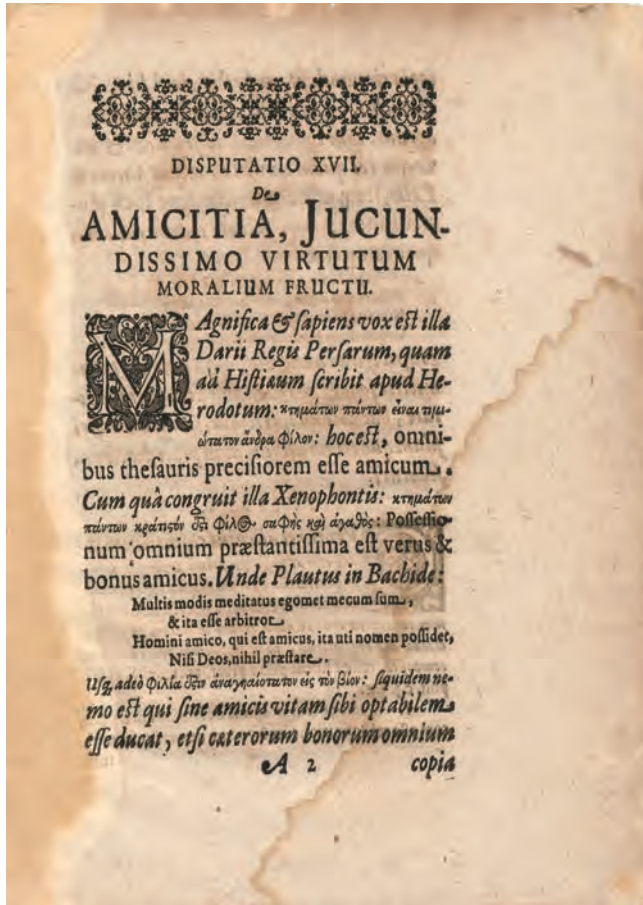
<sup>17</sup> *Aristotelis De moribus ad Nicomachum libri decem nunc primum e Graeco et Latine [...] a Dionysio Lambino expressi*, Venetiis: Ex Officina Erasmiana, apud Vincentium Valgrisium, 1558.

<sup>18</sup> *Aristotelis Ethicorum Nicomachiorum libri decem ex Dion. Lambini interpretatione*, Basileae: Eusebii Episcopi opera ac impensa, 1582.

<sup>19</sup> Rastorffius, op. cit., f. B.

<sup>20</sup> Ibidem, f. Bv.

such as: Is friendship a virtue (*virtus*)? Should multilateral friendship be praised or reprimanded? Is friendship that is practised at the table and with a glass of wine good?<sup>21</sup>



Heinricus Rastorffius, *Disputatio XVII De amicitia jucundissimo virtutum moralium fructu*, Jenae: typis Johannis Weidneri, 1620 – f. A2, scan and property of B.M.-W.

The author of the thesis leads his readers through a myriad of quotations from ancient writers, without clear references. Sometimes he signals only the name of the ancient author, and sometimes he indicates the title of the work. In the early modern era in which Rastorff lived and worked, using large fragments of other authors was widespread, i.e. any text was a “patchwork” consisting of quotations from other books, primarily from the writings of ancient authors. This way of writing, called the mosaic

<sup>21</sup> Ibidem, ff. Bv–B3v.

style, was developed by the great Flemish philologist and humanist Justus Lipsius and was popularized by his followers.

When we read Rastorff's academic thesis, we are impressed by the fact that his text is composed only of quotations. Even the first sentence with which Rastorff began his discourse can be found, unexpectedly, in another book, and this time written by a modern author. Namely, Nikolaus Reusner (1545–1602), a lawyer and humanist, in his book *Symbolorum imperatoriorum tertia classis*, described rulers, from Charlemagne to the Emperor Rudolf II. This book was published in 1602 in Frankfurt in the publishing house of Johannes Spiessius (Spies). When Reusner discusses symbols associated with the figure of Albert II, the Habsburg ruler of Germany, he includes also the motto: "Amicus optima vitae possessio" ("A friend is the best that can be acquired in life"). Then he begins his explanation with the sentence quoted above: "Magnifica et sapiens vox est illa Darii Regis Persarum, quam ad Histiaeum scribit apud Herodotum."<sup>22</sup> It is worth noting that in Rastorff's academic thesis appear the same quotations from Cicero and Plautus. Although Rastorff's further text differs from Reusner's reasoning, we can see a certain dependence on the arguments used in Reusner's *Symbolorum imperatoriorum tertia classis*. It is interesting to note that Nikolaus Reusner was associated with the University of Jena since 1589.

It also turns out that a quotation from Xenophon's *Memorabilia* mentioned above in Latin is an excerpt taken from the translation prepared by a Byzantine monk and a great humanist, Cardinal Bessarion (1408–1472); it was subsequently published during the Renaissance.<sup>23</sup>

The topics of academic theses undertaken by students in the seventeenth century show that university professors saw how important moral issues were in the field of education. It is an interesting observation that Rastorff refers to the text of the Bible only slightly, whereas he profusely quotes Greek and Latin pagan writers and uses examples from classical literature. He mentions, for example, a pair of friends – Pirithous and Theseus – an example taken from mythology, or two tribunes – Lucius Valerius Flaccus and Marcus Porcius Cato the Elder – an example taken from Roman history.<sup>24</sup> Rastorff found these ancient characters and the anecdotes connected with them in printed "commonplace-books" which were used both by students and teachers.<sup>25</sup>

From the collections of quotations, arguments were drawn for academic discussions which concerned the issue of the place of a group of people in society, and also of the role of the individual, problems of general good, as well as of welfare and happiness of a human being. At the same time, Rastorff appears to be convinced that knowledge

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<sup>22</sup> *Nicolai Reusneri Symbolorum imperatoriorum classis tertia*, Francofurti: typis Ioannis Spiessi et heredum Romani Beati, 1602, p. 222.

<sup>23</sup> See David Marsh, *Xenophon*, in: Paul Oskar Kristeller, F. Edward Cranz, eds., *Catalogus translationum et commentationum: Mediaeval and Renaissance Latin Translations and Commentaries*, vol. 7, Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1992, pp. 75–196.

<sup>24</sup> Rastorffius, op. cit., f. A4.

<sup>25</sup> See Ann Moss, *Printed Commonplace-Books and the Structuring of Renaissance Thought*, Oxford: Oxford Clarendon Press, 1996, passim.

*(doctrina)* should be subordinated to virtue (*virtus*) in accordance with the well-known mediaeval Latin proverb: “Qui proficit in litteris, sed deficit in moribus, plus deficit, quam proficit” (“He who is proficient in learning and deficient in morals is more deficient than proficient”). These issues of academic discourse show that ethical ideas born in Antiquity – in this case the idea of friendship – were a strong foundation of moral science in the seventeenth century.



Karolina Mroziewicz

**The Glimmering Light of Friendship:  
Sándor Márai's *Embers*  
(*A gyertyák csonkig égnek*, 1942)**







## The Glimmering Light of Friendship: Sándor Márai's *Embers (A gyertyák csonkig égnek, 1942)*\*

Cicero postulates in his *De amicitia* that only a sage is entitled to speak about friendship. Even though the twentieth century was not favourable to sages and advocates of humanistic ideals, a few meditations on friendship, with *Embers* as a noticeable example, were written. Sándor Márai (1900–1989), a poet, novelist, journalist, and playwright, can undoubtedly be counted amid the few intellectuals and artists who turned their attention towards the nature and meaning of love, friendship, and honour in a time when all human values were under attack. *Embers (A gyertyák csonkig égnek)* is an intimate novel that portrays a lifelong friendship between two men.<sup>1</sup> Márai shows its opaque and multi-layered character along with the capacity of friendship to withstand all turns of life and history. The scenery of the personal drama of two men is provided by a crumbling Central Europe with its stuffy towns and gloomy residences. At times, however, it is

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\* I owe my fascination with Sándor Márai's sensitivity and imagination to Jan Kieniewicz and Jerzy Axer, who put the Polish translation of his journal on my reading list and urged to look at the history of Central Europe through his eyes. The time spent in the literary world of *Embers* is just a continuation of the intellectual adventure they have inspired.

<sup>1</sup> *A gyertyák csonkig égnek* [The Candles Burn to the End] was first published in Budapest in 1942. Its early wave of popularity outside Hungary came shortly after World War II: in 1946 the book was translated into Spanish and in the 1950s into German and French. However, the Márai 'boom,' initiated by critics' and readers' acclaim of the book, only happened around 2000. It was marked by the growing number of translations of the book into most of the European languages (Italian, Polish, Danish, Norwegian, Swedish, Czech, Finnish, etc.) and of its theatrical and radio adaptations. In 2002 Carol Brown Janeway translated the German version of the novel, i.e., *Die Glut*, into English and accordingly entitled it *Embers*. Since then the popularity of the novel did not decline. The social and cultural transformations of Central Europe made Márai's book especially appealing for the contemporary readers.

Because of the mediated character of the English translation and the shifts of meanings resulting from it, I decided to go back to the original text and render it into English. On the changes in meanings in the English translation of *A gyertyák csonkig égnek* see: Peter Sherwood, "On German and English Versions of Márai's *A gyertyák csonkig égnek* (*Die Glut* and *Embers*)," in Steven Tötösy de Zepetnek and Louise O. Vasvári, eds., *Comparative Hungarian Cultural Studies*, West Lafayette: Ind.: Purdue University Press, 2011, pp. 113–122. Subsequent quotes are given according to the Hungarian edition of Márai's novel: *A gyertyák csonkig égnek*, Budapest: Helikon, 2010. The Polish translation of the work, namely *Żar*, prepared by Feliks Netz in 2000 with a great respect for the Hungarian original, served me as a guide through the Hungarian text.

brightened by a ray of light which reveals the truth about the main characters, their emotional bonds, and the nature of friendship. The aim of the subsequent reflections is therefore to go through Sándor Márai's *Embers* taking the interplay between the light and darkness, sunbeams and shadows as an interpretative key to the novel. The close reading of the text, focused on the role of the motif of light, is suggested by the original title of the book, i.e., *The Candles Burn to the End*. Such a reading promises a better understanding of Márai's concept of male friendship along with its Platonic inspirations and the ways he plays with them.

The fading light of a candle evokes associations with the inevitable end of a human life and the question raised by Marcus Aurelius:

Does the light of the lamp shine without losing its splendor until it is extinguished; and shall the truth which is in thee and justice and temperance be extinguished [before thy death]?<sup>2</sup>

Indeed, the doubt voiced by Márai's favourite author of the war period, whom he calls a great friend and comforter,<sup>3</sup> touches the main problem of the novel. Similarly, Márai's second companion of that time, Plato, provokes one to doubt whether the truth about one's life and feelings can be reached in the light of candles that burn to the end, among shadows and glows dancing with each other.

## I.

The main plot of *Embers* is very simple. Two men from the multinational upper class of Austro-Hungary meet to resolve an episode from their shared past. The meeting is hosted by Henrik, the son of a respected Hungarian officer of the imperial army's guards and a French countess from Brittany. The guest, Konrád, is of lower social position, an offspring of an impoverished Galician official and a Polish noblewoman who was a distant relative of Chopin. Most of the missing parts of the entangled puzzle of Henrik's and Konrád's past come to the fore in the subplots, mainly Henrik's recollections of

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<sup>2</sup> *Meditations of the Emperor Marcus Aurelius Antoninus*, transl. George Long, London: Chesterfield Society, [1890?], 12.15, p. 291. The title phrase also has a personal meaning for Sándor Márai. In his late memoirs he uses it to describe the approaching death of his wife, see: Barbara Zwolińska, "Polowanie na prawdę – Żar," in: eiusdem, *Pisać to znaczy żyć. Szkice o prozie Sándora Máraia*, Gdańsk: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Gdańskiego, 2011, p. 66, n. 98.

<sup>3</sup> *Meditations* by Marcus Aurelius served Márai as a reference model for his diary written between 1943 and 1989 as well as for *Füves könyv [Herbal]* published in 1943. In the memoirs of 1943 Márai mentions his last public lecture devoted to Marcus Aurelius and the decision to go on an internal exile among his manuscripts with the philosopher as sole companion: "In these dreadful times, you are my greatest consolation! The world is changing as much as in your epoch: a form of life, which focused on culture, is collapsing. From the human standpoint, one can look at and endure it only in the way you look at and endure it, with patience, understanding, and retreat into the bottom of our souls, giving our bodies to the powers of the world, but keeping our souls and true intentions only for ourselves." Sándor Márai, *A teljes napló, 1943–1944* [The Complete Diary, 1943–1944], Budapest: Helikon, 2006, p. 152.

their shared childhood and youth spent in the cadet academy in Vienna, their mutual fascination, and the first experiences of their adolescent life. Konrád's role, especially in the second part of the novel, is limited to a secondary character of a Platonic dialogue.<sup>4</sup> Even more limited is the role of Henrik's dead wife Krisztina, a figure of key importance for the reconstruction of the circumstances of the friends' separation. She is a shadow,<sup>5</sup> a person without a voice and an agency, who returns in the conversation between the two men. Likewise, the general's ninety-one-year-old nanny, Nini, who substitutes as both a mother and a companion to Henrik, is rather a mute figure, receptive to all the general's needs.

The novel opens with a scene of the old general's return to his palace from the wine-press in his cellars, where he was bottling wine. Even though it is almost noon of the summer day of August 14, 1940, his house and its interiors are musty and dark. The residence is compared to a decorated tomb carved in stone, in which bones of past generations fall apart. This place of solitude contains silence, memories, and traces of long-gone passions. The time and life of the house and its inhabitants stopped on July 2, 1899 when Henrik and Konrád had seen each other for the last time. The circumstances of Konrád's escape and the split of the two friends marked a rupture in their lives. The aim of Henrik's and Konrád's existence, while most of their relatives die, becomes a meeting which could bring a final reconciliation and fulfilment.

## 2.

On the porch of his house Henrik receives a letter from Konrád that abruptly wakes him from a long-lasting apathy. The general asks his old nanny to begin preparations for the dinner and gets himself lost in memories of childhood. He comes back to the time in the cadet academy that brought together highborn boys from all parts of the Habsburg Empire. In this school, which is like an "infernal machine a few minutes before explosion,"<sup>6</sup> a microcosm of Austro-Hungary *par excellence*, Henrik and Konrád met for the first time. The boys immediately realized that they are as the halves of the Platonic hemispherical creatures, "like identical twins in the mother womb,"<sup>7</sup> that were bonded by mutual dependability and close intimacy:

Their friendship was as solemn and wordless as every great feeling that lasts the whole life. And like in every great feeling, in this one there was also shame and a sense of guilt. A man cannot take away one man from the others

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<sup>4</sup> Gregory Jusdanis, *A Tremendous Thing: Friendship from Iliad to the Internet*, Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2014, p. 113. On the reminiscences of Plato's dialogues in the form of Márai's novel see: Juliusz Kurkiewicz, "Zbyt mały niepokój," *Zeszyty literackie* 96 (2006), p. 53. In his diary Márai's notes with pride that the collected works of Plato were rendered into Hungarian during the war period. He also refers to Plato's *oeuvre* several times in his memoirs.

<sup>5</sup> J.M. Coetzee, "Sándor Márai," *Zeszyty literackie* 96 (2006), p. 33.

<sup>6</sup> Márai, *A gyertyák csonkig égnek*, p. 31.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibidem*.

unpunished. But they also knew from the first moment that this meeting is a lifelong obligation.<sup>8</sup>

The boys' friendship was soon accepted by their parents and school peers, because it radiated gentleness, sincerity, and necessity, and brought a light into the ordinary human muddles. Another reason for the general approval of the boys' relation was the acknowledgment of its social value and exceptional rarity. It was realized that the boys shared something very precious and ultimately delicate that had to be well protected. For "people do not desire anything stronger than selfless friendship. They desire it desperately."<sup>9</sup> Years later Henrik realized that:

[...] the greatest secret and gift from life is when two "halves" come together. It is so rare, as if nature prevented this harmony by violence and guile – perhaps, because for the creation of world, for the renewal of life, the tension is needed which always searches for another, which emerges between people of dissimilar intentions and rhythms.<sup>10</sup>

He came to the conclusion that a friend is the other self, whose separate identity should be recognized and respected.

### 3.

The first recognition of differences also causes the first scratch on the surface of the men's friendship. It appeared during the single visit of the friends with Konrád's parents, who lived in stuffy and gloomy Galicia, agitated by the revolutionary ferment of the miserable and insatiable dissatisfaction of Ukrainians, Germans, Jews, and Russians dwelling next to each other. The feeling of unhappiness and misery also filled the cramped apartment of Konrád's parents, whose life's only aim was to assure the well-being of their son. The sacrifice of hard-working parents was Konrád's main burden and caused a sense of guilt that accompanied him throughout his life. This burden was the first thing the men could not share with each other.

The friends had one more sphere which they could not experience together, namely music. "Music told Konrád something that others could not understand."<sup>11</sup> Konrád lost himself when he was listening to music. It was the space of his freedom, the only one in which the sense of guilt ceased to exist. He knew, however, that music had a subversive power that could ruin the social hierarchy and reveal the truth of oneself and he feared it. As in Plato's thought, in *Embers* music has capacity to touch the soul and

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<sup>8</sup> Ibidem, p. 32.

<sup>9</sup> Ibidem, p. 36.

<sup>10</sup> Ibidem, p. 144.

<sup>11</sup> Ibidem, p. 42.

either serve as a cure or as “a source of disquiet and apprehension.”<sup>12</sup> In Márai's novel, musical sensitivity is the domain of three romantic characters, namely Henrik's wife, mother, and friend. When the French countess and Konrád played together Chopin's *Polonaise-Fantasia*, they entirely lost themselves in the performance. The two Hungarian military men, Henrik and his father, remained unmoved. After the concert a ray of evening light came through the palace window – a clear sign that something important has happened among the novel's characters.

Henrik's mother is also the first person who sensed the vulnerability of the boys' friendship. She was aware of the suffering that may result from their intense and intimate relationship. “One day we have to lose that who we love – she said. – Who cannot handle this, does not deserve our sympathy and is not fully human.”<sup>13</sup> The loss of a friend is the main emotional risk involved in this close relationship and in human existence as such. It is an inescapable component of personal experience which prepares one for the eventual encounter with death. As Sandra Lynch observes in her interpretation of *Embers*:

We are necessarily watching over a fading movement, since everything must fade and we remain loyal to and authentic within the relationship only so long as we acknowledge this. For Henrik's mother it is not just loyalty that is at stake, but success as a human being.<sup>14</sup>

#### 4.

The time of childhood and youth was, however, a careless period of Konrád and Henrik's friendship. The moment of test of their relationship was to come later. After the years of educations in the cadet academy, the two men shared one apartment in Vienna and led a different kind of life. Konrád's lifestyle was similar to a young monk's, whereas Henrik was more of a carouser. Konrád read about life, while Henrik lived it. Henrik listened only to popular waltzes and military marches, while his friend's favourite music were romantic piano compositions. The two “lived this way in the refraction of the glittering light of youth,”<sup>15</sup> complementing each other. The first women crossed the path of their lives with all the accompanying excitement and jealousy, “but above women, role, and world, there shimmered a feeling which was stronger than everything. Only men know this feeling. Its name is friendship.”<sup>16</sup>

It was this thought that brought the old general back to a palace where everything waited ready for the arrival of his guest and looked exactly like forty-one years ago. Only Krisztina's likeness was missing from the series of family portraits. Konrád entered the

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<sup>12</sup> Francesco Pelosi, *Plato on Music, Soul and Body*, transl. Sophie Henderson, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010, pp. 6–7.

<sup>13</sup> Márai, op. cit., p. 35.

<sup>14</sup> Sandra Lynch, *Philosophy and Friendship*, Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2005, p. 81.

<sup>15</sup> Márai, op. cit., p. 52.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 54.

palace and the two old men shook hands amicably. “They came to the fireplace and in the cold and glimmering light of the sconces, winking blinded eyes, they looked at each other carefully and appraisingly.”<sup>17</sup> They realized that the time of separation did not affect them. Instead it conserved them and bestowed them with the vital energy necessary for the moment of reunion.

5.

In the room lighted up by the tall blazes of candles and the colourful fire of the fireplace the friends began a dialogue, which should have revealed the truth about the past events. Instead, in the dark interior, resembling the Platonic cave filled with superficial light, the two men presented their own versions of occurrences, which seemed to be only a distorted reflection of their actual motivations and actions years ago.

During the friends’ talk a thunderstorm caused an electric blackout. The men sat in darkness. Only the candle lights danced on the walls. In these circumstances Henrik began his long and grand monologue about friendship and the particular relationship between the men. The old general wondered what lies at the bottom of every human relationship and pointed to a small, spiritual Eros. He referred to Plato and concluded that friendship is the most noble bond between people. Animals also know friendship, Henrik noted, but they understand it as a selfless readiness to help. For the old general friendship was above all a duty that cannot be waived by a friend’s unfaithfulness:

Similarly to one in love, a friend does not await awards for his feeling. He does not want anything in return and does not look unrealistically at the one whom he chose for his friend, he knows his mistakes and even so undertakes it, with all its consequences. This would be an ideal. Indeed, would it be worthwhile to live, would it be worthwhile to be human without such an ideal? [...] What is a friendship worth, in which we love one’s virtues, faithfulness, persistence? What is love worth which requires reward? Is it not our duty to form a friendship as much with an unfaithful friend as with a dutiful and faithful friend? Is the unselfishness, which wants and awaits nothing from the other, not the true essence of every human relationship? The more it gives, the less it expects in exchange?<sup>18</sup>

Henrik looked for an answer to his questions in the works of classical Chinese, Jewish, Latin, and contemporary authors, but could not find any, because one cannot really describe the content of friendship with words. What is truly important cannot be entrusted to words. After Plato, the old general denied the legitimacy of the written word to convey reliable knowledge about human bonds. Instead he believed that he would learn truth about them during the conversation with his friend. The dialogue between

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<sup>17</sup> Ibidem, p. 63.

<sup>18</sup> Ibidem, p. 91.

the two men changes, however, into Henrik's soliloquy which presents his subjective and authoritative reconstruction of the past events.<sup>19</sup> Whereas the old general's version of the story could be taken as doubtful, Konrád's viewpoint is limited to minimum. The form of a Platonic dialogue aimed at arriving at the essence of a thing is twisted into a monodrama of a person lost in the world of his own deductions and suspicions.

6.

Henrik narrated how he entered Konrád's abandoned, exquisitely furnished apartment, which he was told not to visit. Unexpectedly, he also met his wife there, clearly disappointed by Konrád's escape, preceded by a puzzling hunting scene and enigmatic conversations concerning the tropics. The old general remembered every second of the hunt during which Konrád raised a gun against him and attempted to shoot him. A confrontation between the two men revealed the main paradox of friendship.<sup>20</sup> Only because the two men were friends, as close to each other as Castor and Pollux, the mythological twins and patrons of aristocratic friendship, Konrád aimed his gun against Henrik and killed something inside him.<sup>21</sup> Henrik confirmed that even though his life was ruined at this moment, their friendship remained unthreatened. "No external power can change human bonds,"<sup>22</sup> the general declared. For him friendship was an intentional feeling and a life-long service. This rational bond proved to be endangered only by the irrational sphere of music.<sup>23</sup> "A man cannot be a musician and a relative of Chopin with impunity,"<sup>24</sup> Henrik said.

Music connected Krisztina and Konrád, who transcribed notes for her father, a music teacher, and was the binder of their relationship. Henrik became acquainted with his future wife later, through Konrád who introduced them. Eventually the general realized that what Krisztina felt to him was not love, but gratitude. She was a person dissimilar to Henrik, free spirited and truly independent. Her essence of life was freedom and she felt unhappy in her marriage. The couple spent a lot of time together with Konrád. Likewise, after a hunt all three talked and customarily ate together. Only during his visit to Konrád's empty apartment and the accidental meeting with Krisztina, Henrik realized that something had happened between his wife and friend. Not waiting long for an explanation, Henrik moved out to his other living quarters in his hunting palace and never met his wife again. Eight years later Krisztina died. Her version of the events was entrusted to a sealed diary, which Henrik presented to his friend at their final meeting. Instead of looking for answers to his questions in Krisztina's memories, the old general

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<sup>19</sup> Miklós Györffy, "Language as Literary Role-Play: Pastiche and Parody in Sándor Márai's Novels," *The Hungarian Quarterly* 166 (2002), pp. 77–78.

<sup>20</sup> Jusdanis, op. cit., p. 112.

<sup>21</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>22</sup> Márai, op. cit., p. 115.

<sup>23</sup> Ágota Steinart, "Sándor Márai and His World," *The Hungarian Quarterly* 166 (2002), p. 56.

<sup>24</sup> Márai, op. cit., p. 129.

threw the book into the fire without reading it. Both friends looked as the memoirs were eaten by fire and turned into ashes. Krisztina's truth ceased to exist. Konrád in turn refused to answer Henrik's questions.

7.

The candles burned to the end and Konrád decided to leave. The friends shook hands in farewell in the spacious staircase, where lights and shadows were dancing with each other. In their conversation, in this examination little about the riddle of the past had been resolved. At the end it did not matter. When everything ends, "only that counts what remains in our hearts. [...] [A] passion, which one day ignites in our hearts, souls, and bodies and then eternally burns, until our deaths?,"<sup>25</sup> suggested Henrik. The light of this passion glimmers without losing its splendour to the very end and nothing of its value extinguishes before death.

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Sándor Márai's *Embers* draws on the Platonic ideal of friendship, but shows its impossibilities and inner paradoxes. Even though the friend is the other self, the missing half of a spherical creature finally found, he could be a rival and an enemy at the same time. He could kill something in his other self and yet regardless of his deeds and personal features remain a true, lifelong friend. Once the friendship is established and recognized, it becomes a long lasting obligation that cannot be endangered by any external force. The light of friendship glimmers as long as friends live, only the intensity and colour of its flame changes in the course of time.

The metaphors of bright or fading light, artificial and natural glows, shadows and darkness are used in Márai's novel to signalize the important moments in the interactions between the protagonists, and their emotions. They substitute detailed descriptions of the story of friendship that cannot be rendered into words. The essence of the relationship between the two men is wordless, conveyed in memories, feelings, and gestures. Every attempt to articulate the truth about the shared past leads the main characters astray, to the fragments and shadows of events, persons, and places distorted by their subjective perspectives. The dialogue, staged in the Platonic cave, deceives them all the time. Soon both men realize that the reconstruction of the supposed betrayal has no sense. The role of their final meeting is to bring the fulfilment of their lives. The hour of parting suspends the course of time. When a man is alone his life immediately pauses. One can live and bring to completion his life in the company of his friend only.

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<sup>25</sup> Ibidem, pp. 176–177.



Thomas Nørgaard

**Friendship, Conversation  
& Liberal Education**



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Thomas Nørgaard

## Friendship, Conversation & Liberal Education

There are several values of friendship and they can be thoughtfully counted, ranked, and interpreted in a variety of ways. Language provides ample evidence for that variety. The term ‘friend’ has changed meaning over time and does not exactly translate rough equivalents like the Russian *drug*, the Australian *mate*, or the ancient Greek *philos*.<sup>1</sup> Diversity of this sort is not incompatible with the existence of a universal that we might meaningfully call ‘friendship,’ it may just complicate our attempt to identify it.<sup>2</sup> But perhaps we need not be too eager to identify a universal here. Why close a book that cannot really be closed before the last pair or circle of friends have lived their lives together? Is it not better, perhaps, just to compare notes about what, if anything, we have learned about friendship so far? For most of us, there is no urgent practical question to be settled with a firm theory of friendship. We can afford to be patiently tentative and may perhaps learn more in that way. These are the working assumptions here as I explore just one aspect of friendship that has been significant in my own life. While a serious attempt to say something about friendship probably has to rest on personal experience,<sup>3</sup> writings on friendship by C.S. Lewis and Eva Brann suggest that my experience is not unusual. I have also found help in Emerson and Santayana. My debt to these writers will be clear throughout. Sometimes, however, they write as if what I describe as an *aspect of some* friendships is true of friendship as such. For the purposes of this essay, I do not need to consider if they are right. I shall write below as if I am describing a *type* of friendship, but that is merely a device that allows me to lift an elusive phenomenon out of the mess of real life.

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<sup>1</sup> Anna Wierzbicka, *Understanding Cultures through Their Key Words: English, Russian, Polish, German, and Japanese*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997, chapters 1–2; Julia Annas, *The Morality of Happiness*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993, p. 223.

<sup>2</sup> Wierzbicka, *op. cit.*, p. 23.

<sup>3</sup> Anthony C. Grayling, *Friendship*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 2014, p. 15.

## Friendship

Friendship of the kind in focus here is always *about* something.<sup>4</sup> C.S. Lewis and Eva Brann capture this essence through a contrast with erotic love: Whereas lovers face each other, friends face the world side by side.<sup>5</sup> The fundamental rationale for this particular mode of being with one another has been captured nicely by Brann:

Friends look at the world together as if through one of those old stereoscopes: The slight parallax resulting from their different positions gives the scene its depth.<sup>6</sup>

The joint achievement of depth through parallax is essential; the friendship may perhaps be said to begin with a mere promise of depth, but only when that experience has been achieved, at least once, is the friendship fully established. Depth is the central value around which the friendship revolves.

It is a basic phenomenological fact that we can understand ‘things’ in depth, only if we look at them from more than one perspective.<sup>7</sup> Friendship of the kind considered here is significant first of all because we commonly take an interest in ‘things’ that are so many-sided that no person can reasonably hope to inhabit all relevant perspectives on his or her own. Education, for example, the topic to which this essay is headed, “is one of the subjects which most essentially require to be considered by various minds, and from a variety of points of view. For, of all many-sided subjects, it is the one which has the greatest number of sides.”<sup>8</sup> J.S. Mill’s sense that we need a variety of minds when confronted with a many-sided issue is correct, it seems to me, because we are finite creatures who tend to specialize in perspective-taking. Every human being tends to light up the world in some ways and to obscure it in others. We probably develop over time, but at every moment we have a certain epistemic tenor, presumably as unique as our finger prints, that partly defines who we are. In friendship of the kind in focus here, we successfully manage to “blend” our searchlight with another and light up some portion of the world that was dark(er) to each of us before.<sup>9</sup>

Through friendship, then, we are rewarded with a deeper understanding of (some aspect of) the world. Moreover, as we stretch together towards a common object, we learn something about each other too. The world comes first, so this sort of friendship cannot be sought directly, but the absorption in a shared object of attention does not

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<sup>4</sup> Lewis, *The Four Loves*, London: Geoffrey Bles, 1960, p. 66.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 61; Eva Brann, *Open Secrets / Inward Prospects: Reflections on World and Soul*, Philadelphia: Paul Dry Books, 2004, p. 54.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 62.

<sup>7</sup> Robert Sokolowski, *Introduction to Phenomenology*, New York: Cambridge University Press, 1999.

<sup>8</sup> J.S. Mill, *The Collected Works of John Stuart Mill, Volume XXI – Essays on Equality, Law, and Education*, London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1984, p. 217.

<sup>9</sup> I borrow the searchlight metaphor from Nicolai Hartmann, *Ethik*, Berlin: Walter de Gruyter & Co, 1926.

mean that we have no sense of the friend.<sup>10</sup> When we achieve depth, world and friend are revealed together. This two-sided disclosure is crucial to the experience. While a deeper understanding of some ‘thing’ of interest is the first good of this sort of friendship, a string of other goods – rooted in the revelation of our friend – follow like pearls right after. The joint achievement of depth inspires us with a substantial and reasonable *trust* in the other person. It also gives birth to a sense of *equality* for which wealth, position, and academic degrees are quite irrelevant. But most importantly, perhaps, we immediately develop a sense of *precious otherness*. The experience of depth does not result in friendship if I think, rightly or wrongly, that I could have achieved that depth on my own. Friendship of this sort is based on, or comes along with, the *humble* sense of the world as deep and rich well beyond my own easy grasp. For this reason, Aristotle’s thought that a friend can be understood as another self is quite misleading in this context.<sup>11</sup> “Why would I want one more of myself?,” asks Eva Brann. “A friend is the first and closest *other*.”<sup>12</sup> This sense of close and precious otherness flows naturally from each experience of depth achieved through parallax.

It is sometimes said that friendship depends on the experience of agreement. Cicero, for example, wrote that the essence of friendship consists in “the most complete agreement in policy, in pursuits, and in opinions.”<sup>13</sup> There is some truth in this, but in the present context it is misleadingly strong. C.S. Lewis, helpful again, tones it down:

The man who agrees with us that some question, little regarded by others, is of great importance can be our Friend. He need not agree with us about the answer.<sup>14</sup>

There are at least two important insights here. The first is that friends do not have to be in complete agreement. Actually, I would go at least a bit further than Lewis here: Friends of the sort considered here tend *not* to agree completely about the answer to their shared questions. The typical experience in this sort of friendship is that our agreements and disagreements about the shared question will ebb and flow as our conversation develops. And this phenomenon brings us to the second insight in the quote from Lewis. Friendships of this sort are not static. They develop over time because they are driven by shared *questions*. Not only are these friendships about something, they are about something *elusive* or *difficult*. They are essentially quests and often give birth to adventures.

Friendship of this adventurous kind is not about utility. Depth achieved through parallax immediately delights us and may remind us of John Dewey’s claim that “man takes his enjoyment neat.”<sup>15</sup> To make this point clear, we can turn to Lewis again. He

<sup>10</sup> Lewis, *The Four Loves*, p. 71.

<sup>11</sup> Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1934, 1166a30–33.

<sup>12</sup> Brann, *Open Secrets*, p. 50.

<sup>13</sup> Cicero, *De Senectute; De amicitia; De divinatione*, transl. William Armistead Falconer, Cambridge: Harvard University Press (Loeb), 1923, p. 125.

<sup>14</sup> Lewis, *The Four Loves*, p. 66.

<sup>15</sup> John Dewey, *Experience and Nature*, New York: Dover Publications, 1998, pp. 78–79.

makes two distinctions that fruitfully highlight the non-utilitarian character of friendship. First, he insists on a distinction between friends and allies. An ally of mine is someone who is ready to help me out. But this has little to do with the friendship considered here: “[...] good offices are not the stuff of friendship,” Lewis writes<sup>16</sup> and Brann makes a similar point: “Friendship is a mutual aid society only in a pinch. Ordinarily it’s a company for producing delight.”<sup>17</sup> Of course we help our friends when needed, but that is not what the friendship is about.

Lewis makes another more subtle point when he distinguishes between companions and friends.<sup>18</sup> Companionship is about co-operation. We co-operate to survive and take pleasure in that co-operation. When professionals “talk shop” over a beer they can be described as companions. While companionship is a common matrix for friendship, the two relations should not be confused. A friendship may begin at work, and it may be about something relevant for our work, but it points beyond the utility of that work to something *interesting*. Friendship of this sort is ultimately not about making a living, but about living well.

### Conversation

Conversation, Emerson wrote, is “the practice and consummation of friendship.”<sup>19</sup> This rings true at first, at least when we think about friendship of the sort just described. Conversation is certainly a powerful vehicle for the pursuit of depth through parallax. But let’s be careful. It is far from clear that conversation must be the practice and consummation of every kind of friendship. In fact, I do not think that conversation *must* be central to friendships of the kind considered here. Depth through parallax can be pursued and gloriously achieved in ways that are much more dependent on the fact that we have or are bodies. Think of the friendship between George Balanchine and Suzanne Farrell. The erotic aspect of the relationship should not make us blind to their friendship, which was about, pursued through, and consummated in dance.<sup>20</sup> And think of the circle of friends, known as the Z-Boys, who revolutionized skateboarding in the 1970s.<sup>21</sup> The same point can be made here. I have no doubt that conversation played a role in these friendships, perhaps even an important one, but it seems misleading to say that conversation was their practice and consummation. If this is true, Emerson exaggerated.<sup>22</sup> Still, in the present context I will focus on conversation. Not just because

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<sup>16</sup> Lewis, *The Four Loves*, p. 69.

<sup>17</sup> Brann, *Open Secrets*, pp. 53–54.

<sup>18</sup> Lewis, *The Four Loves*, pp. 63–64.

<sup>19</sup> Ralph Waldo Emerson, *Essays*, New York: Carlton House, 1969, pp. 148–149.

<sup>20</sup> This interpretation is based on *Suzanne Farrell: Elusive Muse*, a documentary by Deborah Dickson and Anne Belle (1996).

<sup>21</sup> See the fascinating documentary *Dogtown and Z-Boys*, by Stacy Peralta (2001).

<sup>22</sup> See also Lewis, *The Four Loves*, p. 70.

conversation is close to my own heart, but because that particular vehicle of parallax is crucial for what I would like to say about liberal education in the final part of this essay.

What is it like to experience depth through parallax in conversation? My powers of description fall short here. I can only provide a few hints and hope that you recognize the elusive phenomenon that is the pivot of this essay. Have you ever felt that the back and forth of a conversation took on a life of its own and led you and your friend to a place of insight where none of you had been before? It is not that you covered new territory, though you probably did this too, but something happened as you went over some old favoured territory yet again. Perhaps at some point your friend said something new that struck you as so *true*, so *relevant*, and so *her*; then you surprised yourself by *saying* something in response that you had never *thought* before; something spontaneous and fluent, which now, after the conversation, seems exactly right. You cannot be sure that the conversation *really* brought you to a place of insight – perhaps it misled you? – but despite this healthy scepticism you cannot but feel that you learned something *together*.

The last paragraph was written as if two were the natural number for a good conversation, a plausible view explicitly embraced by Emerson. Friendship, he wrote,

cannot subsist in its perfection, say some of those who are learned in this warm lore of the heart, betwixt more than two. I am not quite so strict in my terms, perhaps because I have never known such a high fellowship as others. I please my imagination more with a circle of godlike men and women variously related to each other and between whom subsists a lofty intelligence. But I find this law of one to one peremptory for conversation, which is the practice and consummation of friendship. Do not mix waters too much. The best mix as ill as good and bad.<sup>23</sup>

The tragic pluralism implied in the last sentence may be contrasted with the more optimistic pluralism of C.S. Lewis:

In each of my friends there is something that only some other friend can fully bring out. By myself I am not large enough to call the whole man into activity; I want other lights than my own to show all his facets. Now that Charles is dead, I shall never again see Ronald's reaction to a specifically Caroline joke. Far from having more of Ronald, having him 'to myself' now that Charles is away, I have less of Ronald. Hence true Friendship is the least jealous of loves. Two friends delight to be joined by a third, and three by a fourth, if only the newcomer is qualified to become a real friend.<sup>24</sup>

Whereas Emerson found the best conversation one-on-one, Lewis found it in a circle of friends.<sup>25</sup> While Lewis' optimism is attractive, Emerson has a point we cannot afford to ignore. Consider the possibility, for example, that Charles and Ronald might not

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<sup>23</sup> Emerson, *op. cit.*, pp. 148–149.

<sup>24</sup> Lewis, *The Four Loves*, p. 61.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 72.

have shared their friend's optimism. We can still hold on to the optimistic thought as a regulative ideal, but would probably need to keep Emerson's darker view in mind in order not to set ourselves up for failure. This difference between Emerson and Lewis will be important later.

The end of conversation of the sort considered here is depth, but where does conversation actually end? One of the signs that a friendship has arisen, that two people have moved beyond 'mere' friendliness, is that conversation becomes inexhaustible. Fatigue will set in, of course, but almost every conversation between friends of this kind has a 'to be continued' written on it. In these conversations we discover and re-discover that the world is endlessly interesting, full of inexhaustible things to talk about and engage with in practice. "How wonderfully the wells of conversation fill up after apparent total exhaustion," Eva Brann writes in her chapter on friendship. Robert Sokolowski, whose phenomenological work provides a rich philosophical background for the understanding of friendship pursued here, offers a straightforward and compelling explanation of this phenomenon:

A thing [...] generates new appearances to a dative [i.e., a human person] that will appreciate them, with greater and greater intensity, not with diminishing strength. It is inexhaustible, an endless reservoir of surprising disclosures. We never know everything that can be said about an object. The thing [...] has depth...<sup>26</sup>

Friendship of the sort described here is a shared response to the depth of things. And Sokolowski himself makes the point about conversation relevant here:

No matter how much time two friends have spent together, they will always look forward to another meeting to enjoy the further appearances that will come to light.<sup>27</sup>

In friendship, conversation does not end. It is only paused. We might even take seriously Schleiermacher's idea that we can continue a conversation with a friend beyond the obvious natural limit, death, but that is not a thought I can pursue here.<sup>28</sup> In the remainder of this essay I want to consider what might happen if we would allow these thoughts about friendship to elucidate our idea and practice of liberal education.

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<sup>26</sup> Robert Sokolowski, *Phenomenology of the Human Person*, New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008, p. 175.

<sup>27</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>28</sup> Friedrich Schleiermacher, *Soliloquies*, transl. Horace Leland Friess, Chicago: The Open Court Publishing Company, 1926, pp. 85–86.



## Liberal Education

Friendship of the sort described here is intimately linked with freedom in at least three ways. First, it belongs to us as creatures of leisure. Friendship of this kind is not necessary for life, but something that makes life good. Moreover, friendship in this sense can be described as a process of liberation. As friends we collectively escape some of the superficiality that is natural to us as individuals. Finally, the process of friendship is remarkably free, i.e., expressive of human freedom. Not only are friends frank, i.e. free with one another;<sup>29</sup> together they tend to be (more) bold, experimenting, and adventurous.<sup>30</sup>

If these links are real, friendship may be adopted as an ideal of liberal education, understood here as an education that is worthy of, promotes, or expresses the freedom of the person educated. Some of those who care about liberal education may not immediately find it attractive to elucidate this ideal in terms of friendship, and I admit that there are good reasons to hesitate, especially in an institutional context.<sup>31</sup> Nonetheless, my aim in the rest of this essay is to argue that we can fruitfully think of higher liberal education as, among other things, the pursuit of friendship.

The most important institutional locus for the pursuit of friendship is probably the seminar, at least that will be my main focus here. The seminar became an important institution for the modern university in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and remains so, not least in colleges and universities that take liberal education seriously.<sup>32</sup> Etymologically speaking, a seminar is a place for planting seeds, and that is a felicitous metaphor in the present context. My suggestion here is that we may look at the seminar as a place in which we can pursue depth through parallax. In other words, the seminar can be a vehicle for the pursuit of an experience essential to the friendships described above.

Of course we do not become friends simply by participating in the same seminar. Friendship *can* begin immediately when two people meet and does sometimes develop very quickly, but more often it is a slow growth. When I suggest that the ideal of friendship can guide our seminar practices, I do not mean that we should all assume to be friends, but that we should practice *friendliness*. In this context, 'friendliness' is the name for friend-like relations between those who are not friends, at least not yet, or not quite. Friendliness and friendship are close relatives, however. Friendliness is not a superficial form of politeness, but a robust and ambitious attitude inspired by the delight of old friendships and the hope, however vague, for new ones. While the *meaning* of friendliness depends on its relation to friendship proper, it has independent *value*. Friendliness is good even if it never leads to friendship.

The aim of the sort of seminar I have in mind is to establish parallax through conversation. What we want as participants in the seminar is to taste a bit of that depth upon

<sup>29</sup> C.S. Lewis, *Studies in Words*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1960, chapter 5.

<sup>30</sup> Lewis, *The Four Loves*, p. 65.

<sup>31</sup> Others will reject the implicit idea that friendship is something one can learn. This is indeed what I think, but I cannot address relevant worries here.

<sup>32</sup> Theodore Ziolkowski, *German Romanticism and Its Institutions*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990, pp. 266–268.

which friendships of the kind described above are built. The premise for each seminar is that many of the most interesting things in the world tend to disclose themselves fully to us only collectively. Moreover, we assume that conversation is a powerful vehicle for the collective *effort* to see the world as it is. Friendship and friendliness in this context are names for the spirit in which that effort can succeed.

Whereas friendship is characterized by a certain ease, friendliness typically takes a great deal of effort. A seminar of the sort I have in mind can be quite exhausting and tends to demand courage. We have to be generous not just with our time but with ourselves and that may provoke anxiety. We are not trying to leap ahead of ourselves, at least not very far, but we do stretch together. The idea of attention, central to the work of Simone Weil and Iris Murdoch, is at home here.<sup>33</sup> A seminar can be described as a small group of co-seekers who, with patient and studious care, attend to some part of the world together. A seminar conversation is normally more regimented than a conversation among friends, but, when handled well, that should not be incompatible with a great deal of the free, imaginative, and bold spirit that we know from friendship proper.

It is perhaps worth making explicit what a seminar of this sort is not. It is not a *debate*, that popular competitive mode of engagement in which the aim is to score points. It is not about *empathy* either, the odd exercise of “putting oneself in another person’s shoes,” whatever that might mean exactly. The aim is *seeing-with* one another, a phenomenon that cannot be reduced to anything more simple.

I do not have space here to consider how big a seminar of the sort described here can be, but let me just end with a note about tutorials. So far I have been following in the rather optimistic footsteps of C.S. Lewis and assumed that the circle of friends in conversation is an ideal proper for conversations at a university. Experience suggests that Emerson has a point, however. It can be maddening, but sometimes the best do seem to mix as poorly as good and bad, and for that reason we typically need to complement our seminars with tutorials, i.e. one-to-one conversations. Ideally, we would have the resources for a combination of seminars and tutorials that can be adjusted to the group in question.

### Hypocrisy?

I will end by considering three objections to the suggestion that the ideal of friendship can fruitfully inspire our pursuit of liberal education.

Consider first the claim that students and teachers *cannot* be friends, at least not as long as they remain in the institutionalized student-teacher relation. It is a fairly common claim, I think, here made with Eva Brann’s usual eloquence:

Although in seminar discussions we [tutors at St John’s College] are expected to assume no seniority but to support our claims just like the students, we do,

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<sup>33</sup> See e.g., Iris Murdoch, *The Sovereignty of Good*, London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1970.

after all, evaluate them, and they are in that sense not our equals; our classroom equality involves a certain degree of benevolent hypocrisy. These are not the conditions of *bona fide* friendships. Those arise when in that sweet moment on commencement day, we, who have addressed them as Mr. or Ms. for four years, call our new-minted alumni by their first name for the first time. Then often a lifelong friendship is started.<sup>34</sup>

This is a powerful argument. An easy response would be to admit that the friendship we pursue in class is between students only. Our aim, then, would be to facilitate a friendly conversation among young people most of whom will soon find themselves in a busy working life with little leisure for that sort of thing. This is true and important, I think, but not sufficient. I *do* want to say that friendship is a worthy ideal in student-teacher conversations as well, so Brann's objection has to be answered.

What worries me about Brann's argument is that it invites teachers to withdraw from the friendliness that facilitates genuine and sustained attempts to establish parallax across generation gaps. That is a particularly difficult form of parallax to achieve, but one that has immense significance for a society's cultural health. I cannot defend that premise here, only stress that this is a thought that fundamentally defines the entire direction of the essay you are reading. If I am right, one of the most precious conversations we can establish at an institution of higher education is that between one generation and the next about what matters in life. To achieve that we need generous and courageous teachers who, despite institutionally necessary inequality, have the will and ability to converse with their students in a personal and egalitarian mode.

Eva Brann herself provides a good example of what I have in mind:

One obvious concomitant of our way [at St John's College] is that we are very reticent with our opinions – at least in class. Outside of class I, for one, will pontificate if a student wants it. I recall, when I was dean, three woman students making an urgent appointment with me about an important matter. The matter turned out to be what I, personally, thought about God. We had a candid conversation – for me a real workout. Thus reticence expresses itself in being sparing with talk in class and conversationally open outside.<sup>35</sup>

In a way, I have no quarrel with Brann. Her pedagogical philosophy provides her with respectable reasons for being fairly reticent in class and she still finds time and space for the sort of friendly conversation that I consider particularly valuable. But how many of her colleagues, not to mention teachers in institutions less idealistic about teaching, go out of their way to have real conversations like this with their students outside class?<sup>36</sup> It is time-consuming and often exhausting. Even those of us who find these conversations rewarding often shy away from them because they are not really valued, perhaps even frowned upon, by the institutions we work in. And that seems to

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<sup>34</sup> Eva Brann, *A College Unique and Universal*, Annapolis: St John's College, 2006, p. 38.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 17.

<sup>36</sup> Another problem here is that this conversation took place only because the students were courageous enough to seek out Brann. What about students who do not have this sort of courage?

be the real issue. Most of the time when teachers say that friendship with students is not possible, it really means that they do not want it all that much.

### Intrusion?

Even if the ideal of friendship *could* inspire student-teacher conversations, it does not follow that it *should*. Many teachers will resist this idea because they worry about being intrusive. Rightly so. As James Redfield once pointed out in a thoughtful essay, the seminar tends to invite intrusion in a way the lecture does not. For that reason one might say, in contrast with current wisdom, that in some sense the lecture is a teaching format more ‘liberal’ than the seminar.<sup>37</sup>

The argument is sound, it seems to me, and especially forceful in the present context. Not only am I defending the conversational seminar, but a version of it – the personal one – that threatens to be more intrusive than what we normally think of as a seminar. This objection needs a serious answer.

Mine has three parts. First, I should emphasize that ultimately I want no student to be forced into personal conversations of the sort described here. Invitations should be frequent, but refusable. There should be whole institutions and programmes where this sort of conversation is central, but there should be other programmes and institutions where students do not do this or do it only in electives. In general, we should realize that it is not possible to gather everything of educational value in any one institution.

Secondly, even when a student has entered a conversational seminar voluntarily, there is no reason to run the seminar in an intrusive manner. Friendliness, like friendship, is not a duty.<sup>38</sup> It may be encouraged but not demanded. And here it is worth pointing out that the shy and the slow can be great conversationalists.<sup>39</sup> When we enter a conversation in the pursuit of parallax, i.e. truth and depth, quality is much more important than speed and quantity.

Finally, we need a distinction between personal and private. We can be generous with ourselves, i.e., personal, without entering the private mode. Brann has given us a wonderful example of the personal, non-private mode in writing. Her book *Open Secrets / Inward Prospects: Reflections on World and Soul* gives us Eva Brann “on a platter,” but – despite frequent references to her bathtub – it is also a remarkably sure-footed in not straying into private matters. Another excellent example would be Schleiermacher’s *Soliloquies*. The basic premise of this book is a principle of generosity: the most precious gift we can give others is a clear view of ourselves.<sup>40</sup> At the same time, Schleiermacher explicitly makes the distinction between personal and private, and most of the time he manages to uphold this distinction in practice as well. What Brann and Schleiermacher

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<sup>37</sup> James Redfield, *On the Discussion Class* [unpublished manuscript].

<sup>38</sup> Lewis, *The Four Loves*, p. 71.

<sup>39</sup> Theodore Zeldin, *Conversation*, London: The Harvill Press, 1998, p. 15.

<sup>40</sup> Schleiermacher, *op. cit.*, p. 9.

have achieved in writing is, if my argument is sound, a fitting ideal for university teachers in conversation with their students.

### Naivety?

The final objection I will consider here is inspired by a passage in Schopenhauer's *Aphorisms on the Wisdom of Life*.<sup>41</sup> Young people of noble disposition tend to be idealists about friendship, Schopenhauer wrote, but as they grow older they wake up to the fact that most human relations are based on some material interest. Given the fact that we live in a world of suffering and need, and since human beings are in the grip of egoism, this should not surprise us. We should not expect there to be much, or perhaps any, genuine friendship around. If there is truth in this grim view, then the idea that an idealistic notion of friendship should guide our educational pursuits may seem not just hypocritically far-fetched but naively irresponsible. Is this not just a safe way in which *not* to prepare students for the real world?

It is all too tempting to assent to this apparently realistic view and let go of the ideal. But this is one of the moments when innocent idealism is wiser than tired experience. We ought to resist the temptation to 'know better' than the idealistic youngsters. It is probably true that there is much less genuine friendship and friendliness around in the world than we would like. Schopenhauer is right about that. Interestingly, however, he adds a moderately optimistic thought in the paragraph that follows the grim one. There does seem to be a grain of genuine friendship in some human associations, he writes, even if they are largely based on egoism, and that ennobles them to the point where we can meaningfully use the term friendship. Even if there is little of it, in other words, and even if it is mixed with human concerns much less noble, friendship is still real. The values of friendliness and friendship are quite robust.

And why should there not be more friendship around? While our talent and capacity for friendship tends to be limited, our desire for it is commonly strong and inclusive. The first paragraph of Emerson's fine essay about friendship reminds us of this:

We have a great deal more kindness than is ever spoken. Maugre all the selfishness that chills like east winds the world, the whole human family is bathed with an element of love like a fine ether. How many persons we meet in houses, whom we scarcely speak to, whom yet we honor, and who honor us! How many we see in the street, or sit with in church, whom, though silently, we warmly rejoice to be with. Read the language of these wandering eye-beams. The heart knoweth.<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>41</sup> Arthur Schopenhauer, *Parerga and Paralipomena*, vol. 1, transl. E.F.J. Payne, New York: Oxford University Press, 1974, pp. 458–459.

<sup>42</sup> Emerson, *op. cit.*, p. 137.

Surely there is some truth here, even if exaggerated, and that makes friendliness a labour of more than mere enthusiasm. There is some space for reasonable hope when we stretch towards friendship. And when we succeed, finally, we see that friendship and friendliness are not only real and good, but that their value is diffusive.<sup>43</sup> These achievements are not just pretty little nuggets of something nice in a big and grim machinery, they tend to change the entire nature of the ‘machines’ in which we organize ourselves to something better. Every act of friendship or friendliness – at home, at work, in public space – is a small victory for humanity. It not only brings warmth to a cold place, but reveals us as lovers of truth, liberty, and noble adventure.<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>43</sup> Cf. R.M. Chisholm, *Brentano and Intrinsic Value*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986, p. 94.

<sup>44</sup> I am grateful to David Hayes, David McNaughton, Peter Hajnal, Sofiya Skachko, Solomija Buk, and Wayne Veck for discussing the issues of this essay with me. I also benefited from questions and comments from audiences at University College Maastricht and University of Copenhagen where I had the opportunity to present some of the thoughts and arguments above.

Elżbieta Olechowska

**PEDO MELLON A MINNO,  
or an Inclusive Concept of Friendship  
of the First Post-War Generation**





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**PEDO MELLON A MINNO,<sup>1</sup>  
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Understanding of universal concepts, including friendship, while informed by philosophical thought and canons of literature, is to a significant degree culture specific, generational, and rooted in personal experience. The early post-WW2 cohorts of children born in Poland were obviously influenced by their parents' pre-war and war-experience and by the harsh post-war reality. The challenges of rebuilding the country, emerging from the desolation of a long and cruel military occupation and going straight into an imposed totalitarian regime, brought at least one benefit: they reduced to the point of irrelevance the traditional class and gender differences in the ways these concepts were grasped. Life was what we would now call grim, regardless of your family pre-war social background and whether you were a boy or a girl. There were no toys to speak of, clothing was inadequate, and nutrition poor. It was naturally much harder on the parents – they remembered their life before the war – than on the children who did not and who took the hardships in their stride.

I propose to explore the question of how this first post-war generation developed the notion of friendship on a somewhat hypothetical, individual example of a child born to university educated parents who survived the war but like many of their compatriots lost almost everything: family members, friends, social status, homes, and personal belongings, including – less necessary but keenly regretted – books they read as children. Books that were an all important source of knowledge, learning, and pleasure, in a world without television, Internet, and with very few telephones. A clean slate possibly but not a good start to a new life as “working intelligentsia,” where rights were equalized and opportunities, if any, were for the most part unsavoury. Let us proceed with this exploration of a particular cognitive experience and leaf through books that helped to shape it. We will follow the chronological order of the child's experiences with literature, not the authors' chronology.

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<sup>1</sup> “Say, ‘Friend,’ and enter” – words “written in the Feānorian characters according to the mode of Beleriand” on the Doors of Durin, Lord of Moria. See John Ronald Reuel Tolkien, *The Lord of the Rings*, London: Harper Collins, 1991 (ed. pr. 1954), pp. 322–326.

## FABLES

## Adam Mickiewicz

Well before a child can experience the fundamentally human relation of friendship, she hears about it from stories told by parents who learned them by heart in their own childhood. Among such stories are practically always various versions of ancient fables. One of the great Polish Romantic poets, Adam Mickiewicz, wrote a fable based on Aesop (or Avianus),<sup>2</sup> entitled *Przyjaciele* [Friends]. It begins with a gloomy thought: “Nie masz teraz prawdziwej przyjaźni na świecie” [“True friendship has now disappeared from the world”], partly modified in the second line: “Ostatni znam jej przykład w oszmiańskim powiecie” [“I know of a last case in Oszmiana<sup>3</sup> county”]. The remainder of the story sadly confirms the sentiment of the opening sentence: the alleged last case did not pass the crucial test for friendship, that of adversity. The fable ends with a pearl of ursine insight: “Prawdziwych przyjaciół poznajemy w biedzie,”<sup>4</sup> variations of which function in all European languages. In English, it is a maxim rounded and smoothed out by usage, like a pebble on the beach: “A friend in need is a friend indeed.”<sup>5</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Avianus, *De duobus sociis et ursae*, in: Ben Edwin Perry, ed., *Aesopica. A Series of Texts Relating to Aesop or Ascribed to Him*, Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2007[1952]. The fable is identified as Avianus 9, Perry Index 65, Chambry 254 (*Fables [par] Esope*, ed. Émile Chambry, Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 1967[1925]), Jacobs 50 (*Æsop, Fables*, retold by Joseph Jacobs, vol. XVII, part 1, in the series “The Harvard Classics,” New York: P.F. Collier & Son, 1909–1914), Oxford (Gibbs) Index 91 (*Aesop’s Fables*, a new transl. by Laura Gibbs, in the series “World’s Classics,” Oxford: Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2002 and a 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. 2008, see also the website: <http://www.mythfolklore.net/aesopica/oxford/91.htm>, consulted Dec. 4, 2015). The moral of Avianus fable: “Ne facile alterius repetas consortia, dixit, / Rursus ab insana ne capiare fera.” The Greek moral in the Chambry’s edition: Ὁ μῦθος δηλοῖ ἀπέχεσθαι τῶν φίλων οἱ τινες ἐν καιρῷ περιστάσεως οὐ περιμένουσι βοηθῆσαι τοῖς φίλοις.

<sup>3</sup> The action takes place in Lithuania, Mickiewicz’s native land, formerly part of the Polish Commonwealth. Oszmiana was the capital of a county in the voivodeship of Vilnius. Mickiewicz underlines the location not only by identifying the district but also in his aside about the bear: “Niedźwiedz litwin mięs nieświeżych nie je” [“A Lithuanian bear does not eat spoiled meat”]. All translations by E.O. unless stated otherwise.

<sup>4</sup> “We recognize true friends in times of need” – Adam Mickiewicz, *Przyjaciele*, in his *Bajki*, Warszawa: T.H. Nasierowski, 1893, pp. 11–13. Two lines are missing in this edition, the publisher did not want to offend innocent sentiments but in fact only eliminated a source of crude humour and a rationale for the bear abandoning its prey: “Wącha: a z tego zapachu, / Który mógł być skutkiem strachu [...] / Wnosi, że to nieboszczyk i że już nieświeży” [“Sniffs: and from the smell / That could have been the result of fear [...] / concludes, that it is a corpse and far from fresh”].

<sup>5</sup> Some other formulas are: “Never travel with a friend who deserts you at the approach of danger” (*Three Hundred Aesop’s Fables*, literally translated from the Greek by the Rev. Geo. Fyler Townsend, London: Routledge and Sons, 187?, p. 49); “Never trust a friend who deserts you at a pinch” (Joseph Jacobs, see n. 2; a recent translation by Laura Gibbs, see n. 2: “Do not be too quick to resume your fellowship with that other man, in case you fall once again into the clutches of another wild beast.”).

### Ignacy Krasicki

The lesson is reinforced when the child hears another staple bed time story, Ignacy Krasicki's fable about friends, also called *Przyjaciele* [Friends].<sup>6</sup> It is a cynical tale of a cute little hare, beloved by all other animals; when hunted by hounds, he asks his friends to save him, one after another, but they all refuse. The horse could not help the hare but was sure that the ox could do that easily; the ox in turn suggested the Billy goat – who thought his back was too hard for the hare to ride on and advised to ask the soft, woolly ewe. The ewe was too afraid of the hounds; she suggested the calf who refused because its elders did and fled. The responsibility of helping a friend in need was hypocritically passed on to whoever else might be on hand and who supposedly could do it better. The moral: “Wśród serdecznych przyjaciół psy zająca zjadły” [“Hounds ate the hare among his bosom friends”].

Predictably, both stories end up discouraging the child and planting a robust seed of mistrust towards potential friends. Well, better to be prepared than disappointed; this is after all the function of fables, easy to swallow, extended release capsules of time-honoured wisdom.

### Jean de La Fontaine

When the same child begins to learn foreign languages (and making friends herself) – in my generation the first such language was, as a rule, French – she may recognize an old pal or two among the delightfully sparkling and not altogether translatable beats and rhymes of Jean de La Fontaine:

Deux compagnons, pressés d'argent,  
A leur voisin fourreur vendirent  
La peau d'un ours encor vivant,  
Mais qu'ils tueraient bientôt, du moins à ce qu'ils dirent.<sup>7</sup>

Two fellows pressed for cash, averse to labour,  
Sold a bear's skin to Furrier, their neighbour –  
Skin of a bear uncaught and living still,  
But one, they said, they were about to kill.<sup>8</sup>

The poem ends with another pearl of ursine wisdom:

Il m'a dit qu'il ne faut jamais  
Vendre la peau de l'Ours qu'on ne l'ait mis par terre.

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<sup>6</sup> A famous fabulist of the Enlightenment era, called the Polish La Fontaine, Ignacy Krasicki (1735–1801); see Ignacy Krasicki, *Przyjaciele*, in his *Bajki nowe*, Fundacja Nowoczesna Polska, [n.a.], digital library of Polish texts in public domain, consulted August 8, 2015, at: [wolnelektury.pl/media/book/pdf/bajki-nowe.pdf](http://wolnelektury.pl/media/book/pdf/bajki-nowe.pdf).

<sup>7</sup> Jean de la Fontaine, *L'Ours et les deux Compagnons*, V, 20.

<sup>8</sup> See *La Fontaine's Fables*, now first translated from the French by Robert Thomson, vol. 2, Paris: G. Doyen, 1806[?]. Consulted August 8, 2015, at: <http://www.la-fontaine-ch-thierry.net/fivehareass.htm>.

He told me to look after other wares,  
Nor deal in skins of uncaught living bears.<sup>9</sup>

Almost the same story but a different moral: here the characters are motivated by greed and do not properly prepare to achieve their goal. They lack not only moral values but also pragmatism and efficiency. The child wonders why there is a different moral to roughly the same plot. And which of the two stories was first, the one about friendship eroded by fear, or the one about two morons who think that hunting a bear is easy, and how do we know which? A philological curiosity is born and at the same time an awareness of diversity and flexibility of ideas.

### Mikołaj Rej

It is with pure pleasure and easy recognition that, a year or two later, when the child graduates to the study of Old Polish literature, she encounters one of the first Polish poets, Mikołaj Rej and his *Figliki albo Rozlicznych ludzi przypadki dworskie, które sobie po zatrudnionych myślach, dla krotofile, wolny będąc, czytać możesz*<sup>10</sup> [Larks, or Diverse People's Courtly Adventures that You Can Read for Amusement When You Are Free after Thinking Too Much]. Among them, the same story, this time called, *Co miedźwiedzia skórę szacowali* [About Those Who Were Pricing a Bear's Skin], with the combined moral about untrustworthy friends and the foolish mistaking of wishes for facts:

Mówił, bych ci nie wierzył, a to pilnie chował,  
póki nie mam, bych cudzej skóry nie szacował.

Told me not to trust you, and to remember never  
To price somebody else's skin before it's mine.

It is the origin of the expression “dzielić skórę na niedźwiedziu” [“to divide the skin still on the bear”], the Polish equivalent of “counting your chickens before they hatch.” A theme dear to fabulists and well entrenched in their treasury of moralizing maxims.<sup>11</sup>

In Mikołaj Rej's fable *Żwierzyniec* [Bestiary] XLI,<sup>12</sup> the moral centres on the difficulty of regaining trust between friends, once it is lost. The story is based on Aesop's

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<sup>9</sup> Here Thomson adds a few words to achieve a rhyme.

<sup>10</sup> Mikołaj Rej (1505–1568) included these humorous epigrams at the end of his *Żwierzyniec* [Bestiary], 1562, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. 1574. Cf. also Julian Ejsmond, ed., *Antologia bajki polskiej*, Warszawa: Gebethner i Wolff, 1915, p. 14.

<sup>11</sup> La Fontaine treats this theme in one of his best known fables, widely memorized by school children, *La Laitière et le Pot au Lait*, a story, with a long and most respectable genealogy (Jacques de Vitry, Nicolas de Pergame, Bonaventure des Périers, *Pañchatantra*), about a silly milkmaid who imagines all she would buy once she sells her pail of milk; she gets so excited that she spills the precious milk on the ground along with her dreams. See Jean de La Fontaine, *Fables*, eds. Pierre Michel & Maurice Martin, vol. 2, Paris: Bordas, 1967, p. 43.

<sup>12</sup> Quoted from Ejsmond, ed., *Antologia bajki polskiej...*, p. 15.

*The Snake and the Farmer*<sup>13</sup> with a difference (in the other known versions of the story, the child always dies) meriting a summary: a snake bites a farmer's child, the farmer reciprocates by cutting off a piece of the snake's tail. Once both the child and the snake recover, the farmer suggests that they may resume their friendship. The snake agrees but doubts whether it would be possible for both sides to simply forgive and forget:

Zawždy gdy obrażona przyjaźń bywa nazbyt,  
na wieczne tam przymierze trudno bywa o kwit.

Always once a friendship is too sorely tried,  
It is hard to resume an eternal alliance.

### Jan Lemański

An anthology of Polish fables, which contains some of the already discussed ones, was published in 1915 by a fabulist and poet, Julian Ejsmond (1892–1930). He selected forty-one authors including himself – ranging from the fifteenth to the twentieth century. Friendship was not a theme much represented in the anthology. One of the exceptions, along poems by Mikołaj Rej, is provided by a fable entitled *On Friendship* [O przyjaźni]<sup>14</sup> by a modern author Jan Lemański<sup>15</sup> (1866–1933). The author talks about diversity of friendships and about his own unique relationship with an eminent person to whom he proved his friendship time and again but when he himself required a service in return, his friend refused saying:

A ja JA swoje cenię, i w imię tej Jaźni  
proszę cię, przyjacielu, zrób to dla przyjaźni –  
dla tej przyjaźni naszej zrzec się swego celu.

Because I value my EGO and in its name  
I ask you, for friendship sake – my friend,  
for our friendship sake, abandon your end.

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<sup>13</sup> It corresponds to Gibbs (Oxford) 75, Perry Index 51, Chambry 81, cf. <http://mythfolklore.net/aesopica/perry/51.htm> (consulted Aug. 8, 2015). There are alternative versions of the fable, some with a different moral, closer to *The Farmer and the Viper*, Gibbs (Oxford) 440, Perry Index 176, Chambry 82, cf. <http://mythfolklore.net/aesopica/perry/176.htm> (consulted Aug. 8, 2015), or to *The Scorpion and the Frog*, a fable about the vicious and uncontrollable nature of scorpion, of uncertain origin, but widely quoted in contemporary popular culture. My favourite example is *Star Trek Voyager*, Season 3, episode 26 and Season 4, episode 1, that form together a two-part 1997 episode entitled *Scorpion*. As a result of forced cooperation between the Voyager and the Borg (of the “Resistance is futile” fame) against a common foe, Species 8472, Seven of Nine has an opportunity to revert to her former Borg nature and tries to assimilate the Voyager; the starship's crew is ready for it and activates ‘operation Scorpion’ which severs her neural link with the Borg collective and ensures the Voyager's escape.

<sup>14</sup> Published in Ejsmond, ed., *Antologia bajki polskiej...*, pp. 156–158.

<sup>15</sup> A minor literary figure whose main title to glory was his short-lived marriage to an important Polish poet Maria Komornicka (1876–1949).

## ROME

**Cicero and Ennius**

The moral known from Adam Mickiewicz's fable – “a friend in need is a friend indeed,” the child, now quite grown up, may find not only in fables, but in Latin texts read at high school, or more likely at the university. It almost exactly corresponds to a fragment of the early Roman poet Ennius preserved for his alliterative glory: “amicus certus in incerta re cernitur.”<sup>16</sup> We have no clear context for this fragment, as it is only a quotation and comes supposedly from an Ennius' tragedy entitled *Hecuba*, treating of vicissitudes of fate. We do know quite well who and where quoted Ennius – Marcus Tullius Cicero in his *Laelius de amicitia*.<sup>17</sup> Let us use this opportunity and indulge our translator curiosity comparing how the phrase itself was translated into English by several consecutive but quite independent scholars:

In insure fortune a sure friend is seen – Andrew Peabody, 1887.<sup>18</sup>

The hour of need shews the friend indeed – E.S. Shuckburgh, 1909–1914.<sup>19</sup>

When Fortune's fickle the faithful friend is found – W.A. Falconer, 1923.<sup>20</sup>

A friend in need is seen a friend indeed – E.H. Warmington, 1935.<sup>21</sup>

All translations render the meaning of the original; all, with one exception (Shuckburgh), attempt to reproduce the alliterations, more or less successfully. Still, none strikes as perfect and definitive.

Many less formal Latinists and not so learned sympathisers have been posting their own versions online, producing rather unimpressive results.<sup>22</sup> There are also web pages providing multilingual translations of the maxim.<sup>23</sup> Clearly not only the universality of the topic but also the origin of the expression and its continued popularity throughout the ages attract a wide public, regardless of their knowledge of Antiquity and of classical languages.

What made Cicero think of Ennius? Let's listen to his unmistakable voice, just before and after the quote, talking about the rarity of friendship among people active

<sup>16</sup> Cf. *Remains of Old Latin*, vol. I: *Ennius. Caecilius*, transl. E.H. Warmington, Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press (Loeb), 1935, frg. 217–218, pp. 298–299.

<sup>17</sup> Cic. *Lael.* 17.64.

<sup>18</sup> Transl. Andrew P. Peabody, Boston: Little, Brown, 1887, p. 48.

<sup>19</sup> Cicero, *On Friendship*, vol. IX, part 1, transl. E.S. Shuckburgh, “The Harvard Classics,” New York: P.F. Collier & Son, 1909–1914, available at: [www.bartleby.com/9/1/](http://www.bartleby.com/9/1/) (consulted Aug 8, 2015).

<sup>20</sup> Cicero, *Laelius de Amicitia*, Latin text with facing English translation by W.A. Falconer, Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press (Loeb), 1923, p. 175.

<sup>21</sup> *Remains of Old Latin...*, frg. 217–218, p. 299.

<sup>22</sup> E.g. a “senior member” of the forum.wordreference.com posted in October 2006: “A faithful friend in a precarious situation is distinguished.” Slightly more literally: “A certain friend in an incertain [*sic!*] affair is distinguished.” Well, high school Latin is clearly not enough to properly translate Cicero, or rather, Ennius.

<sup>23</sup> See <http://lyricstranslate.com/en/amicus-certus-re-incerta-cernitur> (consulted Dec. 4, 2015) providing translations of the phrase in almost twenty languages.

in politics and in public life, and about the “extreme rarity” and almost divine character of people who remain true friends regardless of circumstances:

Itaque verae amicitiae difficillime reperiuntur in iis, qui in honoribus reque publica versantur; ubi enim istum invenias, qui honorem amici anteponat suo? Quid? haec ut omittam, quam graves, quam difficiles plerisque videntur calamitatum societates, ad quas non est facile inventu qui descendant. Quamquam Ennius recte: *Amicus certus in re incerta cernitur*; tamen haec duo levitatis et infirmitatis plerosque convincunt, aut si in bonis rebus contemnunt aut in malis deserunt. Qui igitur utraque in re gravem, constantem, stabilem se in amicitia praestiterit, hunc ex maxime raro genere hominum iudicare debemus et paene divino.

True friendships are very hard to find among those whose time is spent in office or in business of a public kind. For where can you find a man so high-minded as to prefer his friend’s advancement to his own? And, passing by material considerations, pray consider this: how grievous and how hard to most persons does association in another’s misfortunes appear! Nor is it easy to find men who will go down to calamity’s depths for a friend. Ennius, however, is right when he says: *When Fortune’s fickle the faithful friend is found*. Yet it is on these two charges that most men are convicted of fickleness: they either hold a friend of little value when their own affairs are prosperous, or they abandon him when his are adverse. Whoever, therefore, in either of these contingencies, has shown himself staunch, immovable, and firm in friendship ought to be considered to belong to that class of men which is exceedingly rare – aye, almost divine.<sup>24</sup>

Vicissitudes of fate are a test of friendship, no doubt Hecuba is a perfect example of a person who suffered a tragic reversal of fortune and had a sad opportunity to recognize the truth of the maxim. It seems very likely that for that reason quotations from a tragedy may have been ideal for rhetorical exercises. This passage from *Laelius de amicitia* where Cicero’s reasoning flows with conviction born from personal experience of political life, highlights ambition as a serious obstacle in relations between friends. Ambition combined with a tendency to neglect friends when we are prosperous, and to desert them when the fate is against them. The ringing question: “ubi enim istum invenias, qui honorem amici anteponat suo?” could have been asked today with as much relevance. Jan Lemański in the fable *On Friendship* also discussed personal ambition and self-interest as obstacles to true friendship whose important attribute is a two-way character, a necessary give and take.

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<sup>24</sup> Cic. *Lael.* 17.64. Latin text quoted according to: M. Tullius Cicero, *Laelius de amicitia*, ed. C.F.W. Müller, Leipzig: Teubner, 1884. English translation is by W.A. Falconer, in the already quoted Loeb edition of 1923 (see n. 20), pp. 174–175.



## MODERN PROSE

### Albert Camus

A young adult growing up in the People's Republic of Poland, had to be affected by the intellectual peer-pressure of the time and could not have avoided reading Albert Camus' *La Chute* [The Fall]<sup>25</sup> soon after 1957 when the author received the Nobel Prize for Literature. She would have been then confronted with another, unforgettable version of Cicero's gloomy question. It was asked with a haunting poignancy by Jean-Baptiste Clamence, the modern John the Baptist preaching (*clamans*) in the desert who was confessing in an Amsterdam bar his sins of self-regard, egotism, and indifference to others:

Voyez-vous, on m'a parlé d'un homme dont l'ami avait été emprisonné et qui couchait tous les soirs sur le sol de sa chambre pour ne pas jouir d'un confort qu'on avait retiré à celui qu'il aimait. Qui, cher monsieur, qui couchera sur le sol pour nous?<sup>26</sup>

You see, I've heard of a man whose friend had been imprisoned and who slept on the floor of his room every night in order not to enjoy a comfort of which his friend had been deprived. Who, cher monsieur, will sleep on the floor for us?<sup>27</sup>

Albert Camus in *The Fall* defined the standard for true friendship in mid-twentieth-century, setting it higher than anyone before but in full awareness of such friendship being a *rara avis*, or even a species extinct but one we still can describe:

Qui, cher monsieur, qui couchera sur le sol pour nous? – Camus, 1956 AD.  
ubi enim istum invenias, qui honorem amici anteponat suo? – Cicero, 44 BC.

Human nature torn between its yearning for true friendship and its disbelief in such friendship's existence did not change during the two thousand years that lie between these sentences. Camus' classical education and interests in philosophy clearly point to his familiarity with *Laelius de amicitia*. Obviously, the two questions are not identical: in *The Fall*, Camus speaks of a private gesture, particularly selfless because known only to the person who makes it, without the benefit of an appreciative audience, while Cicero considers unlikely that anybody would "prefer a friend's advancement to one's own,"<sup>28</sup> even faced with a full contingent of witnesses ready to be impressed. In that transformation lies possibly the two-thousand year evolution of the concept.

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<sup>25</sup> The first Polish edition of *La Chute* was published in 1957 by Wydawnictwo Literackie in Kraków. The text was translated into Polish by Joanna Guzy.

<sup>26</sup> Albert Camus, *La Chute*, Paris: Gallimard, 1956, pp. 39–40.

<sup>27</sup> *The Fall*, transl. by Justin O'Brian, New York: Vintage, 1991, p. 32.

<sup>28</sup> Cic. *Lael.* 17.64.



### John R.R. Tolkien

From the simplistic morals of fables, through depths of philosophical treatises, and flights of literary visions that all combine to help people understand how the world works and shed a tear at its failings, we easily proceed (or escape) to another reality where it is possible to live up to the highest ideals – the realm of fantasy.

The child we are following on her cognitive journey, met Frodo by pure accident, at the advanced age of twenty-five, browsing through the Grand Passage book section in Geneva in 1970. She fell in love with Tolkien standing there at the display of new paperbacks for an hour and reading the one-volume edition of *The Lord of the Rings*.<sup>29</sup> The book travelled with her since, “wherever she fared,” colouring her view of friendship – an essential and primary theme for the whole of Tolkien’s legacy – shaped by fables, Cicero and Camus, and grounded in her own personal experience.

The intricacies of the concept, developed by philosophers and simplified by maxims, recede into the background when faced with the inscription on the Doors of Durin, the west entrance to Khazad-dûm, adopted as motto for the present paper: PEDO MELLON A MINNO.<sup>30</sup> “Say ‘Friend’ and enter,” a straightforward instruction to all comers (at least those who read the Feänorian script), how to open the door, became a hard to solve riddle, even for a wizard. He understood instead: “Speak, friend, and enter,” and wasted precious time on trying to find “the opening word... inscribed on the archway all the time!” The lack of quotation marks in the old script, a language where there was no obvious difference between a vocative and a nominative, and the forgotten simplicity of times long gone, confused him. He looked for cunning where there was none.

We are in fantasy land, aren’t we? But even there high values are in danger. Since Aesop, Ennius, Cicero, through Rej, La Fontaine, Krasicki, Mickiewicz, Lemański, and Camus, during thousands of years’ worth of literature, a general consensus prevailed that true friendship was an extreme rarity, if not reserved only for gods.<sup>31</sup> Tolkien uses in *The Lord of the Ring* the rhetorical theme of the old good times, when being a friend meant having good intentions and when a declaration was enough to engender trust. The old good times are an illusion, what we do know about the remote past points to a more primitive, brutal, cruel, and unforgiving reality. The past may have been simple – technologically – but human nature, its moral weaknesses, and relations between people appear to have been remarkably similar to ours. Even if our two-thousand years long evidence invalidates Tolkien’s nostalgic view of the innocent past, we cannot do much about it, as he fully controls his fantasy and may let his world slide according to the Ovidian model,<sup>32</sup> or, as he calls it, diminish and fade.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> First edition published in one volume, of 1968.

<sup>30</sup> John R.R. Tolkien, *The Lord of the Rings*, London: Harper Collins, 1991, pp. 322–326.

<sup>31</sup> Cic. *Lael.* 17.64: “hunc ex maxime raro genere hominum iudicare debemus et paene divino.”

<sup>32</sup> *Ov. Met.* 1.89–150.

<sup>33</sup> Tolkien, *The Lord of the Rings*, p. 907 and passim (*The Return of the King*, chapter “The Last Debate”). For the Tolkien’s view of history and his theme of diminishing and fading see John B. Marino, “The Presence of the Past in *The Lord of the Rings*,” in: John William Houghton, Janet Brennan Croft, Nancy Martch et al., eds., *Tolkien in the New Century: Essays in Honor of Tom Shippey*, Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Co., 2014, pp. 169–181, and particularly pp. 170–174.

The rhetoric of a gentler past notwithstanding, Tolkien allows his characters to achieve the highest standards of friendship on all imaginable levels.<sup>34</sup> The world may have become more devious and violent but the virtue of true friendship shines resplendent in Middle Earth. Frodo and Sam provide its most relevant example, one among countless others. If, like Mickiewicz, we cannot find true friendship even in Oszmiana county [“w oszmiańskim powiecie”], we see it in abundance among unadventurous, modest, and down-to-earth Hobbits, tested and proven beyond any doubt *in re highly incerta*, such as the fight between good and evil. A world where no doors open to the sound of MELLON, would not be worth living in, even for a short while.<sup>35</sup>

### Rudyard Kipling

I encountered Kipling’s quasi autobiographical *Stalky & Co.* at a seriously mature age of sixty-three when people do not read school stories, or at least rarely admit that they do. Intrigued by a bronze plaque *Study Number Five* on the doors of the Faculty of “Artes Liberales” Dean at the University of Warsaw and by the provided explanation, I ordered a copy of *Stalky* and was instantly hooked. When I realized that five of the stories in *The Complete Stalky and Co.* were never translated into Polish, I embarked on this delightful labour producing one translated story a year. They are now all done and may be published under the title *Stalky for Grownups* – the sheer volume of allusions to English literature and classics requires a commentary even for a discriminating adult Polish reader, to say nothing of a child. Like in Tolkien’s Middle Earth epic, the *Stalky & Co.*’s underlying theme is friendship, honour, and courage flourishing in unlikely places, such as an atypical British boarding school where “young Centaur-colts”<sup>36</sup> prepare for the service to the Empire.

An unfinished *Stalky* story, “Scylla and Charybdis,” discovered decades ago among Kipling’s bound manuscripts, was published in 2004 in the *Journal of the Kipling Society*.<sup>37</sup> Chronologically, the story, situated during the three heroes’ (Stalky, McTurk, and Beetle) second year at school, should have been opening the collection. The author left the manuscript incomplete and decided to start with *Stalky*,<sup>38</sup> a story explaining the

<sup>34</sup> Since 2003, every March 25, the Tolkien Society celebrates Tolkien Reading Day; it is also the anniversary of the destruction of Sauron’s ring through concerted efforts of Frodo, Sam, and Sméagol. The theme selected for the 2015 day, was – serendipitously – friendship. On the Society’s website, several scholars and two trustees read their favourite passages on the theme, from a number of Tolkien’s texts: from a Tolkien’s letter, from his translation of *Beowulf* published only in 2014, from the *Hobbit*, from “Mount Doom” in *The Return of the King*, from “A Journey in the Dark” in *The Fellowship of the Ring* (discussed above), from “Many Partings” in *The Return of the King*, and from *Leaf by Niggle*, see: <http://www.tolkienesociety.org/2015/03/today-is-tolkien-reading-day/> (consulted Aug. 10, 2015). Yet, practically any fragment would do, as Tolkien’s whole legacy is imbued by the concept of friendship and its various strands.

<sup>35</sup> The invitation “Say, ‘Friend,’ and enter” is inscribed in moon letters on the archway of the Faculty of “Artes Liberales” of the University of Warsaw. Ask anybody.

<sup>36</sup> Rudyard Kipling, *The Complete Stalky & Co.*, ed. with an introd. and notes by Isabel Quigly, in the series “Oxford World’s Classics,” Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999, p. 155.

<sup>37</sup> “Scylla and Charybdis,” the Unpublished ‘Stalky’ Story by Rudyard Kipling,” eds. Jeffery Lewins and Lisa Lewis, *Kipling Journal*, March 2004, pp. 10–34.

<sup>38</sup> Kipling, *The Complete Stalky...*, pp. 11–27.

origins of the main character's nickname. Even if unfinished and discarded, "Scylla and Charybdis" contains a remarkable passage on the nature of friendship that brought and kept the boys together, governed by the 'two-to-one' majority rule:

He [Beetle] had consorted with these two since his first term – a year ago when they were almost as wretched as himself. Corkran of the light eyes had decided with McTurk, in a boxroom, sitting upon a play-box after they had been bullied all one solid hour by Fairburn; and Beetle had taken his orders with meekness and joy. If Corkran and McTurk agreed upon a matter who was he to object. Was it not two to one; and perfectly fair. If he could ever win McTurk or Stalky to his views it would be two to one against Stalky or McTurk. That joyful day had not yet come but Beetle lived in hope. Together they had cooked sparrows over the gas on rusty nibs; together they had made sloe jam; together they had been flung into the deep end of the baths to teach them how to swim; together they had dared to insult a senior and together they had waged war against him when he came to slay them. Together they had grizzled, sore and homesick, down in the lavatories, cheering one another with the thought that they would write home to their parents and be taken away from this beastly place; together they had striven to assist each other with the mysteries of *ut* with the subjunctive and the genders of Gaul. A year in a boy's life is very long. Looking back mistily as children do, they could not remember when they were unallied.<sup>39</sup>

School stories are as much a feature of British literature, as boarding schools for boys were a feature of the British educational system. Moralizing and sentimental stories, divorced from the grim reality of corporal punishment, bullying, rigid and unsympathetic teachers, lack of comfort, warmth and adequate food, glorified sports, school pride, traditions, and propagandistic slogans. Without going into the details of strident contemporary criticism against Kipling's brand of school story,<sup>40</sup> it is clear that Kipling saw friendship as an alliance, as a crucial dynamic of a group – large or small – directed towards reaching important goals, boys fighting school bullies or rebelling against unsympathetic teachers, and once the boys grow up, soldiers fighting wars. Kipling did not dwell on the theme of "schoolboy crush," well established in the genre<sup>41</sup> but rather highlighted principles of democratic consensus within the group and 'stalkiness,' pragmatic cunning against those who threatened the group's wellbeing.<sup>42</sup>

These qualities stemming from friendship as the basis for effective action seemed most attractive to Polish younger and older children historically conditioned to dealing with foreign school policies imposed during the times of the partitions and re-conditioned

<sup>39</sup> "Scylla and Charybdis, '...," p. 18.

<sup>40</sup> See Isabel Quigly's "Introduction" to Kipling, *The Complete Stalky...*, pp. xiii–xiv, xx, xxv; M. Daphne Kutzer, *Empire's Children: Empire and Imperialism in Classic British Children's Books*, London: Routledge, 2000, pp. 40–41; for a collection of significant texts see Elliot L. Gilbert, ed., *Kipling and the Critics*, New York: New York University Press, 1965.

<sup>41</sup> See Eric L. Tribunella, "Tom Brown and the Schoolboy Crush: Boyhood Desire, Hero Worship, and the Boys' School Story," in: Julia L. Mickenberg and Lynne Valloneeds, eds., *The Oxford Handbook of Children's Literature*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011, pp. 455–473.

<sup>42</sup> See also Kutzer, *Empire's Children...*, p. 45.

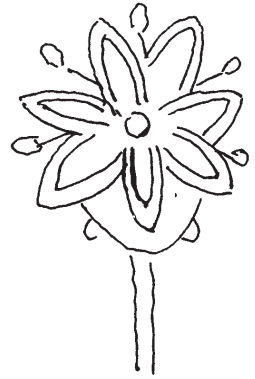
all-over again under German occupation and Soviet communism. In other words, not an instrument of sinister colonial purpose but rather the opposite, of fight and solidarity against oppression.

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Now, in the age of the Internet, blogs, vlogs, smartphones, selfies, and YouTube, friendship remains a universal concept but is shaped more by audio-visual means than just the old-fashioned literary expressions. From “ubi enim istum invenias, qui honorem amici anteponat suo?,” to “nie masz dzisiaj prawdziwej przyjaźni na świecie,” to “together they had striven to assist each other with the mysteries of *ut* with the subjunctive and the genders of Gaul,” to “Qui, cher monsieur, qui couchera sur le sol pour nous?,” and finally to “PEDO MELLON A MINNO” – only Kipling and Tolkien keep their optimism in human nature, saying in fact that friendship is not only an unrealistic universal concept but a basic human need as well.

Hanna Paulouskaya

**Jean-Emmanuel Gilibert's  
Imaginary Friendships**



Hanna Paulouskaya

## Jean-Emmanuel Gilibert's Imaginary Friendships\*

You will be surprised, my dear compatriot, that one of your compatriots, who became “a savage from the North” dares to send you this letter.

Jean-Emmanuel Gilibert, Letter to Antoine-Laurent de Jussieu, Oct. 23, 1778<sup>1</sup>

Reading studies by Jean-Emmanuel Gilibert (1741–1814), a French botanist who spent eight years in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania (1776–1783) at the invitation of King Stanisław August Poniatowski, I was surprised by the number of people mentioned in these articles. They were all well-known scientists, colleagues, members of the Lithuanian nobility, and simple folk (these usually mentioned without names). Some were people to whom work was dedicated, others were authoritative figures in the field referred to by the scientist, or participants of the events he described. In his biographies which were often included in the introductions to the scientific works,<sup>2</sup> Gilibert emphasizes his personal connections with outstanding scholars. I became interested in the role these names and people played in the texts and life of Gilibert. He kept in touch with many of them, and described to them his life and activities in a distant land. At least one of those letters was published and attached to the correspondence with other people.<sup>3</sup> Active correspondence made Gilibert part of *Respublica Litteraria* composed

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\* A version of this article was presented at the conference “Haradzenski Socyum” in November, 2015 in Hrodna (Grodno), Belarus, and will be published in an after-conference volume as *Beavers, Bisons and Brain Lymphoma, or Hrodna Studies of Jean-Emmanuel Gilibert (1741–1814)*.

<sup>1</sup> Piotr Daszkiewicz, “List Jean-Emmanuela Giliberta (1741–1814) z Grodna do Antoine-Laurent de Jussieu (1748–1836) – nieznaný, interesujący dokument historii nauk przyrodniczych w Rzeczypospolitej,” *Kwartalnik Historii Nauki i Techniki* 54.3–4 (2009), p. 214.

<sup>2</sup> Jean-Emmanuel Gilibert, *Exercitia phytologica, quibus omnes plantae Europae, quas vivas invenit in variis herbarionibus, seu in Lithuania, Gallia, Alpibus, analysi nova proponuntur, ex typo naturae describuntur...*, Lugduni: ex typis J. B. Delamolliere, 1792, pp. iv–lxxi. Jean-Emmanuel Gilibert, *Histoire des plantes d'Europe ou Elements de botanique pratique*, Lyon: chez Amable Leroy, 1798, vol. 1, pp. i–xxvii.

<sup>3</sup> Daszkiewicz, “List Jean-Emmanuela Giliberta,” pp. 211–221.

of Philosophers of the Age of Enlightenment who maintained intellectual exchanges as intensively as it was in the days of the Renaissance.<sup>4</sup>

Corresponding with outstanding scholars and patrons, Gilibert acted both as a disciple and a friend.<sup>5</sup> Probably first of all, this exchange of letters during his stay in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania was aimed at self-promotion and promotion of the Medical School and the Royal Botanical Garden in Hrodna, which was later transferred to Vilnius. It was also conducive to sharing scientific views. Even more so, in my opinion, it encouraged and supported him in his work far from home and academia, giving meaning to his mission.

Although the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, and the Grand Duchy of Lithuania especially, existed in the understanding of the Europeans, it was located somewhere on the borders of the “civilized world.” Actually, it was the Eighteenth century, when the imaginary maps of Eastern Europe were constructed, and a concept of “Eastern Europe” as well as of “civilization” was produced.<sup>6</sup> Eastern Europe has become a subject of growing interest of travellers, who described appearance of “the vague lands,” and aspired to create anthropological descriptions of indigenous population.<sup>7</sup> Gilibert also often presented his life in the “Savage North” and aimed to make a scientific description of nature of Lithuania. However he described the region from inside and included into his literary narrative local people on par with representatives of European science (even an old peasant as source of traditional wisdom). At some point surroundings of Hrodna became a “nostra regio” for him and its inhabitants were included into his imaginary world together with the Philosophers.

This description of his life in different kinds of texts (private and public letters, scientific works, oral narrations) formed a kind of literary representation of Gilibert’s life, where he was one of the heroes. People mentioned in these descriptions seem to be closer to the author than those from his real life. His research presented in the texts is included into European discourse and is worthy to be read in Vienna and in Paris. In my opinion, it was this imaginary life and imaginary friendships that allowed Gilibert to pursue his goals and to perceive himself as part of the mainstream trends of the Enlightenment, while being separated from them by both space and culture.

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<sup>4</sup> On the Eighteenth-century Republic of Lettres see e.g.: Dena Goodman, *The Republic of Letters. A Cultural History of the French Enlightenment*, Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1994; Charles W. J. Withers, *Placing the Enlightenment. Thinking Geographically about the Age of Reason*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007.

<sup>5</sup> Catherine Florence, *La pratique et les réseaux savants d’Albrecht von Haller (1708–1777), vecteurs du transfert culturel entre les espaces français et germaniques au XVIIIe siècle*, Thèse pour le doctorat d’histoire sous la direction de Madame le Professeur Simone Mazauric, Université Nancy 2, 2009. P. 83. Internet resource <http://docnum.univ-lorraine.fr/public/NANCY2/doc520/2009NAN21010.pdf> (consulted Feb. 24, 2016).

<sup>6</sup> See Larry Wolff, *Inventing Eastern Europe. The Map of Civilization on the Mind of the Enlightenment*, Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1994.

<sup>7</sup> See aforementioned research by Wolff, as well as Brian Dolan, *Exploring European Frontiers. British Travellers in the Age of Enlightenment*, London, New York: Macmillan–St Martin’s Press, 2000, pp. 73–112.



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Jean-Emmanuel Gilibert came to Lithuania in 1776 at the age of 35. He arrived in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth at the invitation of Stanisław August Poniatowski, who wanted to lay scientific foundations for the emerging industry. Gilibert was chosen by the Polish emissary Tadeusz Downarowicz on suggestion of Albrecht von Haller (1708–1777) – according to Gilibert – or Antoine Gouan (1733–1821), his teacher from Montpellier – according to Louis Dulieu, a biographer of Gouan.<sup>8</sup>

Gilibert came to Hrodna, because it was a special city on the wave of industrialization in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. It was an experimental platform of the King, where his friend Antoni Tyzenhaus was the Starosta and an administrator of royal estates, as well as the Court Treasurer of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. Eventually, the Hrodna project did not succeed, but as it happened later, it is beyond the period under research.

Gilibert was one of a group of Frenchmen working in the Commonwealth at that time,<sup>9</sup> however, as Daniel Beauvois points out, “the number of outstanding Frenchmen, who would respond positively to such an appeal, was not so great, and even very few of them agreed to undertake such a long journey.”<sup>10</sup> Predictably, Gilibert established and kept contacts with other French scholars in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania and gladly met European travellers passing through the country. For instance, such travellers as Johann Bernoulli (1744–1807)<sup>11</sup> and William Coxe (1747–1828)<sup>12</sup> mentioned meeting him during their journeys. As an example of Gilibert's local contacts one can give his collaboration with Charles Joseph de Virion (1749–1817), who worked in Nesvizh for the Radziwiłł family since 1775 and then moved to Hrodna. They worked together also in Vilnius Academy from 1781, when the Hrodna Royal Medical School was closed.

Gilibert decided to move to Lithuania when facing a difficult financial situation. At that moment he worked as a physician and botanist in Lyon and taught at the Collège de Médecine de Lyon, which was set ablaze in 1768 by the locals opposed to the practice of human dissection.<sup>13</sup> Later Gilibert founded a botanical garden at the request of the governing officer of the province of Lyon, Jacques de Flesselles, who promised to cover the costs. However, Gilibert was never reimbursed, and that ruined him financially.<sup>14</sup> The scholar wrote about his situation to Albrecht von Haller, who recommended him

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<sup>8</sup> Piotr Daszkiewicz, *Polityka i przyroda. Rzecz o Emmanuelu Gilibercie*, Warszawa: Neriton, 1995, p. 5.

<sup>9</sup> Daniel Baeuvois, “Jean-Emmanuel Gilibert i Francuzi w Polsce i na Litwie w latach 1770–1780,” *Kwartalnik Historii Nauki i Techniki* 60.1 (2015), pp. 7–16.

<sup>10</sup> Baeuvois, op. cit., p. 9.

<sup>11</sup> Johann Bernoulli, “Podróż po Polsce,” in: Wacław Zawadzki, ed., *Polska Stanisławowska w oczach cudzoziemców*, t. 1, Warszawa: Państwowy Instytut Wydawniczy, 1963 pp. 334–337.

<sup>12</sup> William Coxe, “Podróż po Polsce,” in: Zawadzki, ed., *Polska Stanisławowska*, t. 1, pp. 684–685.

<sup>13</sup> Witold Sławiński, “Jan-Emanuel Gilibert. Przyczynki do życiorysu profesora historii naturalnej i założyciela ogrodu botanicznego Wszechnicy Wileńskiej,” *Archiwum Historii i Filozofii Medycyny oraz Historii Nauk Przyrodniczych* 4.2 (1926), pp. 236–237.

<sup>14</sup> Jean-Emmanuel Gilibert, *Exercitia phytologica...*, pp. xii–xiii; Witold Sławiński, “Dr. Jan Emmanuel Gilibert, profesor i założyciel ogrodu botanicznego w Wilnie. Przyczynek bio-bibliograficzny do historii Uniwersytetu Wileńskiego,” *Ateneum Wileńskie* 3.9 (1925), p. 11.

for a position of naturalist in Lithuania.<sup>15</sup> Gilibert noted that at the same time he was offered a job of organizing a medical school in Portugal:<sup>16</sup>

Hoc praecise tempore, legatus privatus regis Poloniae quaerebat medicum, qui historiam naturalem Magni Ducatus Lithuaniae elaborare posset, hortum botanicum instruere, scholamque medicam aperire. Tam ponderoso oneri parem me, nimium indulgens, credit divus Hallerus.<sup>17</sup>

At this time precisely a private legate of the King of Poland was looking for a physician, who would develop natural history of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, organize a botanical garden, open a medical school. Divine Haller, most generously, believed I was ready for this heavy task.<sup>18</sup>

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Having accepted the proposal of the King and of Tyzenhauz, Gilibert set out for his journey to Paris, Montpellier, Perpignan, Narbonne, Switzerland, and Germany. All these travels, scholars whom he met on the way and with whom he collected plants for his herbarium, museums he visited, were described in detail by Gilibert in the introduction to his *Histoire des Plantes d'Europe ou éléments de botanique pratique*, published in Lyon in 1798.<sup>19</sup> Here is a fragment of this description:

Pour me rendre plus digne de l'emploi honorable qui m'étoit confié, je crus devoir faire quelques voyages: je me rendis à Paris pour consulter les Savans sur les objets de mes études favorites. Pendant quatre mois de séjour, j'étudiai avec soin le Musée National et les plantes du jardin; mais sur-tout je consultai, le plus souvent que je pus, l'oracle des Naturalistes, le savant et modeste Bernard de Jussieu; son neveu, Joseph-Antoine, me communiqua sans réserve les observations qu'il faisoit chaque jour sous la direction de son oncle. L'étonnant Bucquet nous démontra plusieurs fois le Musée de Paris.<sup>20</sup>

In order to be worthy of the honourable position entrusted to me, I felt obliged to make several trips. I went to Paris to discuss the subject of my study with scholars. During the four-month stay I studied in detail the collections of the National Museum and plants of the garden, but above all I consulted, as often as I could, with the guru of naturalists, the wise and modest Bernard de Jussieu. His nephew Joseph-Antoine provided me with unlimited access to the observations he made every day under the supervision of his uncle. The amazing Bouquet showed me the Museum of Paris several times.

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<sup>15</sup> Gilibert, *Exercitia phytologica...*, p. xiii.

<sup>16</sup> Daszkiewicz, *Polityka i przyroda...*, p. 7.

<sup>17</sup> Gilibert, *Exercitia phytologica...*, p. xiii.

<sup>18</sup> All the translations are mine – H.P.

<sup>19</sup> Daszkiewicz, *Polityka i przyroda...*, pp. 8–9.

<sup>20</sup> Gilibert, *Histoire des Plantes...*, pp. vi–vii.

We do not know how Jean-Emmanuel felt at that moment, and whether he was terrified by the prospect of that planned trip or not. He described the expedition as a greatly promising one. He also emphasized personal interest of King Stanisław August Poniatowski in his coming to the Grand Duchy. In a later work he called him “le plus instruit et le plus infortuné des Rois.”<sup>21</sup> In this same fragment he described meeting Antoine Dombey in Switzerland who was about to depart for Peru:

[...] occupé à disposer les espèces de ma dernière herborisation, je fus agréablement interrompu par les questions, d'un Voyageur qui me dit: “Nous ne nous sommes jamais vus, mais nous nous connoissons, nous nous aimons. Les mêmes goûts, la même ambition nous conduisent vers deux points opposés du globe, vous vous rendez en Pologne, je pars pour le Pérou; nous allons l'un et l'autre parcourir, au péril de notre vie, de vastes contrées, mais nous serons heureux si nous pouvons reculer les bornes d'une Science qu'on ne peut aimer qu'avec passion.”<sup>22</sup>

[...] busy with arranging the species from my last botanical walk, I was pleasantly interrupted by questions of a traveller who said: “We have never seen each other, but we know and like each other. The same avocations, the same ambition, lead us to two opposite points of the globe. You are going to Poland, I am leaving for Peru; we both will travel vast lands, at the risk of our lives, but we will be happy, if we manage to push the limits of a Science that one can love only with passion.”

This quotation is full of enthusiasm, inspiration, and faith in the ideas of the Enlightenment. Perhaps it was Gilibert's state of mind when he embarked on the journey North. His comparison of the Commonwealth and Peru is also noteworthy. It was repeated at the beginning of the letter to Antoine-Laurent de Jussieu (1748–1836) quoted above.<sup>23</sup> Such missionary work “at the border” (or “beyond the borders”) of science gave one an opportunity to take a worthy place amongst contemporary scholars. Later Gilibert would be proud of the fact that he was the first to describe the flora of Lithuania:

Sic paulatim nata est Flora nova Lithuanica: novam appello, quia, quod sciam, nullus adhuc juxta leges artis, plantas hujus regionis determinaverat. Vicini nostri scilicet Borussi, plerasque nostras, etiam raras proposuerunt, aut descripserunt: huc veniunt Loeselius, Breinius, Helwingius, Mentzelius, Reygerus, Vulffius; sed horum nullus in Lithuaniam penetravit. Pari jure laudare non possumus Bernitzium et Erndtelium, qui primi catalogos plantarum Polonicarum proposuerunt: hi enim Auctores remotas tantum plantas denominarunt, raro stationes apponendo, plurimas suspectas proponendo; in hisque

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<sup>21</sup> Jean-Emmanuel Gilibert, “Notice sur la vie et les travaux d'Antoine Dombey, Médecin Naturaliste,” *Recueil des actes de la Société de santé de Lyon, depuis l'an premier jusqu'à l'an cinq de la République*, Lyon: De l'Imprimerie de Bruyset aîné et Co, 1798, p. 457.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 457.

<sup>23</sup> Daszkiewicz, “List Jean-Emmanuela Giliberta...,” pp. 211–221.

vix unam aut alteram observationem invenio, quae autopsiam repetitam [orig. repepetitam] demonstret.<sup>24</sup>

Thus a new *Lithuanian Flora* was born little by little. I call it new, because, as far as I know, to this very moment nobody has described plants of this region according to the laws of science. Our neighbors, i.e., Prussia, have proposed or described many of our plants, including rare ones. They are Loesel, Breinius, Helwing, Mentzel, Reyger, Wulff. But none of them examined Lithuania. Because of the same reason we cannot praise Bernitz and Erndtel, who were the first to propose catalogues of Polish plants. These authors named only remote plants, rarely adding places, proposing many suspect plants. I can hardly find there one or another observation that would withstand repeated investigation.

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Since the beginning of his work in Hrodna Gilibert was actively engaged in correspondence to obtain (purchase or receive as a gift) plant seeds for a new botanical garden. One of these letters he sent to Antoine-Laurent de Jussieu on October 23, 1778. Taking the opportunity Gilibert told him about the progress he made in Hrodna and about his state of mind. He described that he has created a botanical garden and a cabinet of natural history with a very rich mineralogical collection, fossils, and minerals from Sweden, Russia, Hungary, Saxony, and Tyrol. He also mentioned an anatomical collection of injected specimens, monsters, and embryos.<sup>25</sup>

In this letter Gilibert described his personal life with great enthusiasm. He proudly recalled all the titles he received in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania and even tells the amount of his income.<sup>26</sup> He praised the country, too, calling it “very beautiful,” and compared the purlieu of Hrodna “to those of Montmorency.”<sup>27</sup> The letter brims with positivity and enthusiasm.

Apart from the addressee there were other European scholars mentioned in the letter: Jean-Étienne Guettard (1715–1786) from Paris, Nikolaus Jacquin (1727–1817) from Vienna, Peter Simon Pallas (1741–1811) from Petersburg, Antoine Gouan from Montpellier, and Jean Hermann (1738–1800) from Strasbourg. Thus, the author built ties with other scholars not only by corresponding with them, but also by mentioning them in his letters to others. In the same letter Gilibert also mentioned Antoni Tyzenhauz, the King, prince Michał Radziwiłł and his librarian Krystian Ferdynand Magnitsky, as well as some Mr. Buegue, who recalled Montmorency. The letter was sent together with a printed copy of a letter to Louis Vitet (1736–1809) on September 19, 1777 and that was mentioned in the text of the letter to Jussieu. The letter to Vitet described King’s visit to Hrodna and was also written with a view of promoting Hrodna enterprises.

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<sup>24</sup> Gilibert, *Exercitia phytologica...*, pp. xviii–xxii.

<sup>25</sup> Daszkiewicz, “List Jean-Emmanuela Giliberta...,” p. 214.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 215.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibidem*.

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Gilbert's scientific papers written in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth also have numerous references to other scholars. For example, one of the articles of *Indagatores naturae in Lithuania*, published in Vilnius in 1781,<sup>28</sup> was dedicated to Nikolaus Jacquin, "an eminent professor of chemistry and botany at the ancient University of Vienna."<sup>29</sup> The article is quite peculiar. It tells about an infectious disease at that time spreading in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania transmitted by some "furiae infernales." In the letter there is a description of the debate held in Vilnius, where the Rector of the Academy, Marcin Poczobutt-Odlanicki, told how his colleague was cured by some peasant. The Rector described the actions of the peasant in detail. On hearing this story, Gilbert made a series of experiments and drew conclusions about the disease's effect on human body and the mechanism of the cure. He concluded the article with an appeal to scientists about the need to listen to the wisdom of common people:

[...] si Medici adhibere vellent plus attentionis ad traditiones vulgi, potuisent certe colligere dogmata pretiosissima ad promovendam medicinam et historiam naturalem. Ab immemorabili tempore in Lithuania plebei cognoscunt causam horum ulcerum quae a similitudine crinium nomine *włosienniki* apellantur.<sup>30</sup>

[...] If doctors paid more attention to the traditions of the people, they would certainly be able to collect the most valuable ideas for promoting medicine and natural history. Since immemorial time in Lithuania peasants know the cause of these ulcers, which are called *włosienniki* because of their similarity to hair.

This wisdom belonged to common people from the "Savage North," thus Gilbert underlines that there is some knowledge beyond "the borders of the Science" and this knowledge is worthy to be recognized by European scholars.

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Gilbert mentioned his colleagues from the Hrodna Medical School in one of his articles. It focuses on the account of premature births by a twenty-four-year old "peasant woman called Anna."<sup>31</sup> The woman miscarried two fetuses, one of which had no head. Gilbert wrote that an autopsy was made by himself and:

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<sup>28</sup> Jean-Emmanuel Gilibert, *Indagatores naturae in Lithuania seu opuscula varii argumenti quae historiam animalium, vegetabilium in Magno Ducatu Lithuaniae et morborum, quibus in hac provincia homines vel maxime obnoxii sunt, illustrare possunt*, Vilnae: Typis Sacrae Regiae Majestatis penes Academiam, 1781.

<sup>29</sup> Ibidem, p. 91.

<sup>30</sup> Ibidem, p. 98.

<sup>31</sup> Ibidem, p. 50.

[...] d. Virion [Charles Joseph de Virion mentioned above] in Schola Regia Grodnensi anatomiae professor peritissimus et d. Müntzius [Jan Henryk Müntz (1727–1790)] in exercitu Regis militum praefectus, historiae naturalis et physicae gnarus, delineator egregius.<sup>32</sup>

[...] Mr. Virion, a highly skilled anatomy professor at the Hrodna Royal School, and Mr. Müntz, a commander in the Royal army, well versed in the natural history and physics, an excellent painter.

Pointing out the participation of these people in the surgery and emphasizing this fact in the description would ensure additional credibility to the words of the author. Gilibert also mentions that Joseph de Virion performed an additional independent examination of the body:

Iterum verificavit doctor Virion. De novo scrupulose [orig. scrupulore] examinavit nucem osseam supra recensitam [...], apophysim sinistram [...], medullam spinalem [...].<sup>33</sup>

Doctor Virion has verified once again. He again scrupulously examined mentioned above bony nut [...], the left apophysis [...], the spinal marrow [...].

The description of these studies allows us to imagine how medical practice looked like in Hrodna and it confirms the functioning of the anatomical amphitheatre. Gilibert describes every incision and its results in the article. The presence of the draftsman proves that the documentation of the surgery contained also illustrations. It was “obsterix,” i.e., a midwife, who told Gilibert about the fact of birth of these abnormal children.<sup>34</sup>

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Many articles in *Indagatores* deal with zoological research. It would have been impossible without help of hunters and employees of Hrodna Royal Manor, who provided information and material for the investigation. An opportunity to study local elk, for instance, was given by “venatore regio,” who brought two young elks in 1776.<sup>35</sup>

At the occasion of diagnosing brain lymphoma in a bull, the French medic recalled a friendly noble family, the Przeździeckis: August Dominik Przeździecki (1760–1782), the governor of Minsk, and his wife Anna Barbara Olimpia Przeździecka (née Radziwiłł, later Mostowska [c. 1762–before 1833]). The account of how this disease was discovered is an interesting one:

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<sup>32</sup> Ibidem, p. 52.

<sup>33</sup> Ibidem, p. 57.

<sup>34</sup> Ibidem, p. 50.

<sup>35</sup> Ibidem, p. 65.

Aperto cranio, cocus lanio separando cerebrum vidit in illius substantia corpus luteum, solidum: miratus attulit caput ill[ustrissimae] d[omi]nae Przeździecka. In nostra regione rara animi perspicacitate et ingenii cultura celebris, haec, non inutile reputans phoenomenon istud, sedulo separavit et collegit corpus istud et pro dessicatione posuit super armarium; post aliquot horas frustulatim cecidit, nucleo tantum integro persistente [orig. persistente]. Hunc nucleum et frustula dono mihi dedit, ut determinarem coadunando omnia fragmenta cum nucleo [...].<sup>36</sup>

When the skull was opened and the brain was separated, the cook has seen a solid, yellow body in it. Amazed he brought the head to the most excellent Mrs. Przeździecka. Famous in our region for her observant mind and intelligence, she thought that this phenomenon is worthy attention. She carefully separated and collected this body, and put it on a dresser for drying. After several hours it split up in pieces, and only the kernel stayed intact. She brought the kernel and the pieces to me as a gift, asking to determine what it was after combining all the pieces and the kernel.

Thus a cook, preparing the bull, found a pebble in the bull's brain which he passed to Mrs. Przeździecka, who gave it later to Jean-Emmanuel Gilibert. This example shows that the naturalist maintained close relationships with (at least some) members of the local gentry. These people (the cook and Mrs. Przeździecka) were interested in a phenomenon that they could not comprehend and needed an answer from Gilibert. One may assume that the discussions on scientific topics often took place in Przeździecki house and in other aristocratic homes, too. Mrs. Przeździecka, a future novelist, was referred to with praise and mentioned among outstanding scientists, and her house resembled a "salon," though it was not called in such a way.

Witold Sławiński confirms that Gilibert visited also Prince Adam Kazimierz Czartoryski in Puławy, bishop Ignacy Jakub Massalski in Vilnius, Grand Chancellor of Lithuania Joachim Chreptowicz in Szczorsy.<sup>37</sup> Maybe he had close relationships also with some of them. Later Aleksander Antoni Sapieha, publishing *Lettre sur les bords de l'Adriatique*, dedicated it to "Mr. Gilibert, doctor of medicine, member of the Academy in Lyon."<sup>38</sup>

Another person, who was proudly referred to by Gilibert and whom he dedicated his *Indagatores*, was King of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, a member of Republic of Letters himself. Gilibert corresponded with the King. Stanisław August held his son Stanisław during the baptism.<sup>39</sup> The arrival of the King to Hrodna was described in the aforementioned printed letter to Vitet.<sup>40</sup> Infatuation with the King is evident from all Gilibert's statements about Stanisław August during his work in the Commonwealth.

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<sup>36</sup> Ibidem, p. 126.

<sup>37</sup> Sławiński, "Jan-Emanuel Gilibert. Przyczynki...", p. 239.

<sup>38</sup> Aleksander Antoni Sapieha, *Lettre sur les bords de l'Adriatique, adressée à Mr. Gilibert, docteur en médecine*, Paris: [s.n.], 1808.

<sup>39</sup> Piotr Daszkiewicz, "Dziewiętnastowieczne wspomnienie Stanisława Giliberta (1780–1870)," *Kwartalnik Historii Nauki i Techniki* 60.1 (2015), p. 217.

<sup>40</sup> Daszkiewicz, "List Jean-Emmanuela Giliberta...", pp. 216–219.

He was still mentioning the King even in the texts written during the Revolutionary era in France.<sup>41</sup>

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Apart from authoritative figures in science of the time referred to by Gilibert with praise, he also mentioned his teachers whom he knew only from their books. This is how he began his preface to *Exercitia phytologica*:

Vix adolescens amavi plantas: elegantissimum opus abbatis Pluche, seu *Spectaculum Naturae* perlegendo, desiderio vehementi omnia naturae producta cognoscendi mox vexatus fui.<sup>42</sup>

Even as a young man I loved the plants. After reading the elegant work of abbot Pluche I was afflicted by desire to know all the products of nature as soon as possible.

This statement concerned the text by Noël-Antoine Pluche (1688–1761), *Spectacle de la nature, ou Entretiens sur les particularités de l'Histoire naturelle*, addressed to youth and aiming to popularize the interest for natural sciences.

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Due to the presence of many names and detailed accounts of circumstances of scientific research Gilibert seems to include a lot of personal information. Sometimes he retells *in extenso* speeches of his colleagues and even describes their facial expressions. In the introduction to the account of an infectious disease in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania Gilibert cites Marcin Poczobutt-Odlanicki's words:

In consessu hebdomario Universitatis Vilnensis magnificus rector Poczobut, astronomus regius, physicus sagacissimus, vultu ad risum composito me allocutus hunc in modum: credis, dixit ille, te unum esse qui potes observationes peragere medicinam spectantes, ac multum utiles [...].<sup>43</sup>

During ordinary meeting of Vilnius University the magnificent rector, a royal astronomer, keen physicist Poczobutt, grimacing for a laugh, addressed me in this manner: "You believe, – he said, – that you alone are able to make medical observations, very useful, of course [...]."

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<sup>41</sup> Gilibert, *Exercitia phytologica...*, pp. xiii, xvi.

<sup>42</sup> Ibidem, p. iv.

<sup>43</sup> Gilibert, *Indagatores...*, pp. 93–94.



Gilibert himself became part of the story in this account, not only as a scholar, but also a person. This description of emotions slightly lifts the veil off the vivid relations and attitudes to the French researcher in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. Including such an unflattering comment of Poczobutt-Odlanicki shows an openness in these relations, though not comparable to that of the salon culture of France.

Gilibert included himself and his friends to the narrative also in other texts and thus turned them and himself into diegetic characters. Mentioning them in the texts written in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania let Gilibert feel himself closer to his friends and introduce his Lithuanian companions into the Republic of Letters. It should be noted that the persons he referred to in the scientific works were, first of all, other scholars and colleagues. He never told about his personal life, his wife, or his problems, that were described in his private correspondence.<sup>44</sup>

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Gilibert's literary image was consistent enough. His version of his autobiography and account of the most important events of his life were repeated in his written and oral texts of a different period. Reading the accounts of William Coxe's or Johannes Bernoulli's visits to Hrodna in 1778 one cannot fail to notice Gilibert's fragments concerning the topics of nature or his self-presentation.<sup>45</sup>

This narration met with a great success. His version of his own autobiography is currently accepted by most of his biographers. Gilibert's self-promotion had some success, too. In both today's Lithuania and Belarus he is still perceived as one of the most distinguished French naturalists, although in France he enjoys significantly less popularity. We can only hope that in his real life in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania (at least in the first years of great hopes) Gilibert also did not feel too lonely, and he was not "solus [...], quaerens in deserto plantas" ("seeking alone [...] for the plants in the wilderness"), as he described himself during his time in Lyon neighborhood after finishing school in Montpellier.<sup>46</sup>

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<sup>44</sup> Cf. Stanisław Kościałkowski, *Antoni Tyzenhauz: podskarbi nadworny litewski*, t. 1, Londyn: Wydawnictwo Społeczności Akademickiej Uniwersytetu Stefana Batorego w Londynie, 1971, pp. 391–392, 406–408; Stanisław Trzebiński, "List Jana-Emanuela Giliberta do Witeta z 1776 roku," *Archiwum Historii i Filozofii Medycyny oraz Historii Nauk Przyrodniczych* 10.1 (1930), p. 117.

<sup>45</sup> Cf. Bernoulli, "Podróż po Polsce," pp. 334–337; Coxe, "Podróż po Polsce," pp. 684–685.

<sup>46</sup> Gilibert, *Exercitia phytologica...*, p. ix.



Joanna Pijanowska

## **Animal Friendship – Fact or Illusion?**



Joanna Pijanowska

## Animal Friendship – Fact or Illusion?

Animals, like people, form deep attachments to other animals and other people, often of the same sex, for reasons that have nothing to do with genetic advantage and everything to do with emotions, and one emotion in particular: love.

Jeffrey M. Masson<sup>1</sup>

Two animals are considered to be friends if they act as if they like one other, even if one does not know exactly why it happens and why they favour one individual over another.<sup>2</sup> Animal friendships, seen as close bonds between individuals in the wild (excluding alliances involving youngsters, mothers nursing their young, siblings growing up together, and matings between males and females, although in some of these cases friendly feelings may be involved as well), have been an under-studied phenomenon.

The idea that non-human animals have feelings and may even establish close friendships among themselves has had a turbulent history. Aesop's fables, from the sixth century BC, explored the similarity between animal and human emotions and behaviour. With the rise of modern Western religions, however, spiritual leaders and philosophers have defined all living beings except humans as inferior, and therefore mere subjects to be dominated and used. René Descartes considered animals to be nothing but machines or robots, without feelings or senses. Even today, scientists are urged to avoid anthropomorphizing, and any suggestion that non-human animals have feelings, self-awareness, or consciousness is normally erased from scientific texts. This attitude has served to silence research on social interactions in non-human animals.

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<sup>1</sup> Jeffrey M. Masson, *The Emperor's Embrace: The Evolution of Fatherhood*, New York: Washington Square Books, 1999, p. 123.

<sup>2</sup> Ronald Noë, "Digging for the Roots of Trading," in: P.M. Kappeler and C.P. van Schaik, eds., *Cooperation in Primates and Humans: Mechanism and Evolution*, Berlin: Springer, 2006, pp. 233–261.

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Early research on animal behaviour took place almost exclusively in zoos, with the results hardly reflecting conditions in the wild. In the late 1950s, zoologists with an interest in studying animal behaviour began to leave laboratories and zoos and carry out research in nature. A.I. Dagg was one of the first, observing the behaviour of giraffes in South Africa between 1956–1957.<sup>3</sup> Other early researchers include English, American, and Japanese zoologists studying the activities of chimpanzees and gorillas, hoping to gain insight on the behaviour of early human ancestors.<sup>4</sup> Strong interest in our closest relatives continues to this day, with over forty existing chimpanzees and bonobo field research sites.<sup>5</sup> Field zoologists record the behaviour of animals in the wild, with their observations focused, in general, on documenting feeding, courtship and reproduction, territoriality and aggression. The study of social bonds and friendship has unfortunately been relatively neglected.<sup>6</sup> Only after methods of identifying individuals had been perfected via the recognition of physical features or distinctive markings, or by festooning individuals with, e.g., rings, tattoos, paint, or collars, was interest in intimate relationships between non-human animals able to flower.

In past studies of monkeys and apes, aggression was considered to be far more important (as well as more exciting) than more pacific and affiliative activities. The importance of cooperative and affiliative behaviours has long been overlooked.<sup>7</sup> Today, sociality rather than aggression is seen as the basic behaviour of our early human ancestors, who are now depicted as having evolved as herbivores and scavengers, rather than as dangerous hunters.<sup>8</sup> After conducting a survey of 81 primate behavioural studies involving 60 species, R.W. Sussman *et al.* found that diurnal group-living prosimians, New World monkeys, Old World monkeys, and apes showed an exceptionally low fraction of aggressive behaviours, normally less than 1% of their daily activity budget.<sup>9</sup> Instead, they spent on average between 85 to 96% of their active time engaged in affiliative behaviour – grooming, playing, cooperatively caring for infants, sharing food, cooperative hunting, and jointly defending infants and resources.

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<sup>3</sup> A.I. Dagg, *Pursuing Giraffe: A 1950s Adventure*, Waterloo: Wilfried Laurier University Press, 2006.

<sup>4</sup> Toshisada Nishida, “A Quarter Century of Research in the Mahale Mountains: An Overview,” in: Toshisada Nishida, ed., *The Chimpanzees of the Mahale Mountains: Sexual and Life History Strategies*, Tokyo: University of Tokyo Press, 1990, pp. 3–35.

<sup>5</sup> Rebecca Stumpf, “Chimpanzees and Bonobos: Diversity within and between Species,” in: C.J. Campbell, Augustin Fuentes, K.C. MacKinnon, Melissa Panger, S.K. Beades, eds., *Primates in Perspective*, New York: New York University Press, 2007, pp. 321–344.

<sup>6</sup> Dagg, *Pursuing Giraffe*.

<sup>7</sup> R.W. Sussman, P.A. Garber, J.M. Cheverud, “Importance of Cooperation and Affiliation in the Evolution of Primate Sociality,” *American Journal of Physical Anthropology* 128 (2005), pp. 84–97.

<sup>8</sup> R.W. Sussman, A.R. Chapman, *The Origins and Nature of Sociality*, New York: de Gruyter, 2004; Donna Hart, R.W. Sussman, *Man the Hunted: Primates, Predators, and Human Evolution*, New York: Westview Press, 2005; but see Richard Wrangham, Dale Peterson, *Demonic Males*, Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin, 1996.

<sup>9</sup> Sussman, Garber, Cheverud, “Importance of Cooperation and Affiliation...,” pp. 84–97.

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Within the past few decades, there has been a step towards regarding non-human animals as similar to humans in that they have feelings, senses, and they suffer when hurt. In addition, they are now regarded to be capable of improving their individual status by forming coalitions and alliances with other individuals. The importance of close friendships in animals was first demonstrated by Barbara Smuts in her book *Sex and Friendship in Baboons*, published in 1985.<sup>10</sup> This book revealed the central role played by non-sexual male-female friendships in the society of olive baboons (*Papio cynocephalus anubis*). Later stimulating works elaborating this point include, e.g., those by Frans de Waal,<sup>11</sup> Jeffrey M. Masson,<sup>12</sup> and Marc Bekoff,<sup>13</sup> depicting non-human animals as thinking, feeling individuals capable of establishing tight, enriching bonds with others.

Animal friendships can be seen to have formed either for evolutionary reasons (looking at ultimate causes) or just because a duo has formed and spend much time together relaxing, feeding, playing, or grooming each other (looking at proximate causes). Social bonds can be extremely beneficial by permitting individuals to be friendly rather than hostile towards one other; in herbivores, it can increase the likelihood of predators being detected as well as the number of animals who can share information about resources for the common benefit. When individuals groom one other, it improves their psychic and bodily health and reduces their parasite load. Since information on resources and threats is limited in single individuals, sharing information leads to better decision-making by the group as a whole.<sup>14</sup> Sociality is so vital in many species that enforced isolation can lead to serious illness.<sup>15</sup> On the other hand, social life can be costly due to increased competition over food, water, mates, and resting sites, a greater likelihood of spreading disease and parasites among group members, and the need to defend individual space.

The likelihood that in any particular species close social bonds will form depends on resource-availability and threat of predation, including infanticide by members of the same species. For social animals which must spread out to browse and graze, there is always trade-off between the need to find forage and the compulsion to stay close enough together to keep an effective watch for predators. The threat of infanticide by males may have fostered friendly behaviours in the course of evolution.<sup>16</sup> For example,

<sup>10</sup> New York: Aldine Publishing Co.

<sup>11</sup> Frans de Waal, *Our Inner Ape: A Leading Primatologist Explains Why We Are Who We Are*, New York: Riverhead Books, 2005.

<sup>12</sup> Jeffrey M. Masson, *The Pig Who Sang to the Moon: The Emotional World of Farm Animals*, New York: Ballantine Books, 200.

<sup>13</sup> Marc Bekoff, *The Emotional Lives of Animals*, Novato, CA: New World Library, 2007.

<sup>14</sup> H.H.T. Prins, *Ecology and Behavior of the African Buffalo: Social Inequality and Decision Making*, London: Chapman and Hall, 1996.

<sup>15</sup> J.S. House, K.R. Landis, Debra Umberson, "Social Relationships and Health," *Science* 241 (1988), pp. 540–545.

<sup>16</sup> Andreas Paul, Signe Preuschoft, C.P. van Schaik, "The Other Side of the Coin: Infanticide and the Evolution of Affiliative Male-Infant Interactions in Old World Primates," in: C.P. van Schaik and C.H. Janson, eds., *Infanticide by Males and Its Implications*, Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2000, pp. 269–292.

females of both olive and chacma baboons form friendships with specific males; if a newcomer male threatens a female's young, her male friend will help protect it.<sup>17</sup>

Friendships among animals can bring about several fitness advantages: (i) friends can alert each other to danger or water and food resources, (ii) they can share food, (iii) they can support one another in conflicts and against infanticide, (iv) they can groom one another, which can serve to provide sensory pleasure as well as to remove parasites, (v) they can learn new information from one another, and (vi) they can help to reduce emotional distress in their partner.

The ability to form friendships between animals was likely shaped by the evolutionary process, for example: (i) male and female geese bond together because this is the most effective way to produce surviving offspring, (ii) male and female baboons form platonic friendships which serve to provide protection for the female and her young, (iii) lionesses develop tight bonds with other female pride members over their lifetimes, which makes them effective hunters. Females who have known each other since birth, as in the case of the lionesses, are familiar with and often friendly towards one another; interactions with relatives are especially beneficial. For species in which females leave their natal group (such as in chimpanzees, bonobos, and gorillas), males sometimes retain male friendships from their youth or with their grown sons. Among primates, female–female bonds are much more common than male–male bonds because the resources that limit the reproductive success of females (food and safety) can be shared more easily than those limiting males (copulations).<sup>18</sup> The earliest bonds in the lives of mammals are, however, those formed between mothers and their newborn offspring. “Mother–infant love may be the foundation of all love.”<sup>19</sup>

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Friendship may arise from a deep affection existing between individuals. Konrad Lorenz talks about “falling in love,”<sup>20</sup> which indeed can happen almost instantaneously, e.g., in humans, wild geese, and jackdaws. It is not only a matter of sexual reproduction. Geese and jackdaw pairs join efforts in the spring following their birth and stay together until they become sexually mature a year later, when they mate and establish a family. If pairs of a migratory species form a pair bond, they are able to breed earlier in the season because they do not have to search for and court a partner; their young then have more time to gain strength before they take flight. In these species, bonded couples are far

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<sup>17</sup> B.B. Smuts, *Sex and Friendship in Baboons*, New York: Aldine Publishing, 1985; R.A. Palombit, “Infanticide and the Evolution of Male-Female Bonds in Animals,” in: van Schaik and Janson, eds., *Infanticide by Males...*, pp. 239–268.

<sup>18</sup> J.A.R.A.M. van Hooff, C.P. van Schaik, “Reproductive Patterns in Eutherian Mammals: Adaptations Against Infanticide?,” in: van Schaik and Janson, eds., *Infanticide by Males...*, pp. 322–360.

<sup>19</sup> A.I. Dagg, *Animal Friendships*, Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2011.

<sup>20</sup> Konrad Lorenz, *Here I Am – Where Are You? The Behavior of the Graylag Goose*, New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1952.



more likely to successfully raise young than are non-bonded pairs.<sup>21</sup> In social mammals, when male and female young originate from the same litter, they tend to bond together as they mature. When they reach puberty, however, members of one sex or the other will usually disperse from their natal group; this breaking of the brother–sister bond prevents inbreeding. In humans, there is no such dispersal. An inborn incest taboo essentially prevents a brother and sister from mating, but often the two remain close friends throughout their lives.

Smuts had defined baboon friends as those male–female couples who have shared large amounts of time in proximity, e.g., grooming one another.<sup>22</sup> She concluded that friendships in baboons, constituting a relationship of social reciprocity, benefited both males and females. In these cases, the females gain the most because males are larger and more aggressive, and therefore are the most helpful long-term allies, in a position to prevent attacks on a female and her young by other group members. The benefits of friendships for females within a baboon troop are derived from the need to protect youngsters against infanticide. Resident males benefit from friendships as well. They more likely than other males mate with their friend when she comes into estrus and, therefore, father her youngsters. In addition, a male friend could use his female partner and her infants as a social buffer to fend off attacks by other males. For newcomer male, female friends can help them to integrate into their new community.

One has to be careful in assuming the existence of friendships between individuals. As an example, the fact that a male and a female lion are resting together might suggest that they are good allies, but this is not necessarily the case.<sup>23</sup> Lionesses often spend much time together, and males may also bond with each other, but unrelated males and females have been found to be only casually interested in one another except when the female is in estrus. Nomadic lion groups may include both males and females, but these ephemeral aggregations break up frequently, with members going their own separate ways. Individual animals may be regarded as friends because they are often seen together; such physical closeness may, however, be misleading. They may congregate because there is food in the area or to seek shade against the sun, or females may gather around a male although they do not like one another.<sup>24</sup> When a female vervet monkey, macaque or baboon gives birth, she is suddenly seen as extremely attractive to the other females in her group even if she is of low rank; they sit beside her and groom her not out of friendship but because they seek an opportunity to groom and handle her infant.<sup>25</sup> When the youngster grows older, the mother loses her temporary “friends.”

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<sup>21</sup> Joanna Burger, *The Parrot Who Owns Me. The Story of a Relationship*, New York: Villard, 2001.

<sup>22</sup> Smuts, *op. cit.*

<sup>23</sup> G.B. Schaller, *The Serengeti Lion: A Study of Predator-Prey Relations*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1972.

<sup>24</sup> Masayuki Nakamichi, “Behavior of Old Females: Comparisons of Japanese Monkeys in the Arashiyama East and West Groups,” in: L.M. Fedigan, P.J. Asquith, eds., *The Monkeys of Arashiyama: Thirty-five Years of Research in Japan and the West*, Albany, N.Y.: State University of New York Press, 1991, pp. 322–360.

<sup>25</sup> D.L. Cheney, R.M. Seyfarth, *How Monkeys See the World: Inside the Mind of Another Species*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990.

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In general, data on friendships are skewed, because animals such as apes and monkeys have been studied in detail while little is known about the behaviour of rare or physically small social species. It is easier to detect friendships among mammals than among birds, in part because birds cannot embrace one another, and in part because in birds, mutual preening does not have to be associated with friendly attitudes. Although we still lack knowledge about the nature or commonality of friendships in cold-blooded species, it has recently been shown to exist, e.g., three-spined stickleback fish recognize one another by olfaction and prefer to associate with individuals from their neighborhood.<sup>26</sup> We should be open to the possibility that after a few decades of further research into this phenomenon, we will see that cold-blooded vertebrates like birds and mammals and invertebrates, can also have complex social systems and form special friendships with conspecifics.

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<sup>26</sup> A.J.W. Ward, M.M. Webster, P.J.B. Hart, "Social Recognition in Wild Fish Populations," *Proceedings of the Royal Society B: Biological Sciences* 274 (2007), pp. 1071–1077.

Maria Poprzęcka

**Imagine There Is No Art History**



Maria Poprzęcka

## Imagine There Is No Art History

The idea for this title came not from the Beatles song of our youth, but a conference at the University of Warsaw's Faculty of "Artes Liberales" entitled *Imagine There Were No Humanities*.<sup>1</sup> This title, however, was not so much an encouragement to imagine universities without humanities faculties as a warning against such a situation. To avoid the conference devolving into a compendium of warnings and defeatist lamentations, the presentations opened with a number of "post-humanist" perspectives, such as human-animal studies, feminist criticism, *caring research*, the change in relations with social sciences, meeting the challenges brought about by the Internet, and use of visual information in the study of literature.

The title's encouragement to use one's imagination can be treated in several ways. Firstly, in radical terms: what would happen if such a field of study as history of art simply did not exist. If there were no Vasaris, Winckelmanns, Burckhardts, Riegls, Panofskys, Gombrichs, or other art history "father figures" and "legislators." *It's easy if you try*. Here we have a coterie of artists ignored by Vasari in his preparation of *Lives of the Artists* (as we know, only Michelangelo achieved the honour of being included among the living artists Vasari discussed), along with a bunch of hired thugs, who attacked the author's house, destroying all the materials for *Vite*, resulting in the original of his artists' biographies not being published. Anton Raphael Mengs' perfidious intrigue, compromising Winckelmann as a homosexual, whose perverse lust denies him any right to judge,<sup>2</sup> results in papal censorship and, in the end, *Geschichte der Kunst des Altertums* also fails

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<sup>1</sup> *Imagine There Were No Humanities*, Faculty of "Artes Liberales," University of Warsaw, Nov. 20–21, 2014. The University's recalling a work of pop culture is significant. As noted by Father Grzegorz Strzelczyk (quoting John Lennon's *Imagine*), "the spread of ideas primarily takes place not through the academic influence of intellectuals on the élite, but rather by the products of pop culture coupled with market (economic) mechanisms. Very few people have read Gianni Vattimo's deliberations on 'weak thought,' whereas millions have bought the [Pink Floyd] album *The Wall*" – Grzegorz Strzelczyk, *Po co zbawienie? Po co Kościół?* [Who Needs Salvation? Who Needs the Church?], in: Zbigniew Nosowski, ed., *Wielkie tematy teologii* [The Great Themes of Theology], Gdańsk: słowo/obraz terytoria, 2015, p. 23.

<sup>2</sup> Anton Raphael Mengs, a painter usually praised by Winckelmann, offended by criticism, contrived an encaustic painting representing Antinous proffering a dish to Zeus. Winckelmann acquired the picture, compromising himself both as a connoisseur of ancient art, and as a homosexual.

to be published. The young Jacob Burckhardt does not lose his religious faith, nor abandons his theological studies, but devotes to them his entire scholarly career. Alois Riegl is caught stealing scraps of Coptic fabrics from the Kunsthistorisches Museum, and following his imprisonment, spends the rest of his life as a storeman in a textile warehouse on the outskirts of Vienna. Ernst Kris fails to sneak Warburg's library out of Hamburg, resulting in the whole collection being burned in a Goebbels-style public *auto-da-fé*, while Aby Warburg sinks into total madness in the Bellevue clinic talking only to moths,<sup>3</sup> his *Mnemosyne Atlas* is never completed. Erwin Panofsky admittedly emigrates in time to the United States, but this devotee of the silver screen is grabbed up by Hollywood, where he sedately resides in Beverly Hills as a prolific screenwriter for Metro-Goldwyn-Meyer. And jumping forward to the present day – Georges Didi-Huberman reveals a submissive nature similar to that of the professor protagonists in Houellebecq's last novel, converts to Islam and “despite everything” abandons his study of paintings.<sup>4</sup>

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The imagination can take the direction of Lennon's text. Lennon himself described his “virtually communist manifesto” as an “anti-religious, anti-nationalist, non-conventional and anti-capitalist” song. We may add that *Imagine* is ahistorical.

*Imagine all the people  
Living for today...*

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<sup>3</sup> The story by Dr. Ludwig Binswanger, the physician treating Warburg, about “strange rituals involving moths” is quoted by Krzysztof Rutkowski, “Warburg i wąż” [Warburg and the Snake], *Konteksty* [Contexts] 2–3 (2011), p. 16.

<sup>4</sup> A daring example of a similar probabilistic in the field of contemporary Polish literature was given by Krzysztof Varga, writing in the margin of a discovered, unknown novel by the young Marek Hłasko *Wilk* [Wolf]: “[...] in his unknown novel *Siedząc w domu* [Sitting at Home], Stasiuk wrote that it is not worth travelling anywhere, because in truth everywhere is just the same, only worse than here, where a man at least has a safe job and comfortable apartment, so what if it is mortgaged, at least it is one's own. Discovered by a young researcher at the Jagiellonian University, Jerzy Pilch's prose about a radical Catholic abstainer, interestingly written in short, concise sentences, and sometimes even inequivalents of sentences, steeped in not only the narrator's (author's?) clear aversion to alcohol, but also to promiscuity. A collection of stories promising a great talent is that by Wojciech Kuczok, lambasting football (the most fervent criticism of soccer fans in the entire history of Polish literature) and branding Alpine, Himalayan, and Tatra mountain climbers and those penetrating caves as irresponsible brats. Conservative in expression, Olga Tokarczuk's unusually thick (900 pages!) novel full of incredibly sensuous descriptions of meat eating and – shockingly! – praise for the patriarchy. Janusz Rudnicki's remarkably subtle miniatures, full of poetic metaphors. [...] Szczepan Twardoch's truly Buddhist novel *Melisa* about inner tranquility [...]. Not to mention Marcin Świetlicki's collection of poems, typeset and ready in the Znak publishing house, but never published [where] the author has created a series of detached, Franciscan, affirmative poems full of conviction of the causal power of God's love” – Krzysztof Varga, “Hłasko socrealistyczny, czyli legenda zagrożona” [Hłasko's Socialist Realism, or the Legend Threatened], *Duży Format* [Large Format] No. 39/1150, Oct. 10, 2015, p. 3.

One may of course take up the other rallying cries of the Lennon manifesto. *Imagine there's no countries* – this would be a history of art without ethnocentrism, without the history of national arts, folkist interpretations, without any national heritage, or listings of national treasures. But before that, there would need to have not existed one of art history's founding texts – the brochure by the young Goethe, equating the gothic cathedral in Strasbourg with the German construction industry,<sup>5</sup> one that found ultimate fulfilment in the consecration of Cologne Cathedral, which was completed thanks to the efforts of several generations, and which Kaiser Wilhelm I and Chancellor Bismarck, present at the ceremony, raised to the status of a symbol of the Second Reich. In the general plan, there would have to be no cultural hegemony of the strong provoking the counter-reaction of the weak, proving their cultural autonomy and diversity.

It would be harder trying to imagine: *And no religion too* – this being perhaps the most difficult, due to the field of art history being inseparable from religion (or religions). But, we may examine the role of art history in the desacralization of art, something that indeed took place.

Eschewing the manifesto of the classic, serious questions may be posed. Would not the existence of a “scientific” art history suppress the development of museum type institutions, which we tend to view as art history's “right hand” and whose nineteenth-century boom proceeded in parallel with the maturing of academic structures and narratives? And what about the impressive institutional and legal foundations that nineteenth-century art history laid down and which allowed this field of study to be consolidated and continued to this day? What would the axiomatic order of European thought be without the hierarchy of values laid down by art history, placing Art exceptionally high among the achievements of the human spirit and its subsequent destruction in the twentieth century? Would the lack of a canon of masterpieces, knowledge of which was for generations of Europeans a sign of culture and a membership card to society, have had an impact on social stratification? Without history of art, would there have arisen the concept of “national heritage,” which has become crucial in the political processes of building ethnic identities and the formation of nation-states, especially following the collapse of the Habsburg, Russian, and Ottoman empires?

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A radical aid in imagining that there is no art history would be the liquidation of its subject matter, that is to say art itself. In short – no art, no problem. The nihilistic, iconoclastic, self-destructive trends in the art of the twentieth century are so well known that there is no need to list them here. Although the already century-old diagnosis claiming the

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<sup>5</sup> Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, *Von deutscher Baukunst* (ed. pr. 1773).

*death of art* is still being placed in new ideological contexts and new forms of rhetoric,<sup>6</sup> nothing has halted or even slowed the on rushing growth in artistic production.

Though without the aggression that characterized *Auto-destructive Art* type movements, the thought of annihilating this sort of production never ceases to haunt artists. There may not be any destructive gestures, but the undisputed status of art is subjected to doubt. The first, discrete example of dystopia may be Karolina Breguła's film *Fire-followers*, shown in the Atlas of Art in Łódź and later at the Venice Biennale in 2013 (in the Romanian pavilion, in accordance with the blurring of national divisions prevailing at the Biennale). Ostensibly this is a conventional story from an unnamed, though picturesque city (surrounded by water, mountains, and forest), but one devoid of expression or any special features. Its streets are clean, but pretty empty, all a bit vague; the sky is grey, and silence reigns, broken only by the sound of traffic. Against this background, the residents are heard in turn, anonymous figures whose selection is quite arbitrary, with nothing connecting them. From their stories there slowly emerges a picture of a city afflicted by a strange psychosis. Vaguely interwoven in this is a fear of the fires that once haunted the city and an aversion to art. Without anger, rather dismissively, the residents talk about the decision to eliminate art from their city as it serves no purpose, costs money, and unnecessarily takes up space.

The film's calm and serious narration is misleading, so for a while the viewer may be under the impression that this is the whole time a sociological document, offbeat perhaps, but still a documentary. Whereas in fact we are imperceptibly approaching the limits of rationality, as in the training centre for dogs, taught to "sniff out art" by the smell of turpentine, glue, and paint (all flammable materials), or in the public aquarium, where works of the Russian avant-garde artists Tatlin and El Lissitzky are fed to predatory moray eels. The demonstration held by young people, raising cries of "Down with art!," is clearly a staged event, but the pictures waiting to be taken away in dumpsters – are quite convincing. We do not quite know how to treat the speech by the director of the local museum, who confidently promises to transform the entire institution into an exemplary warehouse, in which the private collections of the city's inhabitants will be given appropriate storage conditions. And as for the empty hall, which for the time being "is in a bit of a mess, but will eventually be sorted out," have not we seen this somewhere before?

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*Bring Your Artworks to Be Burned. The destruction of Works of Art*, an action initiated in 2010 by Robert Kuśmirowski and repeated in several places, was addressed to artists who wanted to get rid of the works in their possession hanging around in warehouses,

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<sup>6</sup> The writings of the art philosopher Artur C. Danto are of particular importance for any deliberations concerning the "end" or "death of art," especially *After the End of Art: Contemporary Art and the Pale of History*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997. The fiercest critique of contemporary art and a diagnosis of its end is Donald Kuspit's *The End of Art*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004.



offices, apartments, galleries, art schools, museums, and cellars. This action was carried out under a project entitled *Museum of Deposited Art*, which by committee destroys the collected works of art, burning them and placing the ashes in urns located in specially constructed exhibition modules. The action aims – in the words of the artist – “to carry out public services on behalf of the arts by launching a comprehensive recycling, which involves ridding art of unwanted and useless works and liquidation of the same.”<sup>7</sup> Everything is impeccable from the formal and legal angle. The depositing of a work is subject to typical museum procedure, requiring the consent of the owners and artists, certification, inventory filing cards, etc. After a work’s destruction by commission, a preserved fragment measuring 10x10 cm and the ashes from its cremation, along with the necessary documentation, are deposited in a First Aid cabinet inscribed with the artist’s first and last name. These procedures have no need of art historians or museum curators. Regulations, procedures, and a simple clerical routine are quite sufficient.

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The second possibility that *Imagine* opens up are the attempts to create a counter-factual history of art. This is a more stimulating possibility, as instead of liquidation, it offers the imagination creative activity. Its attempt ended in the disastrous circumstances mentioned earlier that would make development of art history as we know it, from its beginnings to the present day, impossible. The easiest way to get started is by inviting alternatives to our own histories. What would happen if at some point we made a different decision, took up other studies, if there were no jobs at the universities or in the museums, if it was urgently necessary to make money, etc. But this is purely a private invitation to invent the history of one’s own life “were there no history of art.” Or if there was, a different one. As someone who has spent almost her entire professional life working at the University of Warsaw’s Institute of Art History, I never cease to be haunted by the question: what might have been had the newly established art history Institute at the once more Polish-speaking University of Warsaw been entrusted not to the Lviv archivist, Zygmunt Batowski, but the more European leaning romantic dreamer Józef Strzygowski?<sup>8</sup>

Building counter-factual versions of events is attractive, although considered more a form of scholarly fun and games. The most outstanding Polish historians played such a game a few years ago, developing the collective work *Gdyby... Calkiem inna historia*

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<sup>7</sup> Cf. Muzeum Sztuki Zdeponowanej [Museum of Deposited Art], catalogue of the exhibition, Galeria Miejska Arsenał, Poznań, 2012.

<sup>8</sup> On the staffing of the first art history department at the University of Warsaw: Maria Poprzęcka, “Katedra Historii Sztuki na Uniwersytecie Warszawskim” [The Art History Chair at the University of Warsaw], in: Adam S. Labuda, ed., *Dzieje historii sztuki w Polsce. Kształtowanie się instytucji naukowych w XIX i XX wieku* [The History of Art History in Poland. The Formation of Scholarly Institutions in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries], Poznań: Wydawnictwo Naukowe UAM, 1996, pp. 156–167.

*Polski [If... A Quite Different History of Poland]*.<sup>9</sup> “Wojtyła was not elected Pope. Jaruzelski did not introduce martial law” – the cover proclaims. Visions of a different history of Poland are described by eminent experts in the various eras, focusing on defining moments and key events. Jerzy Strzelczyk wonders: “What would have happened, had Poland’s King Mieszko not converted to Christianity in 966?”; Janusz Tazbir speculates: “What would have happened, had King Władysław Vasa been made Tsar of Russia in 1610” and “What would have happened, had the Swedes taken Jasna Góra in 1655?”; Włodzimierz Borodziej asks: “What would have happened, had the Poles beaten the Germans in the Warsaw Uprising of 1944”; Jerzy Holzer considers: “What would have happened had ‘Solidarity’ not been formed in 1980”; and Andrzej Paczkowski wonders: “What would have happened had General Jaruzelski not introduced martial law in 1981?” Besides Tadeusz Cegielski’s fictionalized chapter, this work contains some great historical treatises, which, while not resorting to any mystification and being based on an excellent knowledge of the circumstances and contexts of the discussed events, undertake probabilistic analyzes. One can only wonder that the book was clearly treated as a joke. Świat Książki [World of Books] published it as a “club edition” and it never found its way to the library of the University of Warsaw’s Faculty of History, with which most of its authors are connected.

Much less scientific rigour prevails for some time now in the fashion for alternative histories: let’s imagine what would happen if...? The Warsaw Uprising Museum, together with Polish Radio’s Programme 2, conducted a series of public meetings, at which the following questions were asked: What would have happened had Krzysztof Kamil Baczyński survived the Warsaw Uprising and had to live in the People’s Republic of Poland?<sup>10</sup> What would have taken place had the Polish army repulsed the Germans in 1939, and had the USSR not invaded Poland on September 17?... Sometimes these speculations go deeper into the past: How would European history have continued, had the Poles, as a consequence of the Moscow wars, held the Kremlin?

The production of literary alternative histories, classified as *historical fiction* or even *fantasy*, is very abundant. In Poland, this genre has its patrons (Janusz Zajdel, Łukasz Orbitowski). Apart from pure fantasy (the “A long time ago in a galaxy far, far away...”

<sup>9</sup> Włodzimierz Borodziej, Tadeusz Cegielski, Andrzej Chwalba, Andrzej Garlicki, Jerzy Holzer, Janusz Kaliński, Andrzej Paczkowski, Jerzy Strzelczyk, Janusz Tazbir, Julia Tazbir, Jan Wimmer, Henryk Wisner, *Gdyby... Całkiem inna historia Polski* [If... A Quite Different History of Poland], Warszawa: Świat Książki, 2009.

<sup>10</sup> Wisława Szymborska already saw such a possibility in her poem *W biały dzień* [In Broad Daylight], transl. by Richard Bialy:

They’d stay at a guest house in the mountains,  
 come down to lunch in the dining room,  
 he’d look out at four spruces, gazing from branch  
 to branch, without disturbing their fresh snow cover.  
 With beard trimmed to a point,  
 balding, greying, bespectacled,  
 with thicker-set and weary features  
 with a warton the cheek and a furrowed brow, as if angelic marble had been plastered with human  
 clay [...] (1980).

sort of thing), it basically focuses on Poland's traumas and disasters of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. While fantasy frightens with catastrophic and apocalyptic visions, historical alternatives tend to be a consoling attempt to reverse time or some fatal course of events. They reveal imperial urges and lend themselves to dreams of power. It is a form of compensation for unfulfilled glories, liberation from complexes, and the erasure of past disasters. Instead of the Ribbentrop-Molotov Pact, we would have the Ribbentrop-Beck Treaty,<sup>11</sup> there would have been no defeat in September 1939, there would have been no Soviet invasion, and there would be no communism... At the same time, another field of wishful thinking close to these popular alternative histories is the attitude involving the settlement of old scores. The motivation behind this is the need for vengeance and retaliation, the administering of historical justice, the prosecution and stigmatization of those guilty for what happened, when things could have turned out differently. And for those responsible for the actual course of events, there would be no clean slate, prior to which all trespasses would be forgiven and forgotten.

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Attempts to create an alternative version of history exceed, however, the boundaries of political or historical fiction of a pop culture or journalistic nature. They take on a scientific and ideological form, as exemplified by a book loudly proclaimed a few years ago, Jan Sowa's *Fantomowe ciało króla* [The King's Phantom Body].<sup>12</sup> It proposes another history of Poland, not counter-factual, but one seen from perspectives absent from Polish historiography – political theology, postcolonial studies, Lacanian psychoanalysis, etc. Sowa does not alter historical facts, does not dispute or reverse the course of history, but thanks to other points of view, gives us a different interpretation and evaluation. This is sometimes provocative in another way, used in order to put forward the author's basic argument, namely that the Republic of Two Nations "could not in any way be considered a nation by any definition of statehood," was a phantom state, the historical partitions of which were simply a confirmation of this fact.<sup>13</sup>

The condition of art history seems quite different. Methodologically alive, since contemporary art still forces on it fundamental redefinitions of the subject matter and questions the epistemological basis and methodological discourses, art history having been "rewritten" over and over again, and still being rewritten. We have passed through numerous attempts to *rethink*, *revisit*, and *rewrite* art history, along with *about turns*. We have seen not only the "end of art history" but also cancellations and revisions of that

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<sup>11</sup> Piotr Zychowicz, *Pakt Ribbentrop-Beck, czyli jak Polacy mogli u boku III Rzeszy pokonać Związek Sowiecki* [The Ribbentrop-Beck Pact, or How the Poles, Siding with the Third Reich, Could Have Defeated the Soviet Union], Poznań: Rebis, 2012.

<sup>12</sup> Jan Sowa, *Fantomowe ciało króla. Peryferyjne zmagania z nowoczesną formą* [The King's Phantom Body. Peripheral Struggles with Modern Form], Kraków: Universitas, 2011.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 40.

end.<sup>14</sup> Thanks largely to feminist art history, a psychoanalytic perspective (particularly the Lacanian variation) has long been present, not only in the study of women's art. The same applies to postcolonial inspiration, although here it seems that Polish art history is still awaiting such revisions. The "rewriting" and "rethinking" that art history is continually introducing is characterized by varying degrees of radicalism, but a historical (was, was not) formation does not really allow the postulation of a *tabula rasa* or the proposing of such an art history as if up till now there had never been any history of art, although as an intellectual game this does seem appealing. The subtitle of Sowa's book: *Peripheral Struggles with Modern Form* seems an ideal challenge for an alternative history of Polish twentieth-century art. Similarly useful for the re-conceptualization of Polish art history were such factors indicated by Sowa as the lack of a Roman heritage, location beyond the *limes* and the consequent lack of modern social organization, the construction of a national identity defined by the trauma of inferiority via-à-vis the West ("that which is Universal"), and finally self-colonization.

We must also take other differences into account. Such considerations above all need the same categories: counterfactual history and alternative history. The specific nature of art history as a field of study, namely the objects qualified auto-referentially by art history itself as "works of art," clips the wings of counterfactual imagination. Because it is easier to imagine that something never happened, than that there have been no monumental buildings, hectares of paintings, hundreds of thousands of notable sculptures, countless items of craftsmanship, since they still exist, visually and tangibly available to us. Art is not a *terra nullius* – a no man's land, where we can introduce any order that suits us.<sup>15</sup> It is inhabited and controlled by those holding ownership of things – those buildings, paintings, etc., on which we ourselves have conferred a separate, causative status. Art historians are not the owners of this land, rather intruders or a foreign administration imposed upon the territory.

*Imagine all the people  
Living for today...*

As emphasized by Didi-Huberman, our modern times remind us of art history's inherent outdatedness. Things from the past are materially, sensually present in our current lives. They originated "some time ago" but are present "here and now." One

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<sup>14</sup> The founding texts for "polemiczny koniec historii sztuki" (the polemical end of art history): Hans Belting, *Das Ende der Kunstgeschichte?*, München: C.H. Beck, 1983, and by the same author *Das Ende der Kunstgeschichte: eine Revision nach zehn Jahren*, München: C.H. Beck, 1995. For an extensive discussion of polemics: Mariusz Bryl, "Hans Belting i jego adwersarze: polemiczny koniec historii sztuki" [Hans Belting and His Adversaries: The Polemic End of Art History], in: eiusdem, *Suverenność dyscypliny. Polemiczna historia historii sztuki od 1970 roku* [Sovereignty of the Discipline. A Polemical History of Art History Since 1970], Poznań: Wydawnictwo Naukowe UAM, 2008, pp. 495–550.

<sup>15</sup> I owe my reflections on "no man's land" to Andrzej Hercyński's presentation "Taking Chances in the Terra Nullius: Remarks on the Unclaimed Grounds between the *Two Cultures*," at the conference *Interdisciplinarity and Liberal Education at Research Universities: A Global Perspective*, University of Warsaw, Faculty of "Artes Liberales," Oct. 12–13, 2015.

may – as was attempted in the introduction – change the history of events (the attack on Vasari's house, the censorship imposed on Winckelmann's book), but it is more difficult to destroy the objects those events dealt with. Their "real presence" would ensure that if they did not, then someone else would have probably dealt with them.

One also needs to ask whether art historians are entitled to a similar self-destruction, especially those academics burdened with the requirements of being "scholars." Here, any assessment depends on the attitude adopted, in short: a "faith in science." Those advocating the possibility of a "fictional" art history can find their best support not only among narrativist historians,<sup>16</sup> but in the certainly far from new opinions of Didi-Huberman:

Just as history of art as a 'science' is unable to disguise its literary, rhetorical, and even courtly roots, history as a 'science' cannot evade responsibility for the ambivalence implicit in its own name, which assumes not only knowledge about real events (the study of history), but also a fictional drift (storytelling). [...] history constructs plots, is a poetic, rhetorical form of the time being studied.<sup>17</sup>

Didi-Huberman continues:

An art historian is, in every sense of the word, just a *factor*, modeller, and artisan, an author making up a past, which he then gives us to read.<sup>18</sup>

Didi-Huberman, writing about history (including the history of art) as a "poetic, rhetorical form of the time being studied" does not have any fancy words in mind, nor any "resonance" between literature and the visual arts. His "art history project"<sup>19</sup> concerns the very essence of this field of study and its basic concepts, namely "history" and "art." Didi-Huberman's truculent tone in writing directly about the history of art may give the impression of being fresh provocation. The challenge, however, lies more in the style than the substance. His project, seemingly subversive, falls within the revisionist currents of art history animated since the 1960s and, more broadly – within the anti-positivist doubts in the "scientism of art history," or – even more broadly – within the wave of criticism that, since Michel Foucault's times, has been aimed at the modern model of this science, understood as a progressive accumulation of knowledge and improved

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<sup>16</sup> For narrativist reflections on the basis of art history, Hayden White's writings remain the most important, texts collected in the volume entitled *The Fiction of Narrative: Essays on History, Literature, and Theory 1957–2007*, ed. Robert Doran, Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2010.

<sup>17</sup> Georges Didi-Huberman, *Devant le temps. Histoire de l'art et l'anachronisme des images*, Paris: Edition de Minuit, 2000, p. 38 (transl. Richard Bialy).

<sup>18</sup> Georges Didi-Huberman, *Devant l'image. Questions posées aux fins d'une histoire de l'art*, Paris: Edition de Minuit, 1991, p. 49 (transl. R.B.).

<sup>19</sup> A very thorough analysis of this is given by Andrzej Leśniak, *Marzenie senne, anachronizm, przetrwanie. Projekt historii sztuki Georgesa Didi-Hubermana* [A Dream, an Anachronism, Survival. Georges Didi-Huberman's Art History Project], 2008, an unpublished dissertation. The author points primarily to Walter Benjamin and Aby Warburg as the main instigators of the Didi-Huberman project.

methodology. In Didi-Huberman's opinion, art history would not be entitled to create fictional alternatives, but rather does so in the belief that it is practicing "science." When one analyzes the interpretative baggage of works particularly stimulating the inventiveness of their researchers (Giorgione's *Tempest*, Velazquez's *Las Meninas*, Duchamp's *The Large Glass*), the creative, fictional, sometimes poetic nature of these texts is striking.<sup>20</sup> *Art-historical fiction* is often created in good faith using prose whose fictional nature is concealed by the camouflage of the language used, erudition, and such apparatus as footnotes, bibliographies, etc.

In his great summa, Mariusz Bryl, applying the existing methodology, described the condition of art history as a "synchronicity of alternatives"<sup>21</sup> – and the situation has not perhaps changed fundamentally over the past decade. Among today's "synchronicities of alternatives" – the coexistence of various attitudes in the study of art – it would be hard to identify a strongly dominant one, as in the 1960s, when one could point to iconology whose dominance was measured by the force of the counter-reaction. Precluding the establishment of "historical invariants" is the call formulated anew for the "rewriting of art history," the "rethinking of art history,"<sup>22</sup> referring to both specific periods and areas (for instance the art of post-communist countries<sup>23</sup>), as well as the very foundations underlying this field of learning. Likewise, no new model has gained the authority of the old stylistic model, so widely and long disputed. Moreover, the very legitimacy of such a single model is cast in doubt, for which reason one may also ask: if an "alternative" – then an alternative to what? If a "different history of art" – then different from what? Talking about "alternatives" presupposes the existence of a norm as a reference for all "otherness." In view of this, can we call all "critical," "polemical" attitudes in art history "alternatives"? They are at best alternatives to each other.

In light of the above, another question arises: whether in the history of this field of study we can point to an intellectual undertaking that would indeed be an autonomous, determined proposal for a "different" history of art. It will not be revelatory to claim that compared to the "opinions printed on luxury paper" or "empty bartering with

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<sup>20</sup> Cf. Maria Poprzęcka, ed., *Wielkie dzieła – wielkie interpretacje. Materiały LV ogólnopolskiej sesji naukowej Stowarzyszenia Historyków Sztuki* [Great Works – Great Interpretations. Materials for the LV National Session of the Association of Art Historians], Warszawa: Stowarzyszenie Historyków Sztuki, 2007.

<sup>21</sup> Bryl, op. cit., passim. Thanks to the considerable work of Mariusz Bryl, the Poznań academic circles publishing the paper *Artium Quaestiones*, and methodological seminars organized by several Polish academic centres, a Polish art historian, if he so wishes, may become well versed in the current discussions held in European and American art history. Cf. Mariusz Bryl, Piotr Juszkiewicz, Piotr Piotrowski, Wojciech Suchocki, eds., *Perspektywy współczesnej historii sztuki. Antologia przekładów Artium Quaestiones* [Perspectives of Contemporary Art History. An Anthology of Translations of *Artium Quaestiones*], Poznań: Wydawnictwo Naukowe UAM, 2009 (published 2011).

<sup>22</sup> Donald Preziosi, *Rethinking Art History: Meditations on a Coy Science*, New Haven-London: Yale University Press, 1989.

<sup>23</sup> Cf. Piotr Piotrowski, "O 'dwóch głosach historii sztuki'" [On 'Two Voices in the History of Art'], *Artium Quaestiones* 18 (2006), pp. 195–214. The article contains an argument for deconstruction of the relations established by art history between the "West" and Central and Eastern Europe instead of including the art of the latter in the Western European canon.



words,”<sup>24</sup> Aby Warburg’s *Mnemosyne Atlas* – a “history of art without words” is such a proposal. Quite intriguing is the extraordinary rebirth of the *Atlas*, which for decades remained more of a peculiar set of marginalia, a brainchild of a great but mad mind, than a scientific proposition. Andrzej Turowski explains the revival thus:

The reception of Warburg’s art history in conjunction with anthropology [...] found further development only in the 1990s. It is hard to say to what extent this was due to postcolonial studies, however, of undoubted importance here was the increased interest shown by art history (and also museum practices) in trans- and multi-culturalism, and above all the concept of the polysemic image and the role of memory in history.<sup>25</sup>

More important, it seems to me, is Turowski’s general statement about a “second history of art.” The first was based on the Enlightenment model, while this “second” “was extracted from the depths of consciousness, possessed by phobias and passion, in shock caused by jeopardy, in a malaise caused by the trauma of war. While the first was born under the sign of the Sun, the second turned towards melancholy Saturn.”<sup>26</sup> “Chthonic anachronisms, unexpected meetings, instantaneous contacts, anagrams, anti-knowledge revealing wisdom through revelation. A beam of light inducing revelation. A synchronous, rather than diachronic montage, beams of intensity”<sup>27</sup> – in such exalted terms wrote Krzysztof Rutkowski about *Atlas*, pointing out the analogy to Walter Benjamin’s *Arcades Project*.

Polish scholarship about art paid homage to Warburg’s work in an impressive double issue of the journal *Konteksty*<sup>28</sup> and in many other publications. Interest in *Atlas* does not, however, mean attempts to treat *Mnemosyne* as a model, a handy tool that one may use to differently construct scientific (or anti-scientific) art history discourses. I doubt whether that is at all possible. On the other hand, a similar track (although not necessarily subject to Warburg’s direct influence) is found in certain artistic activities, to which I wish to refer, here at the end. The motivations are similar – settlements of artistic scores spring from doubting the narratives offered by critics and art history. Jakub Woynarowski, proposing his *Novus Ordo Seclorum*, even refers to the Pataphysicists ridiculing the official scientific discourse. Woynarowski claims:

*The New Order of the Ages* is a kind of conspiracy theory about art I have been working on it for ten years, amassing a giant visual archive. I take the occasion

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<sup>24</sup> Quotes by Rutkowski, “Warburg i wąż,” p. 24.

<sup>25</sup> Andrzej Turowski, “Historia sztuki w dobie szaleństwa” [History of Art in an Age of Madness], *Konteksty* 2–3 (2011), p. 11.

<sup>26</sup> Ibidem, p. 13.

<sup>27</sup> Rutkowski, “Warburg i wąż,” p. 25.

<sup>28</sup> *Konteksty* 2–3 (2011). This contains a group of articles: “Aby Warburg: sejsmograf nowoczesności” [Aby Warburg: Seismograph of Modernity]; “Podróż amerykańska: etnologia i historia sztuki” [American Journey: Ethnology and Art History]; “Niedokończone leczenie: przypadek Warburga” [Unfinished Treatment: The Warburg Case]; “Atlas *Mnemosyne* i sztuka współczesna” [Atlas *Mnemosyne* and Contemporary Art].

of new exhibitions to reveal further elements of the project. I imagine that someday everything will be gathered together in one installation, as well it being published in the form of a book or film. [...] [It is all about] overturning the canon. I am interested in an alternative path for the history of art. I gather up any threads that defy conventional ideas about how its development looked. Because is art subject to laws of evolution? I question such notions as modernity. I am looking for works from the past that look like they were created today. Stereotype attitudes to art lead to a rigid division between ancient and contemporary art, with any elements not fitting the puzzle having to be excluded. According to some, the art of the past is beautiful, good, and true, and modern art is – degenerate. Others take the opposite view – setting sterile, boring tradition against dynamic, productive modernity. This is of course an artificial division and it continues to surprise me that anyone mindlessly applies it. [...] But then, the history of art is full of surprises. As my “investigation” progressed, anachronistic works that I had treated as exceptions arranged themselves into currents that were international in their scope. What we know is merely the tip of the iceberg. This vision of art has something of the paranoid about it, so I came up with a handle for it in the form of a fictional conspiracy theory. It seems to me, moreover, that any theory has “conspiracy” ramifications, because it aims to reveal a logical structure making order of chaos and clarifying all doubts [...], this way of thinking being marked by a para-religious belief that there exists a Primal Cause behind all processes and a demiurge overseeing his work. Each such theory features an unspecified group holding power.<sup>29</sup>

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The need for change in art history as we know it, particularly the status of the avant-garde and neo avant-garde haunts various artists. Sometimes this takes the form of independent side roads that are trodden alongside the historical mainstream. Agnieszka Polska is trying to compose this change out of marginal works, unfinished projects or those existing as a myth maintained by the milieu thanks to private anecdote, rumours, and family legends (the “Poor Thing” series dedicated to the legacy of Jerzy Beres, Edward Kienholz, Paweł Freisler, and Jerzy Ludwiński<sup>30</sup>). The figure of Ludwiński (together with Sebastian Cichocki) returns in her astonishing film *Future Days*<sup>31</sup> – a phantasmagorical image showing the postmortal lives of forgotten artists (Włodzimierz Borowski, Andrzej Szewczyk, Charlotte Posenenske, Paul Thel, Lee Lozano), wandering the Bergmanesque landscape of Gotland and the island of Faro and watching from the underworld the eclipse of the Earth. Artists in great portrait masks, motionless, watch as our planet slowly sinks into sinister gloom.

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<sup>29</sup> Jakub Woynarowski in an interview with Małgorzata I. Niemczyńska, *Duży Format* [Large Format], Sept. 3, 2015.

<sup>30</sup> See [cowidac.artmuseum.pl/pl/path/the-avant-garde-exhaustion/agnieszka-polska-godbox](http://cowidac.artmuseum.pl/pl/path/the-avant-garde-exhaustion/agnieszka-polska-godbox) (consulted Feb. 10, 2016).

<sup>31</sup> See <https://vimeo.com/81918889> (consulted Feb. 10, 2016).



What fate awaits then the study of art? A gradual eclipse observed from the Other-world by forgotten artists? Let us return to Lennon's utopia. *Imagine...* Truth, fiction, and imagination in which our reasoning about art is entangled, are not mutually hostile. On the contrary. They are friendly to each other. Only their congenial union may give birth to living knowledge, always open to new inspirations, never satisfied in its curiosity.

Translated by Richard Bialy

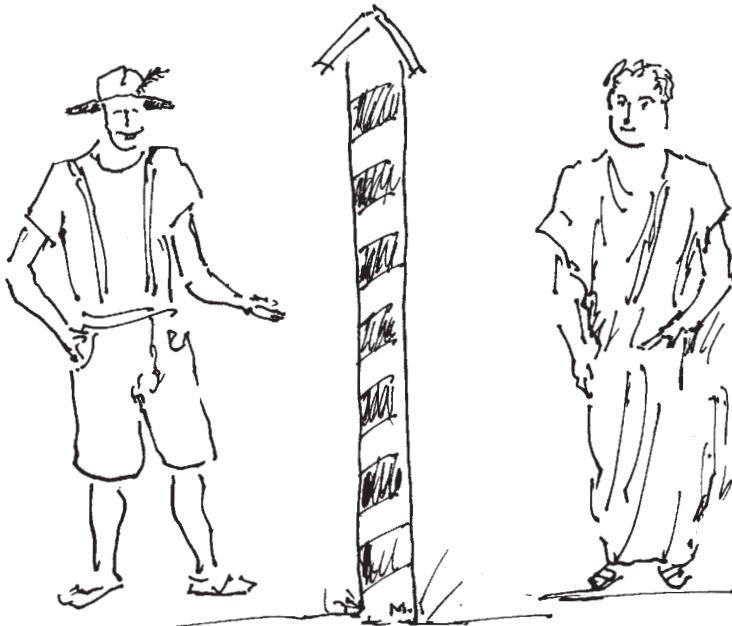


Henryk Samsonowicz

**Borders, or Places of Meetings  
with the “Others”**

BARBARICUM

IMPERIUM ROMANUM



Anything to declare?

Laws and roads...

Henryk Samsonowicz

## Borders, or Places of Meetings with the “Others”

Did borders separating people, always and everywhere, introduced obstacles hard to overcome? Did it not happen in many historical instances that precisely on the borders of cultures – customs, languages, beliefs – emerged conditions facilitating the evolution of human kind? The theme presented in this manner is broad and surely exceeds the possibility of giving a brief answer to these questions. Still, we could formulate a few reflections beginning as a starting point from the birth of a phenomenon called “European culture.”

### I.

First, a rather obvious claim: at the end of the first millennium of our era, as well as earlier, in Europe, there was no single, homogenous world of culture common to all inhabitants of the continent. The dual division of Europe into the high civilization of Greeks and Romans and the *Barbaricum*, as perceived by Greeks and Romans, did not exist anymore. The period of Migration of Peoples, while it helped create awareness of numerous and diverse nations, whose customs, political regimes, languages were different, destroyed many centres of political and cultural life. Lands in the former Roman Empire became progressively more varied being inhabited by people more or less familiar. Some were known from direct contact but there were also some imagined beings. It is difficult to properly answer the questions about the origin of stories about *cynocephali* – creatures with heads of a dog, about beings lying on their backs and protecting themselves from the sun and rain with one huge leg, or about creatures without heads having eyes and mouths on their chests.

As the dimensions of the known world increased, these beings – possibly originating from ancient sources, or from attempts to translate incomprehensible texts – were placed further from human abodes. There were attempts to situate some of them at the confines of the known world, like the Amazons who in the late first millennium were tentatively placed at the borders of Masovia.

In the first millennium AD, contrary to popular beliefs, the existing knowledge about foreign peoples and their characteristics was quite general, not only among the inhabitants of the central lands of ancient Rome but also among people living in the periphery of the developed culture. The Migrations of Peoples embarked upon at the twilight of Antiquity undoubtedly influenced learning about worlds unknown earlier. Not only the migrations connected to those caused by invasions of Asiatic Huns, but also previous ones. Among them, the crossings of the Baltic Sea by Goths and their arrival through the lands north from the Carpathian Mountains down to Crimea, or the Slavs pouring out on the territories of Eastern and Central Europe, or consecutive, further wanderings of Germanic tribes across Italy, Gaul, the Pyrenean Peninsula, down to North Africa. The later migrations of peoples and intensifying contacts began already in the seventh century along with the Arabic expansion. Already during the development of the Carolingian Empire in the next century, trade with the countries of Islam facilitated acquisition of wares needed as the *insignia* for the power élites for the inhabitants of the new states on European lands. In the light of today's research, we could even risk a claim that the exchange conducted by Slavonic and Germanic inhabitants with the rich Muslim countries accelerated the creation of new territorial organizations facilitating contacts not only with Byzantium and Rome, but also with the wide Arab world.

Yet, still in the earlier times among numerous tribes living in Europe knowledge of conquerors from more remote parts of the world grew. Huns were coming from the area of the Chinese Wall, Avars from the steppes of Central Asia, Scandinavians, later, from the north of the continent. The world was becoming more familiar but at the same time more fragmented than during the twilight years of ancient Rome. Almost simultaneously, appeared new, growing divisions between the Eastern, Byzantine Church and the Western – Roman. It seems unlikely that the theological issues were understood by the inhabitants of the Christian part of Europe. Different rites, different sacral languages, different forms of dependence from state authorities were at the core of the division. All these differences did not close the door, at least in late first millennium, to communication between the inhabitants of both cultural circles through a common – or similar – language of gestures, through comprehensible iconography. Differences between the inhabitants of the East and West came rather from the level of education, ability to read and write, than from concepts relating to everyday customs. On the other hand, differences dividing, also in Europe, Christian and Muslim lands, were significant. The South of the continent was predominantly occupied by the followers of Islam, also internally divided, but using a common religious language, common laws, in part originating from a common historical tradition. While varieties of the Muslim culture created separate circles of world culture, contacts between them were bringing to the inhabitants of a large part of Europe, at least from the times of Charlemagne, a constant element of knowledge about the “others.” Thousands of Arab coins found in the ninth- and tenth-century treasure groves at the shores of the Baltic Sea, point clearly to a pre-existing trade of goods and a potential for maintaining mutual contacts. Many people were sold as slaves, others went willingly to work in Byzantium or in the

Arab countries. Such cases must have resulted in a transfer of information about other, sometimes remote lands.

Next to these circles of Christian and Muslim cultures, existed in Europe wide territories inhabited by ethnically diverse peoples whose customs and economic structures were different, such as German, Slavonic, Baltic, Finno-Ugric, Chazar, Avar, and Turkish tribes. These groups were not linked by common beliefs, similar life style, or homogenous social structure. The differences in their life (farming, hunting, or nomadic), language differences, differences in tribal structures, were defining the distinctions between "ours and theirs," creating simple divisions into "I" and "not I," "we" and "others," "foreign." Even the language of gestures was different in various ethnic groups. Nodding one's head meant acquiescence for Indo-European peoples, among Turkish tribes – negation. Ostensibly, this situation excluded the possibility of mutual communication between members of ethnic groups inhabiting European lands. In reality, beginning in the early Neolithic period (if not earlier) contacts between "ours" and "others" existed, shaped by the eternal play of offer and demand. Excess goods produced by miners or hunters opened the possibility of exchange for other goods sought for by various communities. Undoubtedly, in time also other more comprehensible ways of mutual communication appeared, words more generally familiar, gestures expressing an approval of a transaction or a refusal. Already by the end of the first millennium AD, regular meetings with the "others" were occurring. Exchanges of goods and services were happening, sometimes willingly, sometimes not.

It seems that there were at least three reasons leading to initiating contacts with closer and more remote neighbours. The first, the most obvious, was the need to acquire material goods and the need to conduct exchange of goods. There must have existed ways of naming the sought for values – ore of wanted metals, furs, cattle, and – possibly first of all – people. More socially developed communities, not only Muslim but also Christian, wanted slaves, used in farming, in construction, or in mining for minerals. In civilized states at the shore of the Mediterranean Sea, slaves were used for various field services, they were organized in military regiments of Mamluks. Women were wanted for harems, some of them would even reach elevated ranks in the hierarchy of Sultan's spouses. For tribes living to the north or east from the Mediterranean circle acquiring attributes of power – weapons, clothing, precious ornaments – constituted indicators of prestige, required especially during periods of creation of the early state organizations.

## 2.

Incessant fights of a defensive or offensive nature were the second causal factor leading to contacts with "others." Even in mid-first millennium AD, the lands of Eastern, as well as Western Europe, were still under the threat of raids. The countries of the Levant conducted an expansion of Muslims, from the Asian East were coming dangerous nomadic tribes – Proto-Bulgarians, later Avars, Chazars, finally Hungarians. From the Scandinavian Peninsula already since the seventh century, German Vikings were raiding

the central countries of the continent, devastating the lands of the Carolingian state and through Rus reaching as far as Constantinople. Already beginning from the sixth century, Slavs started to expand, colonizing wide areas of Central Europe, deserted as a result of the Migration of Peoples. The expert literature on the subject presents various claims as to their primary cradle but already in the seventh century their settlements, probably insular, reached from one side the Central Europe, from the other, the islands on the Mediterranean. The migrations of Slavs, combined with looting of settlements encountered on the way, were undoubtedly preceded by reconnaissance activities of the conquered lands, during which they were telling the Byzantines that they do not carry weapons because their occupation was singing and playing the lyre (according to Theophylact Simocatta,<sup>1</sup> who wrote about late sixth century).

### 3.

Finally, the third reason to seek knowledge about the “others” was cognitive curiosity, specific to human kind. No doubt, there was more than one reason why Wulfstan of Hedeby, dispatched by the Anglo-Saxon King Alfred on an exploratory journey, sailed along the Baltic Sea. There were also various reasons why Erik the Red travelled to Greenland, and his son Leif Eriksson reached the shores of North America. Yet, we can assume that beyond the need to find precious goods and to ensure a safe haven, there was the will to see the unknown, new lands of the world. Writers active in various times were attempting to identify the described peoples by providing their names. Occasionally, since remote times, the name of tribal or language groups (“stirps,” “gens”), was given by others, sometimes it was a their own proper name (to quote for instance Caesar’s description: “qui ipsorum lingua Celtae, nostra Galli apellantur”). Learned writers – Claudius Ptolemy, Procopius of Caesarea – were able to list several dozens of names of peoples inhabiting lands to the North or East of Europe. These may have been in part proper names, in part names given by neighbours defining these “others” in different manners, among them by their natural habitat. Such is no doubt the origin of the name “Drevlians” (Polish ‘drewno’ – wood) – inhabitants of woodlands, or “Polans” (Polish ‘pole’ – field) – inhabitants of fields.

It seems, generally speaking, that there were three types of names for different social groups. The first type relates to communities of peoples (tribes?) distinguished by real or imagined traits. The oldest names of communities on the lands of Eastern and Central Europe, quoted by Herodotus, and later repeated by mediaeval geographers (Agathyrsi, Neuri, Androphagi, Melanchlaini), were names originating mainly from their natural habitat. Writing about the Budini, Herodotus mentions that “Greeks call them incorrectly Geloni, as the latter live in forests, and the former in farmlands [...]”<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> See *The History of Theophylact Simocatta: An English Translation with Introduction*, transl. Michael and Mary Whitby, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986.

<sup>2</sup> Hdt. 4.110.



Pliny, writing about Northern Europe, informs that the diverse lands of the region are inhabited by Sarmatians, Veneti, Sciri, and Hirri, but the different parts of the regions were “baptized [given names] by our people.”<sup>3</sup> He mentions there a “King of Suevi” which may attest the existence of a more developed political organization, with a ruler at its helm. Tacitus, on the other hand, writes about numerous inhabitants of “Germania” who “do not belong to a single people” and lists many tribes of Sarmatia – Peucini, Veneti, Fenni – whose inhabitants as a rule “all live in filth and sloth.”<sup>4</sup> It appears from these testimonies that many groups living in Germania and Sarmatia had their names, distinctive languages, and customs, as well as specific beliefs, as indicates a mention of “a priest who presides over religious rituals.” Other information seems to show that at least some of these tribal groups created already organizations headed by chieftains called “kings.” The term “state” used in these descriptions (similar to other terminology for political structures – tribe, city, prince, king) denoted a varied social structure and was rather frequently used out of a lack of sufficient knowledge about the existing political system. The eminent geographer Claudius Ptolemy, enumerating several dozens of names of peoples inhabiting Sarmatia, undoubtedly was using proper names, possibly attesting the existence of their organizational connections.

During the period when the “chieftain system” solidified, among Germani, Slavs, Bulgarians, the person of the chief began being used to name the whole organization of the early state. Writers from the Mediterranean region would sometimes add to such name titles known to their readers (“king,” “prince,” “župan”). Hence names (used also in contemporary historiography) of “Samon’s state,” “Mieszko’s state,” “Dragovit’s state,” “state” of Svatopluk or Miliduch. Their territories were more and more frequently defined by linear borders, using for this purpose rivers, mountains, or neighbouring lands.

In later periods, writers were also seeking eponyms that would give names to the tribal community and the lands it inhabited. Like in the case of Czech – the state founder, or Krak – the founder of a capital city. The name of King Svatopluk was used to describe the territorial organization of Moravian Slavs whose ruler “obtained the principedom of the Czechs who had their own prince and their own dynasty.”<sup>5</sup> Sometimes the term *regnum* was used to define authority. In other cases, it was used for larger territories inhabited by several tribes (e.g., Silesia, or the land of the Vistulans, a territory which according to Thietmar belonged not to Mieszko but to the Czechs<sup>6</sup>). Ibrahim ibn Jacob wrote about “four Slavonic kings,”<sup>7</sup> Ahmad ibn Rustah mentioned coronations of Slavonic chieftains whose names he used to enumerate organizations of the Slavs.<sup>8</sup> Writers seeking precision would give various versions of the same, not particularly well known tribal groups. As

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<sup>3</sup> Plin. *HN* 4.97.

<sup>4</sup> Tac. *Germ.* 46.

<sup>5</sup> See Reginon’s *Chronicle* of 890 in: Reginonis Abbatis Prumiensis *Chronicon cum continuatione Treverensi* [by Adalbert, Archbishop of Magdeburg], rec. Fridericus Kurze, Hannoverae: Impensis bibliopoli Hahniani, 1890, p. 134.

<sup>6</sup> See *Chronicon Thietmari*, in eight books, covering the period 908–1018.

<sup>7</sup> Ibrahim ibn Jacob’s tenth-century travel report is preserved in Abu Abdullah al-Bakri’s *Book of Highways and of Kingdoms* dating from the eleventh century.

<sup>8</sup> See Ahmad ibn Rustah, *Book of Precious Records*.

in the story by King Alfred – “Wolfs who are called Haefelds,” or by Einhard – “Slavs whom we used to call Wiltzen, in their own languages are Veleti,” or according to Adam of Bremen (in his *Gesta Hammaburgensis ecclesiae pontificum*) – “Stodorani are the same tribe as Hevelli.” The names of some communities could have been changing in time, as in the case of “Buzhans” – “Volhynians” (in the *Tale of Bygone Years*<sup>9</sup>) as a result of divisions into smaller units. It is not always easy to answer the question if these names of tribes constituted an expression of their self-awareness, of their sense of being distinctive from the others, or if they were an expression that came from outside.

The largest number of names for tribal groups is provided in the *Description of Cities and Lands North of the Danube*.<sup>10</sup> Tribes sitting fairly close to the border of the Empire were rather well identified (Bethenici, Morici or Morizani, Hevelli, Czechs, Moravians, Lusitzi, and others). We can assume that the names that can be explained can be grouped in several segments. Some originate from rivers (Buzhans, Vistulans, Hevelli), others from tribes or groups organized in fairly stable formations destined to survive through the next centuries (Obotrites, Volhynians, Silesians, Milceni), and others undoubtedly from eponyms (Dadosesani, possibly Czechs). It could have been the consequence of these settlements being formed at various stages of development, but at the current state of our knowledge, it is difficult to explain their origin. We could attempt to explore whether these territories had borders and how well they were defined. It appears that on more populated lands, there were borders demarcating the territory of each tribe. Possibly on lands with less dense population, with great forests, there were only approximate areas of tribal influence. We should explore the question to what degree the existence of borders created during the centuries places where neighbours met and exchanged information rather than erected barriers to communication; whether the existence of borders separating different forms and customs was in fact a condition of development not only of economy, trade, and transfer of various information, but also of culture in a wider sense? Acquiring knowledge of the world, knowledge of “others” and at the same time the possibility of better defining oneself and describing one’s own identity.

Translated by Elżbieta Olechowska

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<sup>9</sup> Called also *Russian Primary Chronicle*, a history of Kievan Rus’ compiled in 1113 by St. Nestor the Chronicler.

<sup>10</sup> See Bavarian Geographer, *Descriptio civitatum et regionum ad septentrionalem plagam Danubii*.

Anna Skolimowska

**Records of Friendship on the Threshold  
of a Diplomatic Career:  
Nardino Celinesse's *Propempticon*  
& Caspar Ursinus Velius' *Genethliacon*,  
Poems Dedicated to Ioannes Dantiscus**



Anna Skolimowska

## Records of Friendship on the Threshold of a Diplomatic Career: Nardino Celineses' *Propempticon* & Caspar Ursinus Velius' *Genethliacon*, Poems Dedicated to Ioannes Dantiscus

**I**oannes Dantiscus, a humanist and diplomat originally from Gdańsk, *secretarius regius* in the service of Polish rulers from the first half of the sixteenth century, was an eminent member of *Respublica Litteraria*. Sources consistently present him as an extremely sociable man with good people skills, which was unquestionably an asset in his public activity, whether as an envoy to the courts of Europe or later, when he was a bishop in Prussia.

If one wanted to create hypothetical “Dantiscus’ *album amicorum*,” the main source should be his extensive correspondence. In his times, contacts through correspondence were the main tool of communication. They enabled the educated élite to pursue academic, political, and commercial activity and maintain personal relationships with both family and friends.

So far, an enormous number of 656 people who corresponded with Dantiscus have been recorded in the project called “Registration and Publication of the Correspondence of Ioannes Dantiscus (1485–1548)” that has been carried out for over 25 years at the University of Warsaw, initially under the direct leadership of Professor Jerzy Axer and currently under his friendly guidance. At least a few dozen of these people may be counted among Dantiscus’ close friends. He maintained the closest relations, as reflected in both the content of letters and the intensity and regularity of contacts, with Alfonso de Valdés, Cornelis De Schepper, Jan Zambocki, Nikolaus Nibschitz, Andrzej Krzycki (Andreas Cricius), Jost Ludwig Dietz (Iustus Ludovicus Decius), and Sigmund von Herberstein. Among the scholars that he patronized, his closest ties were with the prematurely deceased Hebrew scholar Jan van Campen. He also had friendly relations with a mathematician and physician from Lovanium, Gemma Frisius, with whom he exchanged letters about the astronomical discoveries of Nicolaus Copernicus, among other topics. He had a less systematic exchange of correspondence, though one testifying to close relations, with people such as Erasmus of Rotterdam, the Swiss scholar Joachim von Watt (Vadianus), the English politician and bishop Thomas Cranmer, and the Spanish conquistador Hernán Cortés. Dantiscus had more formal but undoubtedly intensive and also friendly relations with his long-time superiors at the royal chancellery – Maciej Drzewicki and Piotr Tomicki, with the young Ermland canon Stanisław Hozjusz (Hosius), and with a great many other people.

Dantiscus' friends who were authors and addressees of poetic letters form a special group. They include Caspar Ursinus Velius, Janus Secundus, Helius Eobanus, and Georg Sabinus. The recent discovery of a hitherto unknown *propempticon* – a farewell poem for Dantiscus – by an Italian humanist from Friuli, Nardino Celinese, allows us to add the latter's name to this hypothetical *album amicorum*.<sup>1</sup>

The poem survives on pages 65v–66v of manuscript ms. 18.L.13 housed at the Biblioteca Istituto Campana (BIC) in Osimo, a small town in central Italy, not far from Ancona. The manuscript, comprising 75 folios and entitled *Quaedam opera Publii Nardini Celinei Foroiulii*, contains different pieces written by Nardino Celinese during the time of his stay in Zadar (ca. 1508–1521).<sup>2</sup>

The poem dedicated to Dantiscus is a panegyric praising the addressee as well as his patron of the time – the Emperor. We know nothing about the circumstances in which Celinese met the humanist from Gdańsk. Our ignorance is compounded by a shortage of biographical information on Celinese himself. We only know that he was an active teacher in Zadar, Dalmatia, in the early sixteenth century and that he wrote Latin poems.

We can speculate that Dantiscus and Celinese met at the imperial court during or shortly after the Congress of Vienna in 1515. Dantiscus was thirty-years old and this was the starting point of his international career. He had already made himself known as a neo-Latin poet and skilled orator, which, as we know, led the Emperor to grant him a number of honourable titles. The *propempticon* makes reference to these events.

The poem is composed of twenty-three elegiac distichs. A Latin transcript with an English translation is provided in Appendix 1. From the first eight distichs we learn how the gods have taken care of the diplomat from Gdańsk since he was born. The beauty of his body and spirit at the moment of his birth was ensured by Aphrodite and the Muses, his lips were shaped by Pythian Apollo himself, who also taught him the poetic metres on the lofty peak of Parnassus. The young man drew copiously from the springs of Helicon while his guardians, the Muses, gave him nectar to drink. Thanks to the teachings of Pallas, he also achieved the height of oratory art. His skills match the rhetorical skills of the ancients – Isaeus and Carneades. This introductory segment manifests some similarities with the *genethliacon* written for Dantiscus' thirty-first birthday (November 1, 1516) by Caspar Ursinus Velius. The resemblance is not so much in the phraseology, but rather in the flow of thought and learned rhetoric – the *genethliacon*

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<sup>1</sup> The author was informed of the existence of this poem by Prof. Neven Jovanović from the University of Zagreb, cf. Neven Jovanović, “The Zadar Elephant and Mosquito: The Polemic of Nardinus Celineus and Palladius Fuscus”, *Colloquia Maruliana* 23 (2014), pp. 13–27. The author's thanks go to Neven Jovanović and Branko Jozić from the research project *Croatica et Tyrolensia – A Digital Comparison of Croatian and Tyrolean Neo-Latin Literature*, financed by the Croatian UKF fund in 2013–2015, for providing a reproduction of the poem's manuscript.

<sup>2</sup> Among others, these include a longer epic poem called *De bello Gallico*, elegies, letters, epigrams, epitaphs, and also an oration and a dialogue (cf. Lorenzo Calvelli, “L'opera letteraria di Nardino Celinese. Storia di un codice ritrovato”, *Aquileia Nostra* 74, 2003, pp. 558–584).

is written in the form of a prophecy uttered by Apollo at Dantiscus' birth while also praising his physical and mental qualities and his achievements at the imperial court.<sup>3</sup>

One might wonder, therefore, if the first words of Celinese's poem do not echo the piece by Ursinus. If that were so, we would have to date our *propempticon* after 1516, near the end of Dantiscus' stay at Maximilian's court, i.e. in the summer of 1517. It is quite probable, though, that Celinese's poem might have inspired Velius to put the words of his *genethliacon* in honour of his friend into Apollo's mouth. Thus the poem of Celinese would be created before November 1516. This chronology seems more justified, but the dating of Celinese's piece is not entirely clear.

Information about the poet's laurels ("coronatus lauro" – crowned with laurel), and maybe also about Emperor Maximilian having ennobled Dantiscus ("praecinctus auro" – sashed with gold), is woven into the sixth distich of the *propempticon*. Further on in the poem, there is a mention of Dantiscus' completed mission to Venice ("Carneadem oratorem attoniti stupuere Quirites / Nec minus Euganei te stupuere patres" – The Quirites listening to Carneades were dumbstruck with delight. The Eugeanean fathers were no less amazed listening to you). We also learn that at the time the poem was written, Dantiscus was setting off or had already set off on his next such mission. Its aim was to counteract the threat from Turkey by achieving consensus between the Christian rulers. It could have been Dantiscus' second mission to Venice, which he undertook on Emperor Maximilian's behalf in early July 1516. By this time Dantiscus was already a "poet laureate," a fact indirectly corroborated by the address formula of a letter dated May 4, 1516 that he got from the imperial counsellor and secretary Paulus Obersteiner.<sup>4</sup> Perhaps he had already received his poet's laurels during the Congress of Vienna, in the summer of 1515. However, as it appears, Emperor Maximilian did not enoble the Polish King's secretary until early November 1516. The patent of nobility has not survived. Dantiscus mentions this honour as something new and extraordinary in a group of letters from the end of 1516. He also recalls it more than a year later in a letter to imperial secretary Jakob Spiegel asking him to commend his person to the Emperor who earlier "decorated him with the title of nobility and knighthood and also with the reward of laurels and a title in law."<sup>5</sup>

The date of this distinction is determined on the basis of the same group of letters, whose signatures contain the formula "doctor of both laws, poet laureate, knight of Jerusalem, dubbed knight" ("iuris utriusque doctor, poeta laureatus, eques Hierosolymitanus, eques auratus") or segments therefrom. We find signatures with this formula in five letters from Dantiscus dated between November 5 and December 18, 1516,

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<sup>3</sup> The text of this little-known piece, with a translation, is provided in Appendix 2 at the end of this paper.

<sup>4</sup> *Clarissimo viro, domino Ioanni Dantisco, poetae laureato, serenissimi et clementissimi Poloniae regis secretario, amico tamquam fratri meo observando. In Bolzano (Corpus of Ioannes Dantiscus' Texts & Correspondence, <http://dantiscus.al.uw.edu.pl>, ed. by Anna Skolimowska and Magdalena Turska with collaboration of Katarzyna Jasińska-Zdun, consulted July 28, 2015 – hereafter cited as CIDTC – IDL 931).*

<sup>5</sup> Dantiscus to Jakob Spiegel, Cracow, February 4, 1518: [...] *pro sua singulari clementia patricia et equestri dignitate laureae praeterea et iurium fascibus me decoravit* (CIDTC, IDL 6247).



addressed to three recipients: Sigmund von Herberstein – a diplomat in the Emperor’s service (three letters),<sup>6</sup> Fabian Luzjański – the Bishop of Ermland of the time, and Joachim von Watt (Vadianus). In the two last letters, Dantiscus clearly makes fun of the pompous nature of the titles he recently was granted. He writes to Luzjański:

Videbit, scio, tantum meum, quo me subscripsi, titulum Paternitas Vestra Reverendissima, et ideo ut videret, me enim ipsum rideo, subscripsi.

I know that Your Most Reverend Grace will see the extensive title which I have signed myself as. I have done it precisely so that [Your Honour] might see it, for I laugh at myself.<sup>7</sup>

To Vadianus, he remarks:

Operae pretium duxi magnificum titulum meum Theophr(a)stice subscribere. Ridebis etc.

I decided it was worth signing myself like Theophrastus, with my magnificent title. You will laugh, etc.<sup>8</sup>

Thus, if we interpret the expression “*praecinctus auro*” as an allusion to Dantiscus being dubbed a knight and receiving a coat-of-arms from the Emperor, the dating of the *propempticon* have to be moved forward to an unspecified time after the ennoblement ceremony. In that case, however, it would be hard to identify the mission for which Dantiscus received the *propempticon*.

In summary, the most likely conclusion seems to be that with this poem Nardino Celinese bade farewell to Dantiscus setting off on his second mission to Venice, early in the summer of 1516. Whether he wrote a continuation of the panegyric, as promised in the final distich, after Dantiscus’ return, we do not know. We can assume, though, that his *propempticon* served as inspiration for Caspar Ursinus Velius when he wrote his *genethliacon* in October of the same year, for the thirty-first birthday of his friend and showed himself a worthy rival of the Italian panegyrist from Zadar.

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<sup>6</sup> The following signatures are found in the letters to Sigmund von Herberstein, Augsburg, November 5 and 21, December 1: *Ioannes Dantiscus eques Ierosolymitanus, doctor etc., serenissimi Poloniae regis secretarius* (CIDTC, IDL 119); *Eiusdem Generositatis Vestrae obsequentissimus Ioannes Dantiscus, eques Ierosolymitanus, doctor etc., serenissimi Poloniae regis nuntius et secretarius* (CIDTC, IDL 121); *Eiusdem Generositatis Vestrae deditissimi Ioannes Dantiscus, doctor etc., serenissimi Poloniae regis nuntius et secretarius* (CIDTC, IDL 123).

<sup>7</sup> Dantiscus to Fabian Luzjański, Augsburg, 19 November 1516, signed: *Eiusdem Paternitatis Vestrae Reverendissimae humillimus Ioannes Flaxbinder Dantiscus iuris utriusque doctor, poeta laureatus, eques auratus, serenissimi Poloniae regis nuntius et secretarius apud caesaream maiestatem* (CIDTC, IDL 120).

<sup>8</sup> Dantiscus & Hieronymus Hämerlin of Laugingen & Caspar Ursinus Velius to Joachim von Watt, Augsburg, November 15, 1516, signed: *Ioannes Dantiscus, eques Hierosolymitanus, utriusque iuris doctor, poeta laureatus, canonicus Varmiensis, serenissimi Poloniae regis etc. nuntius et secretarius, tuus tamen qualiscumque* (CIDTC, IDL 4904).



## Appendices

Appendix I

*Propempticon* dedicated by Nardino Celinese to Ioannes Dantiscus  
[June 1516?]

Manuscript source: Biblioteca Istituto Campana (BIC) in Osimo, ms. 18.L.13, pp. 65v–66v  
Web publication: CIDTC, IDL 7047

**P(ublius) N(ardinus) C(elineus)  
Dantisco poetae et oratori cl(arissi)mo  
s(alutem) p(lurimam) d(icit)**

Audivi fando nec me vaga fama fefellit  
Flexanimum Pytho<sup>a</sup> labia fovere tua

Et tibi nascenti Charites castamque Dyonem  
Corporis atque animi composuisse decus.

5 Hoc decus aluit cors Musarum, exceptit alendum,  
Blandae Meletheo nectare pavit apis.

Largius hausisti dulces Tytharesidas undas  
Et quas excussit Belorofontis(!) equus.

10 Te super excelso Parnassi vertice montis  
Edocuit numeros pulcher Apollo suos.

Inde, coronatus lauro praecinctus et auro,  
Duxisti Aonidum per iuga summa choros.

Nec satis hoc fuit: ascendisti Palladis arces  
Occurritque libens in tua vota dea.

15 Isaeo quales dicendi tradidit artes,  
Dantisco tales docta Minerva dedit.

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<sup>a</sup> Pytho *perhaps* instead of Pythium or instead of Pythona (which is unacceptable due to the metrical reasons).

**P. Nardino Celineo**  
**cordially salutes**  
**illustrious poet and orator Dantiscus**

I heard it said, and I was not deceived by a dubious rumour,  
that your lips are formed by the moved Pythian,

and that when you were born, the beauty of your body  
and soul were formed by the Charities and chaste Dione,<sup>9</sup>

and a court of Muses fed that beauty, took it in its care  
and gave it the kind bee's Meletean<sup>10</sup> nectar to drink.

You drew copiously from the sweet waves of the river Titaressos<sup>11</sup>  
and also from the spring<sup>12</sup> that burst from under the hooves of Bellerophon's horse.

Beautiful Apollo taught you his metres  
on the lofty peak of Parnassus.

Hence, crowned with laurel and sashed with gold,  
you led choirs of the Aonides<sup>13</sup> across the high mountain ridges.

Still it was not enough – you entered the castles of Pallas,  
and the goddess gladly met your wishes.

Learned Minerva gave Dantiscus the same speaking  
skills as she presented to Isaeus.

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<sup>9</sup> Dione – here Aphrodite.

<sup>10</sup> Meletean – of or belonging to Meles, a river in Ionia, where Homer was born, poet. = Homeric (Melete – one of three Muses – the other two are Mneme and Aoide – originally worshipped in Helicon).

<sup>11</sup> Titaressus fluvius, Titaresius fluvius – Titarsios (Sarandaporos), a river in Greece.

<sup>12</sup> Aganippe (Hippocrene) – in Greek mythology, a spring that burst forth from the foot of Helicon – home of the Muses – at the stroke of Pegasus' hoof.

<sup>13</sup> Aonides – Muses.

- Carneadem oratorem attoniti stupuere Quirites  
Nec minus Euganei te stupuere patres.
- 20 Obstupuit caesar de rebus magnis agentem  
Atque ostendentem publica nostra mala,
- Quae vafer Othomanus per multos intulit annos  
Atque inferre minax terribisque parat.
- Huic cessit Bellona ferox et clara triumphis,  
Quae Latii quondam gloria Martis erat.
- 25 Qua sol exoritur, medium qua fertur in orbem,  
Cum populis urbes plurima regna tenet,
- Cetera in Europa quae nobis pauca supersunt,  
Vel furto sperat vincere sive dolo,
- Induperatoris nomen sibi praedo superbus  
30 Vendicat et mundum credit haerere manu.
- Communem tu quaeris opem, tu regibus instas,  
Expergiscantur paeniteatque morae,
- Unanimes incant bellum terraque marique,  
Vicibus accendant proelia quisque suis
- 35 Et contra insurgant crudelem fortiter hostem  
Turcarumque animos et fera corda doment.
- Tanta est tibi animi gravitas et gratia linguae,  
Ut vel discordes conciliare queas,
- Victrices aquilas et formidata movere  
40 In commune bonum caesaris arma potes,
- Auspiciis cuius festa cum pace redibunt  
Aurea libertas, unica religio.
- Quare tam pulchrum factu fierique necesse  
Humano generi perfice laudis opus.
- 45 Interea exspecto, ut rebus feliciter actis  
Incolumis redeas, tunc ego magna canam.

Τέλος

The Quirites listening to Carneades were dumbstruck with delight,  
the Euganean fathers<sup>14</sup> were no less amazed listening to you.

The Emperor was dumbstruck [seeing you] acting on great matters  
and indicating our public misfortunes,

which the cunning, dangerous and terrifying Turk  
brought for many years and is readying now.

To him [i.e. the Sultan] succumbed ruthless Bellona,  
famous for victories, who once was the pride of Latin Mars.

He [i.e. the Sultan] possesses many kingdoms, towns, and peoples,  
where the sun rises and where it travels above half the world.

He expects to defeat with robbery or cunning the small  
remaining lands, that we still have in Europe.

The haughty invader demands the title of emperor for himself  
and believes he holds the world in his hand.

You demand a joint effort and force kings  
to awaken and regret their delay,

so that they unanimously join the war on land and at sea,  
and so that each of them gives the battle cry,

and so that they bravely rise against the cruel enemy  
and subdue the 'Turks' souls and wild hearts.

You have such power of spirit and charm of speech,  
that you can even lead opponents to reconciliation.

For the common good, you are capable of moving the victorious eagles  
and the Emperor's formidable troops.

Under his auspices, together with joyful peace, golden liberty,  
and the single religion will return.

Therefore complete your glorious work,  
so beautiful and needed by the human race,

meanwhile I wait for you to return in good health,  
having successfully fulfilled your mission, and then will extol [your] great deeds.

The end

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<sup>14</sup> *Patres Euganei* – Senate of the Republic of Venice.

Appendix 2

***Genethliacon* dedicated by Caspar Ursinus Velius to Ioannes Dantiscus  
[November 1, 1516]**

Early prints:

1. *Casparis Vrsini Velii e Germanis Slesii poematum libri quinque*, Ioannes Froben, Basel, 1522, *Epistolarum liber*, f. qr–q3r (this print served as the basis of this edition).

NB: In the copy of this edition housed in the library of the Complutense University, Velius' *genethliacon* in honour of Dantiscus includes handwritten marginal notes made by Diego Gracián de Alderete, Dantiscus' son-in-law.<sup>15</sup> In the copy in question, marginalia are present next to just this one poem dedicated to Dantiscus (disregarding vertical lines or crosses here and there next to other works from the volume). On a blank page at the end of the print in question, the same hand that wrote the marginal notes in the *genethliacon*, copied a poem by Pittorio, *De Christo Crucifixo*.<sup>16</sup> Under Pittorio's poem is a note made in a different hand (no doubt one of Gracián and Juana Dantisca's numerous children): "de mano de mi Padre el Secr(etari)o Di(eg)o Gracian" [= in the hand of my father, secretary Diego Gracián].

Gracián's notes in part explain some of the more obscure references to ancient figures in the poem, and in part – and much more interestingly – refer to Dantiscus himself. In line 21 Gracián also makes a correction, changing "tuos" to "notos" (despite this causing an error of prosody!). As a result of the correction, the erotic poems to Prospera mentioned by Velius are no longer proof of Dantiscus' personal amorous fire ("ignes tuos"), but allegedly describe some kind of widely known romantic affairs ("ignes notos"). It is worth noting that Gracián also made this correction in the text of the *genethliacon* in a printed version of which he was the publisher. In a volume of his father-in-law's religious hymns, which he published in Salamanca in 1571, he cites Velius' poem as supplementary material about Dantiscus.<sup>17</sup> Thus, the intention behind the correction must have been to protect the good name of Dantiscus as the author of hymns, and indirectly also the honour of his daughter and son-in-law, i.e. Gracián himself.

Coming back now to the notes Gracián made on the copy of the Velius edition: in the lower margin of the q1v–q2r two-page spread, Gracián also quotes an excerpt from Giovanni Pontano's *Ad amicos Hierosolymam proficiscentes*,<sup>18</sup> obviously a reference to Dantiscus' pilgrimage to the Holy Land described by Velius.

Gracián's marginalia (except the quotation from Pontano mentioned above) are provided below in the critical apparatus.

<sup>15</sup> The writing of the author of these notes is identical to the autographs of Gracián's letters to Dantiscus, cf. e.g. CIDTC, IDL 2969.

<sup>16</sup> [Luigi Bigi Pittorio], *Pictorii sacra et satyrica epigrammata*, Basileae, 1518, p. 3.

<sup>17</sup> See below, early printed publication No. 2.

<sup>18</sup> *Felicemque locum iacuit quo rector Olympi / Et quam divino sanguine tinxit humum / Hic ubi crudeli traiectus brachia ferro est / Fixit et immeritos cuspis adacta pedes / Hausit et immeritum latus heu ferratile telum / Diluit et fustus crimina nostra cruor* (Giovanni Pontano, *Carmina: Ecloghe, elegie, liriche*, ed. by Johannes Oeschger, Bari: Laterza, 1948, p. 275).

2. *Hymni aliquot ecclesiastici, variis versuum generibus, de Quadragesimae Ieiunio & sex eius diebus Dominicis, deque horis Canonicis Christi passionis tempore & de resurrectione, Ascensione, Spiritus Sancti missione, matreque gloriosissima Maria Virgine, recens aediti. Autore perillustrissimo ac Reverendissimo Domino Ioanne de Curiis, Dantisco: olim Serenissimi Regis Poloniae Oratore apud Maximilianum et Carolum Imperatores: ac post Episcopo primum Culmensi, deinde VVarmiensi, Salamanticae, 1571, f. A7v + 2 pp. not numbered.*
3. *Ioannis de Curiis Dantisci episcopi olim Varmiensis poemata et hymni e Bibliotheca Zalusciana*, ed. by Johann Gottlob Boehme, Vratislaviae, 1764, pp. 297–300.

Web publication: CIDTC, IDL 6256.

**C. Vrsini Velii**  
**Genethliacon Ioannis Dantisci poetae clarissimi**

- Natali, Dantisce, tuo pia sacra frequentet,  
    Quisquis Castalio lavit in amne caput.
- Personet aurata cithara praedulcis Agileus<sup>b</sup>  
    Et carmen solito laetius ore canat.
- 5 Illo Pierides saltent cantante sorores  
    Et sua cum Phoebi carmine mixta sonent.
- Adsit adhuc pedibus surisque madentibus Evan<sup>c</sup>  
    Nuper ab expresso praela peruda mero.
- Altera post decimam lux haec trieterida nobis,  
10     Annua lux partus conscia grandis adest.<sup>d</sup>
- Tale vel hoc carmen pariturae ad limina matris  
    Divino Clarius protulit ore deus.
- Nascere felici, puer o pulcherrime, fato,  
    Tantum non Phoebio pulchrior et Bromio.
- 15 Et tibi formoso crescant in corpore vires,  
    Membra lacertosis sint bene firma toris.
- Qualis erat, cum victor ovans, Tirynthius heros<sup>e</sup>,  
    Aurea ab Hesperio mala dracone tulit.
- Et celebrer scriptis et factis clarus habetor.  
20     Carmina Peligno<sup>f</sup> proxima lude seni.

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<sup>b</sup> Agileus *underlined and explained in the margin in the hand of Diego Gracián de Alderete (hereinafter abbreviated as DGA)*: id est Apollo.

<sup>c</sup> Evan *underlined and explained in the margin in the hand of DGA*: id est Bacchus.

<sup>d</sup> Next to this distich marginal note in the hand of DGA: id est 31 annorum aetas tunc Dantisci.

<sup>e</sup> Tirynthius heros *underlined and explained in the margin in the hand of DGA*: id est Hercules.

<sup>f</sup> Peligno *underlined and explained in the margin in the hand of DGA*: id est Ovidio.



**Caspar Ursinus Velius**  
**On the birthday of Ioannes Dantiscus, famous poet**

May everyone who has dipped his head in the Castalian spring  
celebrate your – Dantiscus – birthday.

May sweet Agileus<sup>19</sup> play the golden zither  
and may he sing a merrier song than usual.

Around the singer, may the Pieride sisters<sup>20</sup> dance,  
and may their song mingle with the [song] of Phoebus.<sup>21</sup>

May Evan<sup>22</sup> come with feet and ankles still dripping  
wine freshly pressed with a juice-spurting press.

The day is approaching for us, the second day after the tenth three years,  
an anniversary day, witness of a magnificent birth.

This is the song that Clarius<sup>23</sup> sang with his divine lips  
at the door of the mother in labour:

O most beautiful boy, you are born under a lucky sign,  
less beautiful only than Phoebus and Bromius,<sup>24</sup>

and may you gain strength in your shapely body,  
may your limbs be powerful with strong muscles.

Such was the Tirynthian hero<sup>25</sup> when, as a triumphant victor,  
he brought the golden apples from the Hesperian dragon.

Be famous for your writing, and shine with your deeds.  
Make up songs worthy of the Pelignian elder.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> Agileus – Apollo.

<sup>20</sup> Pieride sisters – Muses.

<sup>21</sup> Phoebus – Apollo.

<sup>22</sup> Evan – Dionysius.

<sup>23</sup> Clarius – Apollo.

<sup>24</sup> Bromius – Dionysius.

<sup>25</sup> Tirynthian hero – Hercules.

<sup>26</sup> Pelignian elder – Ovid.

- Prima tuos<sup>g</sup> ignes recitabunt ludicra: toto  
Prospera versiculis vivet in orbe tuis.
- Tristia post laetos vulgabis carmina versus  
Et dices patrio praelia facta solo.
- 25 Signaque Sarmatici victricia regis et arma,  
Vidit Pellaei quae ducis ara, canes,
- Arma per infecti disiecta Boristhenis undas  
Cumque suis armis corpora vasta virum.<sup>h</sup>
- 30 Magna tibi semper fulgebit gratia regum,  
Quorum munificas experiere manus.
- Tum peregre populos varios visurus et urbes  
Ibis et externis gentibus hospes eris,
- Cymbrica namque leges prima, formose, iuventa  
Litora, permensus Baltheon ante fretum,
- 35 Acre virum genus et validos Saxones adibis,  
Omne per Hercynium progrediare nemus.
- Innumeros late populos gentesque videbis,  
Quas claudunt gelidis Rhenus et Ister aquis.
- 40 Italiae posthac et opes miratus et urbes,  
Audebis vastos per maris ire sinus.
- Alcinoi veteres primum mirabere sedes,  
Alta tibi hospitium deinde Zacinthus erit
- Atque Epidaurus, ubi serpentis imagine cultus  
Indigenis Phoebos natus in aede fuit,

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<sup>g</sup> tuos corrected into notos in the hand of DGA.

<sup>h</sup> In the margin next to ll. 23–28, annotation in the hand of DGA: bellum contra Moschovitas quod Rex Sigismundus congressit.

First you will announce your amorous fire in amusing rhymes  
thanks to which Prospera<sup>27</sup> will be known in all the world.

After joyful poems you will send out sad songs  
and recount battles waged in your native land.

And you will extol the victorious regiments of the Sarmatian King,<sup>28</sup>  
and the arms seen by the altar of the Pellan Duke,<sup>29</sup>

weapons scattered on the waves of murky Boristhenes,<sup>30</sup>  
and with the weapons the powerful bodies of men.

Great favour of kings will always shine on you,  
you will experience the generosity of their hands.

Then you will travel far to see different nations and towns,  
and be a guest of foreign peoples,

in your first youth, o beautiful, you will sail the Cimbric<sup>31</sup> coast,  
having earlier crossed the Baltic Sea.

You will also reach a bold people, the powerful Saxons,  
having traversed the whole Hercynian Forest,<sup>32</sup>

you will see numerous nations and peoples that the Rhine  
and Ister<sup>33</sup> surround with their cold waters.

Next, amazed at the riches and towns of Italy,  
you will dare journey across the vast bays of the sea.

First you will admire the old seats of Alcinous,  
then high Zacynthus will be your home,

and Epidaurus, where in the temple the cult of Phoebus  
in the form of a snake was born among the indigens,

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<sup>27</sup> Prospera – the Dantiscus' paramour, cf. letter from Jan Zambocki to Dantiscus, Cracow, Aug. 16, 1527: "Prosperam tuam, dum castra sequitur, Leopoli esse mortuam" (CIDTC, IDL 362). Dantiscus' erotic poems addressed to Prospera mentioned here have not survived.

<sup>28</sup> Sarmatian King – King Sigismund I of Poland; cf. Ioannes Dantiscus, *De victoria Sigismundi contra Moschos sylvula* (CIDTC, IDP 21; *Ioannis Dantisci poetae laureati Carmina*, ed. Stanisław Skimina, Cracoviae: PAN, 1950, No. 15, pp. 60–63).

<sup>29</sup> Pellan Duke – Alexander of Macedon.

<sup>30</sup> Boristhenes – the Dnieper River.

<sup>31</sup> Cimbric – Danish.

<sup>32</sup> Hercynian Forest – Schwarzwald, or perhaps the Sudetes.

<sup>33</sup> Ister – the Danube River.

45 Atque Rhodon Phoebos claram et magno Iove Creta  
Et Cypron Idaliae regna superba deae.

Et Syriae populos et inhospita vasta videbis,  
Qua non aequoreo tutius extat iter.

50 Quin et adorabis sacrum quo condita passi  
Lurida sarcophago membra fuere Dei,

Quaeque Palaestinas loca sunt veneranda per oras  
Bethlemiumque larem Calvariaeque solum.<sup>i</sup>

Denique Trinacriam fumantemque ignibus Aetnam  
Conspicies, Siculo praeteriture freto.

55 Claram et Parthenopen peragrabis et Appula iuxta  
arva et Campani rura beata soli

Atque orbis dominam victi mirabere Romam,  
Quicquid et in tota visitur Ausonia.

60 Mox iterum regumque aulis regumque vacabis  
Conciliis, regum laus erit arma sequi.

Regius Augusti vives orator in aula  
Iussus ad Euganeos<sup>j</sup> saepius ire patres.<sup>k</sup>

Ista quidem mediis iam tum perfeceris annis  
Pectus et ingenium testificata tuum,

65 Cum decorata sacrae lambent tua tempora laurus,  
Caesaris invicta munera lata manu.

Quod reliquum est vitae spatium, nam longa beato  
Pollicita est facilis stamina Parca tibi,

70 Curret id omne tibi feliciter et tenor unus,  
Unus erit vitae cursus ubique tuae,

Et non est oneri tibi sera futura senectus,  
Sed viridis, sed quae rara venire solet.

Ipse tuas augebit opes, augebit honores  
Rex tuus, ingrata ni volet esse manu.

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<sup>i</sup> *In the margin of f. q2r annotation in the hand of DGA, relating to ll. 31–52: Peregrinatio Hierosolymitana Domini Ioannis Dantisci Iuvenis adhuc.*

<sup>j</sup> *Euganeos underlined and explained in the margin in the hand of DGA id est Venetos.*

<sup>k</sup> *In the margin next to ll. 57–60, annotation in the hand of DGA: Dantisci legatio ad Venetos nomine Caesaris Caroli V (!).*

and you will see Rhodes, made famous by Phoebus, and Crete – by the great Jove,  
and Cyprus – the proud kingdom of the Idalian goddess.<sup>34</sup>

You will also see the peoples and inhospitable deserts of Syria,  
the road across which is no safer than that across the sea.

You will pray where the pale members  
of martyred God were laid in the tomb,

and in all the places worthy of veneration in Palestine,  
in the temple of Bethlehem, in the land of Calvary.

Finally, as you sail across the Sicilian Strait,<sup>35</sup>  
you will see Trinacria<sup>36</sup> and Etna breathing fire.

You will traverse famous Naples and the Apulian fields lying nearby,  
and the rich villages of the Campania region.

You will also admire Rome – the mistress of the vanquished world –  
and everything there is to see in all of Ausonia.

Soon you will return to the courts of kings and to royal councils,  
and following the army of kings will win [you] glory.

You will live as a royal envoy at the court of Augustus<sup>37</sup>  
with orders often to visit the Euganean fathers.<sup>38</sup>

What you achieve midway through [your] years  
will testify to your heart and your mind,

when your decorated temples are encircled with the gift of the holy laurel,  
brought by the Emperor's invincible hand.

The rest of your life – for friendly Parca  
has promised you, fortunate man, a long thread –

will all pass by happily, and there will be one thread,  
always the same course of your life,

and approaching old age will not be a burden to you,  
but [will be] robust, which seldom happens.

Your King will increase your wealth and honours,  
if he does not want to seem ungrateful.

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<sup>34</sup> Idalian goddess – Venus.

<sup>35</sup> Sicilian Strait – Strait of Messina.

<sup>36</sup> Trinacria – Sicily.

<sup>37</sup> Augustus – Emperor Maximilian I.

<sup>38</sup> Euganean fathers – Senate of the Republic of Venice.

75 Sic cecinit Phoebus. Phoebo cessante sorores  
Lanificae nivei staminis orsa trahunt.

Solvebat magnum Lucina facillima partum  
Et positum est utero dulce parentis onus.

80 Natus es in lucem, lux o generosa tuorum.  
Felicem o genium terque quaterque tuum.

Natus es auspiciis diis et Iunone secunda,  
Fila quater vitae terque beata tuae.

Sed iam, convivae, plausum date, pocula sumat  
Quisque simul mecum et talia voce sonet:

85 Vivat io Dantiscus, io laetum exigit aevum!  
Vivat io patriae, vivat io ille suis!

Est bene, non votis optamus inanibus ista,  
Risit et optatis annuit ipse deus.

Thus sang Phoebus. When Phoebus departed,  
the weaver sisters pull the ends of the white thread.

The most sympathetic Lucina<sup>39</sup> freed a marvellous foetus  
and the sweet burden was placed on the mother's bosom.

You were born to the world, o noble light of yours!  
Three and four times fortunate is your genius!

You were born under the auspices of the gods and with Juno's help;  
three, four times blessed are the threads of your life.

But applaud now, fellow banqueters! May everyone raise  
their cup with me and sing these words:

Hey! Hail Dantiscus! Hey! May he live a joyful life! Hey!  
May he live for his homeland! Hey! May he live for his [near and dear]!

All is well, we do not express these wishes in vain,  
[for] the god himself has smiled and concurs with them.

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<sup>39</sup> *Lucina* – Juno, patron of births.





Jerzy Styka

*Inter amicos inter aequales...*  
**The Reflections of Sidonius Apollinaris  
(Fifth Century AD) on the Élite  
Consciousness of Gallo-Roman Nobles  
in the Period of Barbarian Invasions**



Jerzy Styka

## *Inter amicos inter aequales...* The Reflections of Sidonius Apollinaris (Fifth Century AD) on the Élite Consciousness of Gallo-Roman Nobles in the Period of Barbarian Invasions

The letters of Sidonius Apollinaris, one of the most important Roman authors of the fifth century AD, are an example of a special relationship: one arising from common artistic ideals, coloured with the feelings of friendship, with traces of patriotism, devotion to the beauty of traditional culture and to the classical language. A huge role in cultivating this special relationship in a time of anxiety was played by an exchange of correspondence, with the poet's own works of poetry and spectacular declamations added. From the testimonies preserved in Sidonius' letters, a particular picture emerges: an image of cultural attitudes and of behaviours limited to the minority, marked by elitism and detachment in relation not only to the barbarian world (which was, like in the case of Sidonius treated as a civilization standard), but also to the uneducated Romans undergoing cultural barbarization. The Gallo-Roman educated élite, composed mainly of the representatives of local aristocracy, mainly the senatorial and clerical families, who were attached to the Roman state and the traditional Latin culture and highly appreciative of intellectual and artistic values, was very aware of their alienation in the wilderness of rampant barbarism; the greater their desire to maintain close ties (at least epistolary ones) with like-minded people.<sup>1</sup>

These men were united – regardless of social ties resulting from their membership in the aristocratic élite – by feelings of personal friendship, underpinned by similar education and shared artistic ideals.<sup>2</sup> This is proved by, among other things, Sidonius' letter III 7 addressed to Felix, a close friend and the former praetorian prefect in Gaul, a patrician of the Roman Empire. Sidonius complains of the long silence of his friend, who is absorbed with his many duties as a statesman. The author alludes to their long-standing friendship, the fact that should lead Felix to break the stubborn silence, even if he is immersed in study in the privacy of some library or participates in some

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. Nina Gradowicz-Pancer, "L'honneur oblige. Esquisse d'une cartographie des conduites et des stratégies de l'honneur aux V<sup>e</sup> et VI<sup>e</sup> siècles," *Revue Belge de Philologie et d'Histoire* 74.1 (1996), pp. 273–293.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Antoni Swoboda, *Pojęcie przyjaźni w listach św. Paulina z Noli i św. Sydoniusza Apolinarego. Studium porównawcze*, Poznań: Papieski Wydział Teologiczny, 1995.

important council, expecting, on his part, to hear from Sidonius, as Felix apparently believes his friend to have greater skills in writing letters:

Longum a litteris temperatis. Igitur utrique nostrum mos suus agitur: ego garrigo vos tacetis. Unde etiam, vir ad reliqua fidei officia insignis, genus reor esse virtutis tanto te otio non posse lassari. Ecquid numquamne respectu movere familiaritatis antiquae, ut tandem a continuandi silentii proposito pedem referas? Aut nescis quia garrulo non respondere convicium est? Tu retices vel bybliotheacarum medius vel togarum et a me officium paupertini sermonis expectas, cui scribendi, si bene perspicias, magis est facilitas quam facultas.<sup>3</sup>

For a long time you have refrained from writing. Each of us then observes his own practice: I chatter, you keep silence. And so, as you are conspicuously diligent in the performance of every other obligation that a sense of duty imposes, I really think that your tireless endurance of that long inactivity must be a kind of virtue. Will you never be moved by regard for our old intimacy to shift from your resolution of perpetual silence? Or do you not know that to give no answer to a chatterer is to revile him? You, deep in your library or immersed in civil business, you never write me a line: but from me you expect the service of a letter, a jejune letter – from me who (a perceptive critic will note) have a facility, not a faculty, for composition.<sup>4</sup>

The role of friendly sentiments in the reception of literary works is proved by letter III 14, addressed to Placidus. Here, Sidonius focuses on literary matters related to his own creativity. He is greatly pleased with the news received from mutual friends: Placidus supposedly finds special pleasure in reading Sidonius' works, both prosaic and poetic:

Quamquam te tua tenet Gratianopolis, comperi tamen hospitem veterum fido relatu quod meas nugas sive confectas opere prosario seu poetarum stilo cantilenosas plus voluminum lectione dignere repositorum. Gaudeo hoc ipso, quod recognovi chartulis occupari nostris tum tuum; sed probe intellego quod moribus tuis hanc voluptatem non operis effectus excudit sed auctoris adfectus, ideoque plus debeo, quia gloriae punctum, quod dictioni negares, das amicitiae.<sup>5</sup>

Although you are still detained in your beloved Gratianopolis, I have ascertained by the trustworthy report of old friends that you are kind enough to esteem my poor writings (whether fashioned in prose or warbling in poetic style) more highly than the reading of the rolls that are stored in your cases. This itself is a delight to me, to have learnt that my sheets occupy your leisure hours; but I quite realise that it is not the effectiveness of the work but affection for the author that produces such an enjoyment in a nature like yours; and

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Sidonius, *Epist.* III 7.1.

<sup>4</sup> Sidonius, *Poems and Letters*, transl. W.B. Anderson, vol. II: *Letters*, Books III–IX, Cambridge, Mass.–London: Harvard University Press (Loeb), 1984, pp. 29–31.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. Sidonius, *Epist.* III 14.1.

so I am all the more in your debt, because you grant to friendship an award of distinction which you would be bound to refuse to the composition in itself.<sup>6</sup>

In the above statement, Sidonius clearly underlines the importance of friendship as the basis for Placidus' positive approach to his work.<sup>7</sup> It is a post-Neoteric feature to promote the work of friends who share the same artistic ideals. This attitude leads to the rejection of criticism derived from outside one's own literary circle, as it is considered overtly unfair and devoid of factual basis.<sup>8</sup> Continuous friendship as a feature of the aristocratic ethos is repeatedly emphasized in the letters of Sidonius. We see it in the congratulations that Sidonius sent in 469 AD to his friend Magnus Felix, a descendant of a patrician family of the Filagrii. His father held the consulate in 460 AD, while Felix himself, who gained the position of the prefect, was also given the rank of patrician.<sup>9</sup> A characteristic feature of Sidonius' congratulations is the highlighting of the faithful friendships that Felix maintained despite his high social and official position:

Gaudeo te, domine maior, amplissimae dignitatis infulas consecutum. Sed id mihi ob hoc solum destinato tabellario nuntiatum non minus gaudeo; nam licet in praesentiarum sis potissimus magistratus et in lares Philagrianos patricius apex tantis post saeculis tua tantum felicitate remeaverit, invenis tamen, vir amicitiarum servantissimae, qualiter honorum tuorum crescat communione fastigium, raroque genere exempli altitudinem tuam humilitate sublimas.<sup>10</sup>

I am delighted, my honoured lord, that you have gained the insignia of the most exalted dignity; and I am no less delighted that the news has been sent me by a special messenger; for though you are at present a magistrate of the highest rank and through your success alone the patrician honour has found its way back after so many generations to the house of the Philagrii, yet you, with your characteristic regard for the claims of friendship, find ways of enhancing the greatness of your lofty dignities by geniality, and in a fashion far from common you raise your elevation still higher by a lowly spirit.<sup>11</sup>

The durability of friendship is discussed also in a letter to Polemius (IV 14), the praetorian prefect in Gaul. The epistle emphasizes the immutability of this feeling, regardless of the distinguished position. After quoting the words of the commander Germanicus (cited by Tacitus, the ancestor of Polemius), who could be considered a friend of Vespasian, until the latter became emperor, Sidonius writes:

<sup>6</sup> Sidonius, *Poems and Letters*, vol. II: *Letters*, Books III–IX, p. 59.

<sup>7</sup> Cf. Swoboda, *op. cit.*, pp. 513–517.

<sup>8</sup> Cf. Jerzy Styka, *Studia nad literaturą rzymską epoki republikańskiej. Estetyka satyry rzymskiej. Estetyka neoteryków*, Kraków: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego, 1994, pp. 105–106.

<sup>9</sup> Cf. Frank-Michael Kaufmann, *Studien zu Sidonius Apollinaris*, in: "Europäische Hochschulschriften," Reihe III "Geschichte und ihre Hilfswissenschaften" 681, Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 1995, pp. 306–308.

<sup>10</sup> Cf. Sidonius, *Epist.* II 3.1.

<sup>11</sup> Sidonius, *Poems and Letters*, transl. W.B. Anderson. Vol. I: *Poems, Letters*, Books I–III, Cambridge, Mass.–London: Harvard University Press (Loeb), p. 437.

‘Quo respicit,’ ais, ‘ista praefari?’ Ut scilicet memineris eo tempore, quo personam publicam portas, gratiae te privatae memorem semper esse oportere. Biennium prope clauditur, quod te praefectum praetorio Galliarum non nova vestra dignatione sed nostro affectu adhuc vetere gaudemus.<sup>12</sup>

“What,” you ask, “is the object of the preamble?” It is to make you remember that you ought, when wearing an official dignity, to be ever mindful of your private friendship. For almost two whole years I have rejoiced to see you praetorian prefect of Gaul – not because of your new rank but because of our old friendship.<sup>13</sup>

Cultivating a close intimacy is also warranted by the friendship between ancestors. This fact is clearly recognized in the letter to Aquilinus (V 9). Here, Sidonius speaks very warmly of cordial friendship linking their grandfathers and fathers who shared a similar birth, education, dignity, feelings, and beliefs. Now, he says, the time has come for grandchildren whose friendship, according to the statement of Sidonius, is based on similar grounds:

Ventum ad nos, id est ventum est ad nepotes, quos nil decuerit plus cavere, quam ne parentum antiquorumque nostrorum per nos forte videatur antiquata dilectio. Ad hoc in similem familiaritatem praeter hereditariam praerogativam multifaria opportunitate compellimur; aetas utriusque non minus iuncta quam patria; unus nos exercuit ludus, magister instituit; una nos laetitia dissolvit, severitas cohercuit, disciplina formavit.<sup>14</sup>

Now it is the turn of us, the third generation, and it behoves us above all things to ensure that the affectionate friendship of our parents and of the ancients of our line should not by any chance seem to have been scrapped by us. Moreover, we are urged to cherish a like intimacy not only by our hereditary privilege but by many fortunate coincidences: our ages are no less near to one another than our birthplaces; the same school drilled us, the same master taught us, the same joys cheered us, the same strictness checked us, the same training moulded us.<sup>15</sup>

Conversely, the letter VII 14, written between 469–470 AD and addressed to the scholar Filagrius, a nobleman from the family of emperor Avitus, highlights the alienation of the intellectual élite in a sea of barbarism. He shows us on the one hand the gap between the educated people and the common crowd, while on the other it emphasizes the importance of letter exchange in supporting the spiritual bond. Sidonius relates a debate which took place in good aristocratic company (“inter summates viros”), on the topic of the excellent intellectual qualities of Filagrius. Some of those present, who knew Filagrius

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<sup>12</sup> Cf. Sidonius, *Epist.* IV 14.1.

<sup>13</sup> Sidonius, *Poems and Letters*, vol. II: *Letters*, Books III–IX, p. 117.

<sup>14</sup> Cf. Sidonius, *Epist.* V 9.3.

<sup>15</sup> Sidonius, *Poems and Letters*, vol. II: *Letters*, Books III–IX, pp. 201–203.

personally and who were, judging by the contents of the letter, less educated, were of the opinion that only direct contact with a person provides a good understanding of his or her spiritual and intellectual values. Sidonius strongly opposed such a view, believing that an uneducated neighbor is much more distant to an educated man than a man who lives far away, but with whom the spirit of community and education can be shared:

Proxime inter summates viros (erat et frequens ordo) vestri mentio fuit. Omnes de te boni in commune senserunt omnia bona, cum tamen singuli quique varia virtutum genera dixissent. Sane cum sibi quipiam de praesentia tua, quasi te magis nossent, praeter aequum gloriarentur, incandui, quippe cum dici non aequanimiter admitterem virum omnium litterarum vicinantibus rusticis quam institutis fieri remotioribus notioem.<sup>16</sup>

The other day, in a gathering of leading men (a well attended meeting of our order it was, too) your name came up. All the best people with once accord expressed the best possible opinion of you, though each individually mentioned various aspects of your excellence. When some actually plumed themselves unduly on their proximity to you as if they knew you particularly well I flared up, for I could not calmly admit the statement that such a consummate man of letters was better known to his rustic neighbours that to men of learning who lived farther away.<sup>17</sup>

When facing these obstinate and ignorant people (Sidonius calls them “idiotae”), the author insists that the lack of personal acquaintance does not preclude an in-depth knowledge of a learned man, because the fruits of his mind could reach the remote corners of the world and that the bond formed by the exchange of letters and other writings and created thanks to the use of a pen is so strong that it can even surpass the feeling occurring in direct communion:

Processit in ulteriora contentio; et cum aliqui super hoc errore pervacaciter controversarentur (idiotarum siquidem est, sicut facile convinci, ita difficile compesci), constanter asserui, si eloquentibus amicis numquam agnitio contemplativa proveniat, esse asperum, utcumque tolerabile tamen, quia praevalent ingenia sua, coram quibus imperitia civica peregrinantur, ad remotarum desideria provinciarum stilo adminiculante porrigere; per quem saepenumero absentum dumtaxat institutorum tantus colligitur affectus, quantus nec praesentanea seduliate conficitur.<sup>18</sup>

The argument extended itself still further; and as some stubbornly disputed about his false notion (for the trouble about the uninstructed is that, though it is easy to refute them, it is difficult to quell them), I stoutly maintained that, if a merely visual acquaintance between friends who have the gift of words can never be complete success, it was indeed a hard misfortune in any circumstances,

<sup>16</sup> Cf. Sidonius, *Epist.* VII 14.1.

<sup>17</sup> Sidonius, *Poems and Letters*, vol. II: *Letters*, Books III–IX, p. 373.

<sup>18</sup> Cf. Sidonius, *Epist.* VII 14.2.

but it may be rendered tolerable by the fact that, with help of the pen, such men are able to extend to eager recipients in distant provinces the thoughts of their minds, in the presence of which their ignorant compatriots are like strangers in a strange land. Through the medium of the pen there is often formed between people separated by wide distances – at any rate between people of education – such a great affection as even assiduous personal attentions cannot produce.<sup>19</sup>

These remarks are followed by Platonizing philosophical considerations on the superiority of the spirit over the flesh. The latter, in fact, in terms of efficiency and ability to overcome difficulties is surpassed even by the better-equipped bodies of animals. It is thanks to the former that man has dominion over nature and remains the only creature that has the ability to discriminate between truth and falsehood typical for a truly rational soul:

Nam illud, sicuti ego censeo, qui animum tuum membris duco potiozem, non habet aequalitatem, quod statum nostrum supra pecudes veri falsique nescias ratiocinatio animae intellectualis evexit; cuius si tantisper summoveant dignitatem isti, qui amicos ludificabundi non tam iudicialiter quam oculariter intuentur, dicant velim in hominis forma quid satis praestans, quid spectabile putent.<sup>20</sup>

But, as I hold, who consider your soul more precious than your body, all that is of minor importance, because the reasoning faculty of an understanding mind has raised us above the beasts of the field, who do not know true from false. If the importance of this reasoning power is, even for a moment, suppressed by these mockers whose view of their friends is derived, not from reasoned judgment, but from the outward eye, I should like them to state what they think specially outstanding and remarkable in the human frame.<sup>21</sup>

Conversely, Sidonius ponders the gradation of minds, develops the criticism of sensory perception and a theory of the various states of animal and human consciousness, this time proposing a Peripatetic thesis about the superiority of an educated mind, subjected to the rigors of intellect, over a natural talent:

Nam sicut animae humanitus licet ratiocinantes, hebetes tamen pigrioresque prudentum acutarumque calcantur ingenio, ita si quae sunt, quae sola naturali sapientia vigent, hae peritarum se meritis superveniri facile concedunt.<sup>22</sup>

[...] for just as some minds, though they reason in human fashion, are dull and rather sluggish and so are overtrodden by the ability of minds which are both wise and clever, so those which derive their strength only from natural

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<sup>19</sup> Sidonius, *Poems and Letters*, vol. II: *Letters*, Books III–IX, pp. 373–375.

<sup>20</sup> Cf. Sidonius, *Epist.* VII 14.4.

<sup>21</sup> Sidonius, *Poems and Letters*, vol. II: *Letters*, Books III–IX, p. 377.

<sup>22</sup> Cf. Sidonius, *Epist.* VII 14.8.



wisdom readily admit that they are eclipsed by the superior merits of highly trained intelligences.<sup>23</sup>

A good way to know the mind of another man is to imitate his external behaviour. Here, Sidonius consider himself a faithful follower of Filagrius. They both have a predilection for people who are balanced, though Sidonius admits that he does not avoid the lazy, either. Filagrius stays away from the barbarians, because of the notoriety surrounding them; Sidonius keeps away from them even if they are considered to be good. Sidonius, like his friend, is fond of reading; like Filagrius, he tries to cultivate his piety and refrains from desiring someone else's property. Finally, what is most important for the present paper, Filagrius enjoys the company of educated people. Similarly, Sidonius calls the common and uneducated crowd, no matter how great: the greatest loneliness ("maxuma solitudo"):

Amas, ut comperi, quietos, ego et ignavos. Barbaros vitas, quia mali putentur; ego, etiamsi boni. Lectioni adhibes diligentiam; ego quoque in illa parum mihi patior nocere desidiam. Complex ipse personarum religiosi; ego vel imaginem. Aliena non appetis; ego etiam refero adquaestum, si propria non perdam. Delectaris contuberniis eruditorum; ego turbam quamlibet magnam litterariae artis expertem maxumam solitudinem appello.<sup>24</sup>

You love quite people, I find; I love even the lethargic. You shun barbarians because they are reputed bad; I shun them even if they are good. You devote great attention to reading; I, too, do not permit indolence to damage me there. You fill the rôle of an ecclesiastic; I represent at least the shadow of one. You do not covet the possessions of others; I count it gain if I do not lose my own. You delight in gatherings of the learned; to me, any assembly, however large, which is devoid of literary talent seems a complete wilderness.<sup>25</sup>

It would be difficult to find a stronger statement of artistic elitism, which despises uneducated crowd on the basis of Callimachaen aestheticism; in Rome, this aesthetic attitude was shared not only by the Neoteric poets,<sup>26</sup> prone to imitate the Alexandrian manner, but also by the classicizing Horace, the author of the sentence: "Odi profanum vulgus et arceo."<sup>27</sup> The importance of élite scholarship is stressed by Sidonius also in the letter to Arbogast, mentioned above (IV 17). There he expresses a belief in the superiority of the educated people over the untaught: the educated stand as much above the ignorant as do humans above animals:

<sup>23</sup> Sidonius, *Poems and Letters*, vol. II: *Letters*, Books III–IX, p. 381.

<sup>24</sup> Cf. Sidonius Apollinaris, *Epist.* VII 14.10.

<sup>25</sup> Sidonius, *Poems and Letters*, vol. II: *Letters*, Books III–IX, pp. 382–383.

<sup>26</sup> Cf. Styka, *Studia nad literaturą rzymską epoki republikańskiej*, pp. 106–107 (*Estetyczny manifest neoteryków* [The Aesthetic Manifesto of the Neoteric Poets]).

<sup>27</sup> Cf. Hor. *Carm.* 3.1.1.

Quapropter alternum salve rependens granditer laetor saltim in illustri pectore tuo vanescentium litterarum remansisse vestigia, quae si frequenti lectione continuas, experiere per dies, quanto antecellunt beluis homines, tanto anteferri rusticis institutos.<sup>28</sup>

For this reason, as I reciprocate your greeting, I rejoice greatly that at any rate in your illustrious breast there have remained traces of our vanishing culture. If you extend these by constant reading you will discover for yourself as each day passes that the educated are no less superior to the unlettered than men are to beasts.<sup>29</sup>

The great importance of academic and literary studies for Sidonius is proved by letter III 10, addressed to the scientist Tetradius. In the letter, Sidonius asks him to help a young man by the name of Teodorus, from a distinguished family (“vir illustris”), in his studies. Sidonius is of the opinion that such young men get the glory for themselves, whenever in doubt they seek advice from scholars and when they not only try to increase their knowledge, but also want to share this knowledge with others:

Plurimum laudis iuvenes nostri moribus suis applicant quotiens de negotiorum suorum meritis ambigentes ad peritorum consilia decurrunt, sicuti nunc vir clarissimus Theodorus, domi quidem nobilis, sed modestissimae conversationis opinione generosior, qui per litteras meas ad tuas litteras, id est ad meracissimum scientiae fontem laudabili aviditate proficiscitur, non modo repturus illic ipse quod discat sed et forsitan relaturus inde quod doceat.<sup>30</sup>

Our young men reflect great credit on their character when, being uncertain how they stand in certain matters of business, they have recourse to the counsels of the experienced. So it is at the present moment with Theodorus, a man of the class of Honourable, who is a nobleman by birth, but also has the still higher rank derived from the reputation of a well-disciplined life. With my letter to introduce him, he is now betaking himself, with laudable eagerness, to your lettered erudition, that is, to the purest possible fount of knowledge, in the hope not only of finding there something for himself to learn but also perhaps of carrying away something to teach others.<sup>31</sup>

The sense of elitism and of uniqueness of the literary and academic production of his friends is accompanied in Sidonius’ writings by the belief in the great benefits and pleasures that draw people to develop such passions. Literary studies, as he writes in a letter to Ruricius (VIII 10), provide young man with proper preparation for public activities, as they form a great style in a speaker:

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<sup>28</sup> Cf. Sidonius, *Epist.* IV 17.2. See also the commentary of David Amherdt, *Sidoine Apollinaire, Le quatrième livre de la correspondance. Introduction et commentaire*, “Sapheneia, Beiträge zur Klassischen Philologie,” Bern–Berlin–Bruxelles–Frankfurt a. Main: Peter Lang, 2001, p. 389.

<sup>29</sup> Sidonius, *Poems and Letters*, vol. II: *Letters*, p. 129.

<sup>30</sup> Cf. Sidonius, *Epist.* III 10.1.

<sup>31</sup> Sidonius, *Poems and Letters*, vol. II: *Letters*, Books III–IX, pp. 37–39.

Esse tibi usui pariter et cordi litteras granditer gaudeo. Nam stilum vestrum quanta comitetur vel flamma sensuum vel unda sermonum, liberius assererem, nisi, dum me laudare non parum studes, laudari plurimum te vetares.<sup>32</sup>

I rejoice greatly that literary pursuits are both profitable and congenial to you, but I should testify more freely to the glow of thought and the flow of language that accompany your writing, were it not that, while immensely anxious to praise me, you ban superlative praise for yourself.<sup>33</sup>

Obtaining an education provides opportunities to tackle difficult cases, which admittedly require more skill and effort, but also guarantee fame to the speaker:

Nam moris est eloquentibus viris ingeniorum facultatem negotiorum probare difficultatibus et illic stilum peritum quasi quendam fecundi pectoris vomerem figere, ubi materiae sterilis argumentum velut arida caespitis macri glaeba ieiunat.<sup>34</sup>

For eloquent men are accustomed to test the efficiency to their talent by difficult task: using their clever pen as the plough share of their fertile mind, they bring it to bear just where a subject consisting of sterile material grows starved on parched lean soil.<sup>35</sup>

In this context Sidonius recalls the examples of famous orators from the Roman past, who managed to prove their talents for oratory by undertaking very difficult tasks:

Sic et magnus orator si negotium aggrediatur angustum, tunc amplum plausibilis manifestat ingenium. Marcus Tullius in actionibus ceteris ceteros, pro Aulo Cluentio ipse se vicit. Marcus Fronto cum reliquis orationibus emineret, in Pelopem se sibi praetulit. Gaius Plinius pro Attia Viriola plus gloriae de centumvirali suggestu domum rettulit, quam cum Marco Ulpio incomparabili principi comparabilem panegyricum dixit.<sup>36</sup>

So also the great orator, if he tackles a troublesome business, displays his real talent more triumphantly. Marcus Tullius, while in his other pleading he surpassed all other speakers, in his defence of Aulus Cluentius supresses himself; Marcus Fronto won distinction by his other orations, but excelled himself in his speech against Pelops; Gaius Plinius by his speech for Attia Viriola took away with him from the centumviral tribunal more glory than when he delivered a panegyric that measured up to the matchless Emperor Trajan.<sup>37</sup>

<sup>32</sup> Cf. Sidonius, *Epist.* VIII 10.1.

<sup>33</sup> Sidonius, *Poems and Letters*, vol. II: *Letters*, Books III–IX, p. 451.

<sup>34</sup> Cf. Sidonius, *Epist.* VIII 10.2.

<sup>35</sup> Sidonius, *Poems and Letters*, vol. II: *Letters*, Books III–IX, p. 453.

<sup>36</sup> Cf. Sidonius, *Epist.* VIII 10.3.

<sup>37</sup> Sidonius, *Poems and Letters*, vol. II: *Letters*, Books III–IX, pp. 453–455.

He mentions Cicero's speech in defense of Aulus Cluentius together with the excellent fictitious declamation of Marcus Fronto against Pelops and the speech of Pliny the Younger in defense of Attia Viriola, which brought him more fame than his panegyric addressed to Trajan.

Learning opportunities in the fifth century in Gaul, especially in its second half, had already been significantly reduced. The letters of Sidonius, however, point at the living tradition of education in the region constantly threatened by barbarian invasions. He quotes quite detailed information about the curriculum of the grammar and rhetoric school of Eusebius in Arles ("Eusebianos lares" – *Epist.* VI) and about the activities of John, a teacher of grammar and rhetoric (*Epist.* VIII 2); these remarks sparked a debate among scholars over the actual condition of the grammatical and rhetorical schools in Gaul in the fifth century. Two main concepts prevail.

Firstly, Maurice Roger in his work, published in 1905,<sup>38</sup> was of the opinion that in the fifth century there were no more public schools at different levels of instruction, as no specific written sources confirm their existence; hence Sidonius' information about the school of Eusebius should be interpreted as referring to a private teaching institution ("intra lares") meant for a small group of students.

On the other hand, Pierre Riché, an influential specialist in culture and education of Late Antiquity, was convinced that the lack of sources does not prove the lack of public schools in Gaul, because there are many sources confirming the existence, in the cities of Gaul, of many traditional municipal institutions, active practically to the end of the fifth century; it seems rather plausible<sup>39</sup> that among them were also schools. Hence, we could assume that public education at different levels functioned in Southern Gaul at least until the disaster of 474 AD, when emperor Julius Nepos, in a peace treaty with Euric, king of the Visigoths, lost virtually all Gallic territories.

The functioning of public schools at that time in Gaul could also be proven by the aforementioned letter VIII 2, addressed to John the Grammarian and dated by André Loyen at about 478 AD, in which Sidonius enthusiastically praises John's activities. In the letter Sidonius notes that in the imminent times of barbaric domination, when the external degrees of dignity would disappear, only education will remain a sign of nobility: "solum erit posthac nobilitatis indicium litteras nosse."<sup>40</sup> The letter apparently seems to attest at least a limited functioning of grammatical and rhetorical schools in southern Gaul in the last decades of the fifth century; nevertheless, the youth of Sidonius was still a period in which, despite emerging threats, Roman rule at least in Southern Gaul did not seem to be significantly endangered and the cities of the region

<sup>38</sup> Cf. Maurice Roger, "L'enseignement des lettres classiques d'Ausone à Alcuin," *Annales de Bretagne* 21.3 (1905), pp. 351–353.

<sup>39</sup> Cf. Pierre Riché, "La survivance des écoles publiques en Gaule au V<sup>e</sup> siècle," *Le Moyen Âge* 63 (1957), pp. 421–443; see also Amherd, op. cit., pp. 80–81; Glanville Downey, "Erziehung und Bildung im spätrömischen Reich," in: Horst-Theodor Johann, ed., *Erziehung und Bildung in der heidnischen und christlichen Antike*, Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1976, pp. 549–572; Henri-Irénée Marrou, "L'école de l'antiquité tardive," in: eiusdem, *Christiana Tempora. Mélanges d'histoire, d'archéologie, d'épigraphie et de patristique*, Rome: École Française de Rome, 1978 (Publications de l'École Française de Rome 35), pp. 49–65.

<sup>40</sup> Cf. Sidonius, *Epist.* VIII 2.2.

enjoyed a traditional Latin culture.<sup>41</sup> It all helped Sidonius (and, indeed, the majority of the Gallo-Roman élite) to get a good education and to maintain the bilingual, Graeco-Roman cultural tradition. His literary culture and mythological erudition are not always profound, but for the conditions, under which he wrote his poetic works, they still remain rather highly sophisticated. Another important feature of the letters is the defense of the purity of Latin against barbaric influences and an elegance of cultivated poetic language, manifested in the tendency towards formal manipulation of carefully selected and artistically exquisite words – the so-called “gemmeus stilus.”

In the letter IV 12, written probably at the beginning of 471 AD, after receiving episcopal ordination, and sent to his relatives Simplicius and Apollinaris, Sidonius includes an interesting passage which deals with the joy of shared reading of poetry. Sidonius recalls the moments spent with his son on a parallel study of Terence’s comedy *Hecyra* (*Mother-in-Law*) and Menander’s comic drama *Epitrepontes* (*Men at Arbitration*), a comedy only partially preserved. The scene described can be considered a lesson in parallel reading of the old Roman author, recognized in Late Antiquity as a classic Latin poet, and of his Greek model; the lesson is conducted according to the scheme described by Aulus Gellius, in the *Attic Nights*, where he presented his impressions from the public parallel reading of Caecilius’ comedy *Plocium* and the corresponding Greek original by Menander.

Sidonius and his son read a more sophisticated author, Terence, whom the writer believed to be equal to Virgil, the greatest poet of pagan Rome. It is worth mentioning here a comment that Sidonius made at the end of the song addressed to the Emperor Majorian:

Nam nunc Musa loquax tacet tributo,  
 quae pro Vergilio Terentioque  
 sextantes legit unciasque fisci.<sup>42</sup>

For now my talkative muse is silenced by the tax, and culls instead of Virgil’s  
 and Terence’s lines the pence and halfpence owed to the Exchequer [...].<sup>43</sup>

In turn, song XXIII addressed to Consentius calls Terence the master of Roman comedy, recalling Plautus only at the second place and naming him “son of hard times”:

Et te, comica qui doces, Terenti,

<sup>41</sup> Cf. Pierre Riché, “La fin des écoles publiques en Gaule en V<sup>e</sup> siècle,” *Bulletin de la Société Nationale des Antiquaires de France* 1957, pp. 43–45. In the present context it could also be useful to mention the testimony of Ennodius in his *Paraenesis didascalica* (in his *Dictiones*). This prosometric treatise on the ways of acquiring education contains the discussion on the main branches of knowledge, studies by pupils: grammar, rhetoric, poetics, law, dialectics, and arithmetic and it proves that traditional schooling models were still in use in the fourth and fifth century.

<sup>42</sup> Cf. Sidonius, *Carmen* XIII, 35–37.

<sup>43</sup> Sidonius, *Poems and Letters*, vol. I: *Poems, Letters*, Books I–III, p. 217.

et te, tempore qui satus severo  
Graios, Plaute, sales lepore transis.<sup>44</sup>

[...] Terence, producer of comedies, Plautus, who though born in a serious age surpasses by his brightness the wit of the Greeks [...].<sup>45</sup>

Sidonius' respect for the comic mastery of Terence was not isolated in Late Antiquity. Ausonius, in his *Protrepticus ad nepotem* (*Protrepticus to His Grandson*), advised him to read the works of the three classics of Latin poetry – Horace, Virgil, and Terence:

Te praeunte, nepos, modulata poemata Flacci  
Altisonumque iterum fas est didicisse Maronem.  
Tu quoque, qui Latium lecto sermone, Terenti,  
Comis et adstricto percurris pulpita socco.<sup>46</sup>

My grandson, first it is proper to familiarize yourself with the melodious poems of Flaccus and later on with the grandiose-sounding Maro; also you, o Terence, a man of excellent speech, run through theatres and through Latium with your sandals undone.<sup>47</sup>

Similar is the case of Menander, the second poet cited by Sidonius: he was known in Late Antiquity as an artistic authority equal to Homer. The testimony from Ausonius in the *Protrepticus* quoted above proves that point:

Perlege, quodcumque est memorabile. Prima monebo.  
Conditor Iliados et amabilis orsa Menandri  
Evolvenda tibi.<sup>48</sup>

Read what is worth remembering. Firstly, I suggest  
That you read through the creator of *The Iliad*  
And the plays of charming Menander.<sup>49</sup>

Menander is the only Greek comic playwright whom Sidonius quotes and when he does, he emphasizes his uniqueness among the greatest poets of Greece, discussing, for example, in song IX the comic tone of Menander's plays ("non hic socciferi iocos

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<sup>44</sup> Cf. Sidonius, *Carmen* XXIII, vv. 147–149.

<sup>45</sup> Sidonius, *Poems and Letters*, vol. I: *Poems, Letters*, Books I–III, p. 293.

<sup>46</sup> Cf. Ausonius, *Protrepticus ad nepotem*, vv. 55–59; on the popularity of Terence in Late Antiquity see Heinz Marti, "Zeugnisse zur Nachwirkung des Dichters Terenz im Altertum," in: Udo Reinhardt, Klaus Sallmann, eds., *Musa locosa. Arbeiten über Humor und Witz, Komik und Komödie der Antike. Andreas Thierfelder zum siebzigsten Geburtstag am 15. Juni 1973*, Hildesheim–New York: Georg Olms Verlag, 1974, pp. 158–178.

<sup>47</sup> Transl. Aleksandra Kłęczar after J.S.

<sup>48</sup> Cf. Ausonius, *Protrepticus ad nepotem*, vv. 45–47.

<sup>49</sup> Transl. Aleksandra Kłęczar after J.S.

Menandri<sup>50</sup>) or recalling Menander as a judge for acting performances of his friend Consentius (“huic levato / palmam tu digito dares, Menander<sup>51</sup>”).

The scene presented in letter IV 12 shows the Apollinares, father and son, absorbed in a parallel reading of Terence and Menander. This picture seems to be realistic, although it is worth noting that in Latin epistolography there are earlier scenes showing a father reading together with his son and introducing him to the studies of Greek literature. Such a scene may be found in Symmachus, who was one of the main sources of epistolographic inspiration for Sidonius:

[...] dum filius meus Graecis litteris initiatur, ego me denuo studiis eius velut aequalis adiunxi.<sup>52</sup>

When my son was first learning Greek literature, I rejoined his studies as if I was his equal.<sup>53</sup>

As for the process of reading presented in the letter, it has a character of in-depth comparative reading of parallel passages from Terence’s *Hecyra* and Menander’s *Epitrepontes*. The son is holding the Latin text in his hand, while the father, yielding to his literary passion and oblivious to his episcopal consecration which prohibits him from reading pagan poets, holds the Greek comedy. The reading is very careful; Sidonius describes it using the metaphor of rumination (“ruminare<sup>54</sup>”) and it focuses on three objectives: to recognize forms of humour (“Hecyrae sales”), to study metric techniques (“rhythmi comici”), and to assess the similarity of content (“argumentum simile”):

Nuper ego filiusque communis Terentianae Hecyrae sales ruminabamus; studenti assidebam naturae meminens et professionis oblitus quoque absolutius rhythmos comicos incitata docilitate sequeretur, ipse etiam fabulam similis argumenti, id est Epitrepontem Menandri, in manibus habebam.<sup>55</sup>

The other day I and the son to all of us were browsing on the wit of Terence’s *Mother-in-Law*. I was seated beside him as he studies, following my natural inclination and forgetful of my sacred calling, and in order to spur his receptive mind and enable him to follow the comic measures more perfectly, I had in my own hands a play of similar content, the *Epitrepontes* of Menander.<sup>56</sup>

<sup>50</sup> Cf. Sidonius, *Carmen* IX, vv. 213.

<sup>51</sup> Cf. Sidonius, *Carmen* XXIII, vv. 129–130; on the popularity of Menander in Late Antiquity see also Pierre Courcelle, *Les lettres grecques en occident, de Macrobe à Cassiodore*, Paris: Editions de Boccard, 1948, pp. 238–239.

<sup>52</sup> Cf. Symmachus, *Epistula* IV 20.2.

<sup>53</sup> Transl. Aleksandra Kłęczar after J.S.

<sup>54</sup> It was used by Varro of Reate, familiar to Sidonius (*Men.* 60): “Odyssean enim Homeri ruminari incipis” (“Because you are starting to chew on the *Odyssey* of Homer”). See also Amherdt, op. cit., p. 312.

<sup>55</sup> Cf. Sidonius, *Epist.* IV 12.1.

<sup>56</sup> Sidonius, *Poems and Letters*, vol. II: *Letters*, Book III–IX, p. 111.

The achievement of these goals by Sidonius raises another important issue debated by scholars, as in the case of Sidonius' translations of the work of Philostratus, namely *The Life of Apollonius of Tyana* (VIII 3). Did Sidonius have a sufficient knowledge of Greek? The answer to this question is not easy. Specialists on the Roman cultural realities of the fifth century, André Loyen<sup>57</sup> and Pierre Courcelle,<sup>58</sup> assume (quite rightly, as it would seem) that Sidonius had a good knowledge of Greek. There are no reasons, in fact, to question their opinion. Good knowledge of Greek among the educated Gallo-Roman aristocracy was not something very unique. Sidonius himself mentions an excellent knowledge of Greek among his friends: Consentius of Narbonne, Leo, Lampridius of Bordeaux, or Claudianus Mamertus, whose education was comparable to his own.

It must therefore be assumed that Sidonius' enthusiasm resulting from him reading together with his son the works of Terence and Menander and the joy of reading poetry, clearly visible in the passage, is not only a ploy, meant to exalt the writer. Both of them – father and son – read their own text, praising its artistic value and toying with it, focusing primarily on the rhetorical confrontation of the sophisticated forms of humor, full of refined style and poetic meters:

Legebamus pariter, laudabamus iocabamurque et, quae vota communia sunt, illum lectio, me ille capiebat [...].<sup>59</sup>

We were reading, praising, and jesting together, and, such are the desires we all share, he was charmed with the reading, and I with him [...].<sup>60</sup>

In the élite literary circles of Sidonius there was also an evident belief of writers and poets, known from Homeric times, that through literary legacy one can secure immortality. This kind of attitude is reflected particularly in the letter VIII 5, addressed by Sidonius to his friend Fortunalis, a poet from Spain. The letter dates from the late seventies of the fifth century. Sidonius recognizes Fortunalis' literary achievements, whom he calls the pride of the Iberian lands, and claims that his name should survive thanks to his creativity:

Ibis tu in paginas nostras, amicitiae columen, Fortunalis, Hibericarum decus inlustre regionum; neque enim tibi familiaritas tam parva cum litteris, ut per has ipsas de te aliquid post te superesse non deceat. Vivet ilicet, vivet in posterum nominis tui gloria.<sup>61</sup>

You also shall find a place in my pages, Fortunalis, pillar of friendship, bright glory of Spanish lands; for your familiarity with letters is not so small that it

<sup>57</sup> Cf. André Loyen, *Sidoine Apollinaire et l'esprit précieux en Gaule aux derniers jours de l'empire*, Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 1943, pp. 26–28.

<sup>58</sup> Cf. Courcelle, *op. cit.*, p. 238.

<sup>59</sup> Cf. Sidonius, *Epist.* IV 12.2.

<sup>60</sup> Sidonius, *Poems and Letters*, vol. II: *Letters*, Books III–IX, p. 111.

<sup>61</sup> Cf. Sidonius, *Epist.* VIII 5.1.



would be wrong for you to have some degree of immorality through this letter of mine. So you see the glory of your name shall live on, yes it shall live for ages to come.<sup>62</sup>

It ought to be added that Sidonius is also convinced that his own works should survive and he suggests to Fortunalis that all the attractive features of his character would be preserved in his letters:

Nam si qua nostris qualitercumque gratia reverentia fides chartulis inest, sciat aetas volo postuma nihil tua fide firmitus, forma pulchrius, sententia iustius, patientia tolerantius, consilio gravius, convivio laetius, colloquio iucundius.<sup>63</sup>

For if my poor sheets have, in whatever way, anything to bring them favour, respect, or credit, I want future generations to know that there is nothing stronger than your faith, nothing more handsome than your person, nothing juster than your judgment, nothing more enduring than your patience, more weighty than your counsel, more cheerful than your company, more delightful than your conversation.<sup>64</sup>

The letter, which completes our reflections on the elitist attitudes, creativity, and studies in the literary circle of Sidonius Apollinaris, deals with an issue of particular importance for the aesthetics of ancient literary work, namely the freedom to use the works of other authors, defined as *imitatio auctorum*. Ancient Graeco-Roman culture had, in this respect, an attitude completely differing from modern laws. Free imitation and the use of works recognized as top achievements within a given genre were considered a highly desirable creative method. Such a method was supported by the existence of various canons, developed mainly in the Hellenistic age, which presented a perfect form of certain genres. The concept of plagiarism (“furtum”) was, in fact, known to the writers; however, it was not deemed important.<sup>65</sup> A belief developed already in Hellenistic times stated that to achieve an artistic resemblance to the ideal pattern, it is crucial to imitate art, not nature. This is clearly visible in Quintilian’s *Institutio Oratoria*:

Et hercule necesse est aut similes aut dissimiles bonis simus. Similem raro natura praestat, frequenter imitatio. Sed hoc ipsum, quod tanto feliciorem nobis rationem rerum omnium facit quam fuit illis, qui nihil quod sequerentur habuerunt, nisi caute et cum iudicio apprehenditur, nocet.<sup>66</sup>

By Hercules, we need to be either similar to the good examples or dissimilar to them. This similarity rarely comes from nature: more often it is a result of imitation. But by the very same process which makes it much easier for us to acquire rational knowledge about everything than it used to be for those who

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<sup>62</sup> Sidonius, *Poems and Letters*, vol. II: *Letters*, Books III–IX, p. 417.

<sup>63</sup> Cf. Sidonius, *Epist.* VIII 5.2.

<sup>64</sup> Sidonius, *Poems and Letters*, vol. II: *Letters*, Books III–IX, pp. 417–419.

<sup>65</sup> Cf. Edward Stemplinger, *Das Plagiat in der griechischen Literatur*, Leipzig: B.G. Teubner, 1912.

<sup>66</sup> Cf. Quint. *Inst.* 10.2.3.

had no examples to imitate, becomes harmful, if not applied carefully and with good judgment.<sup>67</sup>

In Roman literature the issue of *imitatio* was of fundamental importance. In case of poetry, as we know, the Roman literature started with the translations and adaptations of Greek originals.<sup>68</sup> Soon, however, simple translation and copying of Greek works ceased to satisfy Roman authors and audience. A new trend appeared, one that was continued to the very end of ancient Latin culture: the desire to create national counterparts of Greek literary genres, equal to the originals.<sup>69</sup> The letter of Sidonius (IV 16) addressed to (already well known to us) Ruricius, the bishop of Lemovices (Limoge) concerns some pathological forms of literary imitation, namely copying, without the knowledge of the author, of a large part of someone else's text. Sidonius found out, from his friend's letter, that the friend in question copied a book ("libellus") of Sidonius' writings, presumably letters; still, Sidonius sees no problem in that; he rather gives the impression of being pleased that the copies of his letters circulate among his friends.

Sidonius speaks very highly about the style of Ruricius' letter: by the use of the metaphor of honey ("mel") he emphasizes its sweetness, stemming from ornate style and variety, as well as its expressiveness, manifested in its witty jocularity ("sal").<sup>70</sup> He also expresses the supposition that these stylistic advantages result precisely from a secret reading ("lectio furiva") of the copied book:

Accepi per Paterninum paginam vestram, quae plus mellis an salis habeat incertum est. Ceterum eloquii copiam hanc praefert, hos olet flores, ut bene appareat non vos manifesta modo verum furtiva quoque lectione proficere. Quamquam et hoc furtum quod deprecaris extemplati libelli non venia tam debeat respicere quam gloria.<sup>71</sup>

I have received your letter by the hand of Paterninus. One could not say whether it has more of honeyed wetness or of the salt of wit; anyhow, it displays such fertility of utterance, and such fragrant flowers of style that you are clearly profiting not only from open but stealthy reading. Yet even this "theft," for which you apologise, of a book which you have copied out, must needs be matter for pride rather than for pardon

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<sup>67</sup> Transl. Aleksandra Kłęczar after Mieczysław Brożek.

<sup>68</sup> Cf. Scevola Mariotti, *Livio Andronico e la traduzione artistica*, Milano: Tipografia Giovanni de Silvestri, 1952; also Hans Eberhard Richter, *Übersetzen und Übersetzungen in der römischen Literatur*, Diss. Erlangen, Coburg: Coburg Tageblatt-Haus, 1938.

<sup>69</sup> Cf. Arno Reiff, *Interpretatio, imitatio, aemulatio. Begriff und Vorstellung literarischer Abhängigkeit bei der Römer*, Diss. Köln, Würzburg: Triltsch, 1959; also Andrée Thill, *Alter ab illo. Recherches sur l'imitation dans la poésie personnelle à l'époque augustéenne*, "Collection d'Études Anciennes," Paris: Belles Lettres, 1979.

<sup>70</sup> Cf. Amherd, op. cit., pp. 371–372.

<sup>71</sup> Cf. Sidonius Apollinaris, *Epist.* IV 16.1. See also Isabella Gualandri, *Furtiva lectio. Studi su Sidonio Apollinare*, Milano: Cisalpino-Goliardica, 1979, pp. 75–103.

Sidonius feels in no way aggrieved by Ruricius' abuse of his book; indeed, he himself was guilty of similar practices.<sup>72</sup> He rather believes it an advantage that his letters have contributed to significant improvements of his friend's style, the enhancement of the expressiveness of his letters and the development of his literary talent:

Ego vero quicquid impositum est fraudis mihi, utpote absenti, libens audio principalique pro munere amplector, quod quodammodo damnum indemne toleravi. Neque enim quod tuo accessit usui, decessit hoc nostrae proprietati aut ad incrementa scientiae vestrae per detrimenta venistis alienae. Quin potius ipse iure abhinc uberi praeconio non carebis qui magis igneo ingenio naturam decenter ignis imitatus es de quo si quid demere velis, remaneat totus totusque transfertur.<sup>73</sup>

For my part I am quite pleased to hear of the little trick played on me in my absence, and I welcome as a splendid gift the fact that I have, so to speak, sustained a loss which is no loss. For that which has gone to serve your use has not gone from my ownership, nor have you acquired an increase of your technical skill through the diminution of another's. On the contrary, you will henceforth with good right enjoy ample applause in that with your flaming genius you have fittingly chosen to imitate the character of fire; for one may seek to take from a fire, but the fire that is left and the fire that is removed are each a complete fire.<sup>74</sup>

The metaphor of fire, used at the end of his discourse by Sidonius, does more than just to emphasize the expressive style of Ruricius. Its last sentence very accurately captures the idea of ancient *imitatio auctorum* – the work that is imitated provides a source of unlimited inspiration itself, while remaining intact; at the same time, it allows the works of authors imitating it to burn with a brighter flame. The entire letter shows the

<sup>72</sup> Cf. the story of Sidonius' participation in copying illegally obtained speeches of bishop Remigius (mentioned in letter IX 7) or of similar copying of the treatise of Faustus of Riez, *De gratia* in letter IX 9, 8: "Quid multa? Capti hospitis genua complector, iumenta sisto, frena ligo, sarcinas solvo, quaesitum volumen invenio, produco, lectito, excerpto, maxima ex magnis capita defrustans. Tribuit et quoddam dictare celeranti scribarum sequacitas saltuosa compendium, qui comprehendebat signis quod litteris non tenebant" ("In short, I embraced the knees of my captured guest, stopped the horses, tied up their bridles, undid his baggage, and, finding the book I sought, drew it forth, read and re-read it, and made excerpts, picking out the greatest of those great chapters. I also secured some saving of time by the speed of the scribes in following my rapid dictation and denoting with signs what they did not compass by letters." Sidonius, *Poems and Letters*, vol. II: *Letters*, Book III–IX, pp. 537–539.). See Jerzy Styka, *Sydoniusz Apollinarius i kultura literacka w Galii V wieku*, "Prace Komisji Filologii Klasycznej PAU" 38, Polska Akademia Umiejętności: Kraków, 2008, pp. 273–274. See also Salvatore Pricoco, "Un esercizio di 'Parallelo' retorico (Sidonio, *Epist.* IV, 12, 1–2)," in: eiusdem, *Studi su Sidonio Apollinare*, Catania: Centro di Studi sull'Antico Cristianesimo, Università di Catania, 1965, pp. 113–140; and Jerzy Styka, "Estetyka rzymskiej palliaty," *Meander* 50.3–4 (1995), pp. 107–125; idem, "Lektury paralelne dzieł greckich i łacińskich w świadectwach autorów rzymskich," in: Waclaw Rapak, Jakub Kornhauser, Iwona Piechnik, eds., *De la lettre aux belles-lettres / Od litery i listu do literatury. Études dédiées à Regina Bochenek-Franczakowa / Studia dedykowane Reginie Bochenek-Franczakowej*, Kraków: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego, 2012, pp. 513–526.

<sup>73</sup> Cf. Sidonius, *Epist.* IV 16.2.

<sup>74</sup> Sidonius, *Poems and Letters*, vol. II: *Letters*, Books III–IX, p. 125.

elitist attitude of Sidonius, the creator and protector of threatened Latin culture, who cares greatly for its survival and propagation and who, for this purpose, is willing even to give up his copyright, as we would say today.

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The considerations above prove that Sidonius' concepts of elitist behaviour, creativity, and cultural-historical studies are most similar to the post-Alexandrian attitude. It is visible in his passion for the academic and literary study, in poetic self-awareness, also in the elitism of works addressed to a narrow circle of friends, the cult of artistic forms, in literary criticism based on the bonds of friendship and shared artistic ideals as well as his contempt for the crowd, uneducated and unaware of poetic and rhetorical tradition. The pro-Roman attitude of Sidonius, resulting from socio-political and cultural situation in the fifth century (mainly the diminishing area of Roman civilization, administration, education, and cultural life) is also clearly noticeable here.

In this context, the elitist attitude of Sidonius and similar Gallo-Roman aristocrats seems to have quite a real basis. At that time, not too many of such people remained highly educated both in classical Graeco-Roman and Christian traditions and in accordance with the age-old cultural practice of Rome, and in fact (although to varying degrees) bilingual. Hence Sidonius' incentive to defend the threatened Roman culture, addressed to his correspondents. He urges them to follow thorough literary studies, to practice their own creativity, to get actively involved in literary life – through correspondence, if direct contact is difficult. He stresses the importance of cultivating the purity of the classical Latin, threatened by the influx of barbarisms. All this should be done so that the voice of the Muses could still be heard in Gaul, even if the speakers would be only few.

Sidonius, like other highly educated representatives of the Gallo-Roman aristocracy, was actually aware of cultural decline, as shown by R.W. Mathisen,<sup>75</sup> but only in the quantitative, not qualitative sense. He and his contemporaries knew that there were fewer and fewer people with a profound knowledge of classical culture; still, they highly valued their own learning and erudition, and did not have an inferiority complex towards the artistic and literary achievements of earlier generations, sharing the view that their own work was still on a high level.

Translated by Aleksandra Kłęczar

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<sup>75</sup> Cf. Ralph Whitney Mathisen, *Roman Aristocrats in Barbarian Gaul. Strategies for Survival in an Age of Transition*, Austin: University of Texas Press, 1993, pp.105–110; see also of the same author: *The Ecclesiastical Aristocracy of Fifth-Century Gaul: A Regional Analysis of Family Structure*, PhD Diss., University of Wisconsin–Madison, 1979.

Robert A. Sucharski

**On Friendship and Cultural/  
Civilizational Matters Contrastively**

Friend



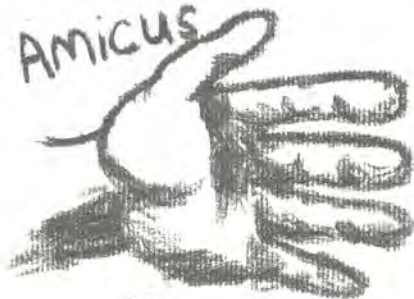
Inimicus



Foe



Amicus



Hospes



Obey



Host



Hostis

Robert A. Sucharski

## On Friendship and Cultural/ Civilizational Matters Contrastively

There might be only a few people who would oppose the statement that it is Cicero to whom we owe one of the best definitions of friendship, which later centuries inherited from Antiquity. We read in *De amicitia* (20):

Est enim amicitia nihil aliud nisi omnium divinarum humanarumque rerum cum benevolentia et caritate consensio, qua quidem haud scio an excepta sapientia nil quicquam melius homini sit a dis inmoratilibus datum.

For friendship is nothing else than an accord in all things, human and divine, conjoined with mutual goodwill and affection, and I am inclined to think that, with the exception of wisdom, no better thing has been given to man by the immortal gods.<sup>1</sup>

We know, of course, Cicero was not the first to write on friendship – it is quite easy to find in his work evocations of previous thoughts by Plato, Xenophon, Aristotle, or Theophrastus. Tully's merit may be, however, found not only and not necessarily in the lapidary elegance of his definition but rather in the perpetual, never ending echo of the past his words have produced.

When we look at the linguistic map of Europe around 500/600 AD (as known to us today),<sup>2</sup> we can see only a few language families belonging in the vast majority to the Indo-European community: Italic or already (pre-)Romance, Celtic, Germanic, Greek and Balto-Slavic, linguistically isolated indigenous Basque/Aquitanian, Turkic Bulgar and Khazar, Finno-Ugric dialects, and vernaculars of Picts (in the north of the Great Britain), and of Pannonian Avars, both not attributable with certainty to any language families (because of the lack of sources). It goes without saying that these language families are also fundamental for the linguistic map of Europe today despite many historical

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<sup>1</sup> Texts according to Cicero, *De senectute. De amicitia. De divinatione*, transl. William Armistead Falconer, London–Cambridge: Harvard University Press (Loeb), 1923, available at: <http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?doc=Perseus%3Atext%3A2007.01.0040%3Asection%3D20> (consulted March 6, 2015).

<sup>2</sup> Cf. e.g.: "Europa od upadku Cesarstwa Rzymskiego (476 r.) do końca VI w.," in: Elżbieta Olczak and Julia Tazbir, eds., *Wielki atlas historyczny*, Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Demart, 2003, pp.12–13.



and demographical events, which have taken place in the history of the continent, to name a few: the Arabian conquest of the Iberian Peninsula, the Hungarian invasion, the growth of the Ottoman Empire. Most inhabitants of today's European continent (roughly 740 million people – 2012<sup>3</sup>) speak either Germanic, or Romance, or Slavic languages as their first idiom, and each of these groups numbers more than 200 million users (roughly almost 30% of the entire European population).

It is hard not to notice that for many centuries one of the most important frontiers in Europe was the Roman *limes* separating the Roman Empire from *Barbaricum* – until the fall of the Western Roman Empire or slightly earlier, the migration of Germanic tribes and of the Slavs to the South *limes* was also the language border. On the southern side of *limes* Latin was used, and in the eastern part of the *Imperium Romanum* – apart from Latin – it was also Greek; Germanic, Celtic, and Balto-Slavic idioms dominated the North. Besides, *limes* was also a cultural barrier in any sense of the word. Until today the frontier between Europe of wine and Europe of beer,<sup>4</sup> and to some extent between Europe of olive oil and wheat, and Europe of butter/lard and rye coincides in unsettling ways with the reach of the Roman State. Ancient/Mediaeval Europeans living outside the Roman Empire, but on its outskirts, were all culturally united as in relation to the Germanic and Western Slavic tribes brilliantly argues Karol Modzelewski citing the works of Reinhard Wenskus.<sup>5</sup>

It is fascinating that some fundamental differences may even today be found also in the languages. Speakers of Slavic or Germanic languages, and at the same time Latin learners usually find it astonishing that etymologically the same word, which in their idioms has a neutral or even positive meaning: 'a stranger' that is 'a guest' (OCS 'гость,' Pol. 'gość,' Rus. 'гость,' BCS 'gost,' Goth. 'gasts,' Germ. 'Gast,' Swed. 'gäst'<sup>6</sup>), in Latin denotes 'an enemy' – 'hostis.'<sup>7</sup> As it seems very important that:

1. Germanic and Slavic meaning<sup>8</sup> is a primary one and the Latin word underwent a significant semantic change<sup>9</sup> (the remainder of the original/

<sup>3</sup> Cf. e.g.: <http://www.census.gov/population/international/data/idb/region.php> (consulted July 15, 2015).

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Norman Davies, *Europa. Rozprawa historyka z historią*, Kraków: Wydawnictwo Znak, 1998, p. 43, map 3. *Wschód-Zachód: linie podziału w Europie*.

<sup>5</sup> Karol Modzelewski, *Barbarzyńska Europa*, Warszawa: Iskry, 2004, passim, especially pp. 12–13.

<sup>6</sup> O(ld) C(hurch) S(lavonic) as the oldest Slavic literary language, Polish, Russian, and B(osnian) C(roatian) S(erbian) as representatives of three Slavic branches, Gothic as the oldest Germanic literary language and in the same time representative of East Germanic, German for West-, and Swedish for North Germanic.

<sup>7</sup> Dagmar S. Wodtke, Britta Irlinger, Carolin Schneider, *Nomina im indogermanischen Lexikon*, Heidelberg: Universitätsverlag Winter, 2008, p. 173, s.v. \**ghost(h<sub>2</sub>)i-* 'Fremder.'

<sup>8</sup> It has not been adequately proved that the Slavic word is a Germanic loan.

<sup>9</sup> Cf. James Mallory & D.Q. Adams, eds., *Encyclopedia of Indo-European Culture*, London: Fitzroy Dearborn Publishers, 1997, p. 249.



primary meaning can be found in the Latin word for ‘host’/‘guest’: ‘hospes’ < PIE. \**g<sup>h</sup>ost(i)-pot<sup>-10</sup>*),

2. the Baltic, being much closer to the Slavic, since both co-create a language sub-family, in order to denote ‘a guest’ uses a lexeme, which is a derivate of the pronominal root ‘his/her own’ (PIE. \**sue-*): Lith. ‘svetỹs’/‘svėčias,’ Lett. ‘svešs.’<sup>11</sup>

In Celtic the situation seems to be very far from certain: generally speaking the lexeme is not attested, although Lepontic might perhaps confirm the root in a personal name *Uvamokozis*, which means either ‘allerhöchste Gäste habend’ or ‘für den der Gast am höchsten ist.’<sup>12</sup>

Of course, there is no way to be sure why this type of semantic changes generally take place – one of the most commonly invoked hypotheses is the development of civilization coupled with it a tendency to isolate a growing community and restrict it to its own company:

It has been suggested that initially IE social customs required one to be more hospitable to strangers but with the progressive change in customs and experiences, especially the shift from societies based on interpersonal relations to ones governed by relationships within states, this duty was no longer observed and the original meaning of \**ghostis* changed dialectally according to the prevailing attitude towards strangers. It is evident from its usage in Latin that this involved an increasingly hostile relationship.<sup>13</sup>

We may thus conclude that the primordial ‘stranger’/‘guest’ has become in Latin ‘the enemy.’ Somehow naturally a question appears: who is then a friend? From the morphological point of view the Latin lexeme meaning ‘friend’ – ‘amicus’ (repeatedly attested as manifold already in works by Gnaeus Naevius<sup>14</sup>) is a verbal derivate formed upon the root ‘to love’ – ‘amare.’ The verb being a reflex of PIE stem \**h<sub>3</sub>mh<sub>3</sub>-* ‘to take

<sup>10</sup> Michiel de Vaan, *Etymological Dictionary of Latin and the Other Italic Languages*, Leiden–Boston: Brill, 2008, p. 291.

<sup>11</sup> Cf. Ernst Fraenkel, *Litauisches etymologisches Wörterbuch*, Band II. *privykėty – žvolgai*, Heidelberg–Göttingen: Universitätsverlag Carl Winter–Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1965, p. 952. Wojciech Smoczyński rejects such an interpretation, arguing “[d]la wywodu *sue-* z pie. \**sue-* brak jest jednak oparcia, ponieważ odnośna osnowa nie ma kontynuacji w bałtyckim zaimku” and suggests development “z ie. \**su.at-* <pie. \**h<sub>1</sub>su.at-* < (zanik lrg. w II członie złożenia) \**h<sub>1</sub>su-h<sub>2</sub>át-* < \**h<sub>1</sub>su-h<sub>2</sub>ét-*, znac. etym. ‘ten, kto przychodzi z dobrych zamiarach,’ in his *Lietuvių kalbos etimologinis žodynas*, Vilnius: Vilniaus Universitetas Filologijos Fakultetas, 2007, p. 618. What seems to be clear is the fact, that even if we accept Smoczyński’s views, the Baltic development thoroughly differs from the Slavic. Cf. also Rick Derksen, *Etymological Dictionary of the Baltic Inherited Lexicon*, Leiden–Boston: Brill, 2015, pp. 437–438.

<sup>12</sup> Wodtko, Irslinger, Schneider, *Nomina im indogermanischen Lexikon*, loc. cit.

<sup>13</sup> Mallory & Adams, eds., *Encyclopedia of Indo-European Culture*, loc. cit.

<sup>14</sup> Cf. fragment (v. 90) of the *Tarentilla*: *Nūnquam quisquam amico amanti amica nimis fiēt fidelis* (text after the edition: *Scaenicae Romanorum Poesis Fragmenta*, vol. 2, ed. Otto Ribbeck, Lipsiae: In aedibus B.G. Teubneri, 1898, available at: <http://latin.packhum.org/author/112>, consulted July 14, 2015).

hold of’ proves itself the semantic change: “[t]he Latin meaning [‘to love’ – R.A.S.] has developed from ‘to take the hand of’ > ‘regard as a friend’<sup>15</sup> and does once more confirm that it is the civilizational development that conduces to regard the people in the near as friends and the strangers as enemies. The ‘friend’ is thus ‘his/her own’ in the most narrow meaning of the phrase, i.e. the ‘friend’ is a human being whose hand you may hold. We can go even further, thanks to the Greek verb ‘ῥμνυμι’ – ‘to swear,’ which is an etymological counterpart: the ‘friend’ is a person to whom you may swear love, fidelity, faithfulness, since friendship – to come to back to Cicero – is nothing more than “omnium divinarum humanarumque rerum cum benevolentia et caritate consensio.”

Although the Greek word for ‘a friend’ – φίλος’ does not seem to be etymologically clear, we can reasonably assume “[t]he original meaning of φίλος was ‘own, accompanying’ rather than ‘beloved.’<sup>16</sup> We face therefore an interesting parallel: both Classical languages: Greek and Latin testify that ‘a friend’ is someone whom we can call ‘our own.’ Even more peculiarity we can find in the fact that the words in both languages actually coincide semantically but not etymologically. Outside the Roman *limes* situation changes. Again we face Germanic-Slavic concurrence: OCS. ‘приятель,’ Pol. ‘przyjaciół,’ Rus. ‘приятель,’ BCS ‘prijatelj,’<sup>17</sup> Goth. ‘frijonds,’ Germ. ‘Freund’<sup>18</sup> are verbal derivatives formed upon PIE stem \*prejH- ‘vertraut, lieb sein/werden’<sup>19</sup> and while the Nordic languages (e.g. Swed. ‘vän’) base their lexemes with the meaning ‘friend’ upon another stem \*ven (PIE \*uenH- ‘liebgewinnen’<sup>20</sup>), its meaning is very similar ‘gern haben, lieben, wünschen.’<sup>21</sup>

The Celtic differs again – the word meaning ‘a friend’ continues other stem than the words in Greek, Latin, Germanic, and Slavic, but – despite its uniqueness – the Celtic etymological meaning is much closer to those attested in *Barbaricum*. The reconstructed Pre-Celtic lexeme for ‘a friend’ sounds \*karant-. Its reflexes are alive in the modern Celtic languages (both: Gaelic and Brittonic) and from the morphological point of view it is a simple present participle of the verb ‘to love’ PIE \*keh<sub>2</sub>-ro.<sup>22</sup>

Europe therefore faces a curious dichotomy – in the languages spoken inside the *Imperium Romanum*, i.e. in Greek and Latin ‘a friend,’ is a person whom you possess, own, have, while in the Indo-European languages of *Barbaricum*, which we can attempt to analyze linguistically, ‘a friend’ means ‘someone whom you love/someone who loves

<sup>15</sup> De Vaan, *Etymological Dictionary*, p. 39.

<sup>16</sup> Robert Beekes (with the assistance of Lucien van Beek), *Etymological Dictionary of Greek*, vols. I–II, Leiden–Boston: Brill, 2010, p. 1574.

<sup>17</sup> Rick Derksen, *Etymological Dictionary of the Slavic Inherited Lexicon*, Leiden–Boston: Brill, 2008, pp. 419–420.

<sup>18</sup> Guus Kroonen, *Etymological Dictionary of Proto-Germanic*, Leiden–Boston: Brill, 2013, p. 155.

<sup>19</sup> LIV = *Lexikon der indogermanischen Verben. Die Wurzeln und ihre Primärstammbildungen* (bearb. von Martin Kümmel und Helmut Rix), Wiesbaden: Dr. Ludwig Reichert Verlag, <sup>2</sup>2001, p. 490.

<sup>20</sup> LIV, p. 682.

<sup>21</sup> *Wörterbuch der Indogermanischen Sprachen, Dritter Teil: Wortschatz der Germanischen Sprachheit* (by August Fick with contributions by Hjalmar Falk, entirely revised by Alf Torp in 1909 – electronic version created by Sean Crist, available at: [http://lexicon.ff.cuni.cz/pdf/pgmc\\_torp/pgmc\\_torp.pdf](http://lexicon.ff.cuni.cz/pdf/pgmc_torp/pgmc_torp.pdf), consulted July 24, 2015), p. 260.

<sup>22</sup> Ranko Matasović, *Etymological Dictionary of Proto-Celtic*, Leiden–Boston: Brill, 2009, pp.190–191.

you.’ If we add to such a conclusion an evident dislike and reluctance towards strangers vividly expressed in the Latin semantic change from ‘a stranger’ to ‘an enemy,’ we can paraphrase what Adam Mickiewicz said about the Slavs: “Sławianie, my lubim sielanki,”<sup>23</sup> apply it to the entire *Barbaricum*, and somehow ironically ascertain: “We barbarians, we do like idylls,” with John Dryden in mind and his “noble savage,” uncorrupted by civilization and embodying innate human goodness.

It is a real pity that the Slavic literacy started so late (in comparison even to Germanic and Celtic, to say nothing about the Greek) – therefore we cannot determine any clear date other than *terminus ante quem* of the appearance of the all-Slavic adjective meaning ‘somebody else’s/another person’s’ (Pol. ‘cudzy,’ Rus. ‘чужой,’ BCS ‘tuđ’) and finally confirm it as a derivate of the Gothic ‘þiuda,’ ‘Volk’<sup>24</sup> (the Germanic noun actually developed into the national designation of Germans and into the English name of Dutchmen<sup>25</sup>). It would be very interesting to check whether it coincides chronologically with the first use of the word ‘Slav’ for ‘a slave’ and with the contact between Goths and the Mediterranean culture (the Gothic word ‘slave’–‘skalks’ does not have a clear etymology<sup>26</sup>).

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<sup>23</sup> “We Slavs, we do like idylls” – citation taken from the poetic drama *Dziady* [Forefathers’ Eve] by Adam Mickiewicz (Part III, scene VII – “Salon warszawski”/“Warsaw salon”).

<sup>24</sup> Max Vasmer, *Russisches etymologisches Wörterbuch*, Bd. III Sta-ÿ, Heidelberg: Carl Winter Universitätsverlag, 1958, p. 352; Макс Фасмер, *Этимологический словарь русского языка*, т. IV (Т–Ящур), Москва: “Прогресс,” 1987, p. 379.

<sup>25</sup> Ernest Klein, *A Comprehensive Etymological Dictionary of the English Language*, Amsterdam–London–New York: Elsevier Publishing Company, 1966, p. 491.

<sup>26</sup> Cf. Winfred P. Lehmann, *A Gothic Etymological Dictionary*, Leiden: Brill, 1986, pp. 308–309.



Marek Wąsowicz

**On the Art of “Performing” Law  
and on Law as an Art**



IUS EST ARS BONI ET AEQUI

## On the Art of “Performing” Law and on Law as an Art

Let us start with an anecdote. A highly gifted young pianist was once introduced to Arthur Rubinstein. The Maestro listened to him play a few pieces and then said: “Technique-wise, you’re excellent. In fact better than me. Now it’s time to take care of music.”

The point of departure of this essay is the belief that law belongs in its entirety to the world of art and that this has a bearing on the understanding and application of law, functioning in social life, and on teaching. Now, if we consider law as an art, we can speak of “performing” law, just we would speak of “performing” music. By linking law and the world of music, with arguments of a different category emerging, it becomes possible to arrive at a better understanding of the essence of law and an opportunity opens up to redesign the methods of teaching law. This is why Arthur Rubinstein’s words may well provide a starting point for further disquisition and be taken as a motto for a text on the ways of understanding law and the art of its application.

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First off, a few words about music. “Music is the art of combining sounds in a manner agreeable to the ear,” wrote Jean-Jacques Rousseau. The definitions of music proposed by Pythagoreans in ancient Greece and later by the founder of the mediaeval model of education, Cassiodorus, or by Leibniz, are predominated by mathematical features, with music becoming a numerically represented relationship of physical vibrations. Others see music mainly as a form of sound movement, as *scientia bene modulandi*, as St. Augustine had it. In each of those ways of understanding music, it becomes something that fills the space around us (as the Chinese claim, the whole Universe is tuned to F-sharp). However, music is a human activity. It is not just any source of sound, for example a natural one, such as the singing of birds or the murmur of a mountain stream. We are talking about a sequence of sounds designed by man (whatever the source of inspiration) and performed by man.

Having this in mind, it must be noted – an important observation in the context of this essay – that in musical performance, technical proficiency, finger efficiency, even of

the highest class, is still not enough to create music. Also musical notation itself is not music, while it does contain its entire potential. Reading sheet music, each musician may create a highly individual delivery of the musical text, building on their musical knowledge, skills, but also general sensitivity and understanding of the world of culture. But it is only the interaction with the instrument, drawing a sequence of sounds from it that makes music (a conductor has a collective instrument with which to deliver his musical concept – an orchestra or a choir). Thus the playing technique is not music in itself but on the other hand it is not possible to evoke the world of music without those technical skills, fostered sometimes at the expense of years of arduous exercises. The experienced music lover will probably recognize a piece, but whether he will be overwhelmed by its performance or discover some new content in it, depends on the performer's skills, imagination, intuition, but also sensitivity to a broadly defined world of culture. One can be a highly educated consumer of music, be familiar with musical styles and extensive literature, be able to recognize composers and their specific works, know the history of music, and even how different instruments are built, and yet play none of them. You can be immersed in the world of music without creating music. But you can also play with phenomenal ease, have an excellent musical memory and ear for music, and yet be a complete musical ignoramus, ready to embark on activities such as breaking speed records in playing piano or violin without any sense of style or form, or to dazzle the audience with other equally shocking ideas.

Does such a world of music, a world of grand masterpieces and minor works, of daring musical ideas and correct, run-of-the-mill forms, the world of musical performance, which requires craft but also a dash of talent, a world of musical culture referring to individual experience, but also to social perception of music, have anything in common with the world of law? Can such reference to the world of music enable us to better understand the essence of law? I believe there are surprisingly many such links which enable us to see a depth in law which cannot be told “in plain words.” One could describe even these unseen connections between the law and the music as “mysterious friendship.”

First of all, law should be treated as a product of broadly defined culture. This point of view is shared by many authors, both those representing the world of legal dogmatists (an interesting insight was provided by a survey published in the magazine *Czasopismo Prawno-Historyczne* [Journal of Law and History]<sup>1</sup> concerning the significance of historical legal science and historical legal subjects for learning and teaching law at university faculties of law) and disciplines such as history of law, sociology of law, or archaeology of law. Consequently, it is legitimate to claim that law is an art, i.e. the skill of giving form but also of expressing the content of certain phenomena (social ones in this case), as well as shaping them (because resolving a particular case shapes social relations). In this sense, there is a similarity to the world of music, which is also, as already mentioned, a way of organising, in this case, sound material. Then is a legal text not similar to musical score? Is it not true that it contains a potential solution but you still have to be able

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<sup>1</sup> “Ankieta na temat miejsca dyscyplin historycznoprawnych wśród nauk historycznych i prawnych,” *Czasopismo Prawno-Historyczne* 21.2 (1969), pp. 165–191 and 22.1 (1970), pp. 195–203.



to create it, which takes not only the technical ability to read laws, but also the ability to solve problems, that is to create reality, which usually requires some general culture and understanding of the context in which a proposed solution is to function? Does a lawyer, having certain technical skills of reading and understanding laws, not resemble a musician who saturates a “potential” musical text with his artistic vision in which there is also room for his general culture and musical knowledge? In other words, does a lawyer’s work unavoidably not reflect his personal background, his cultural resources, being not a mere external addition but contributing to the shape of the final decision?

Thus the issue comes down to the question about the relationship between law and code, and whether the knowledge of legal provisions (combined with a relevant university degree) makes someone a lawyer. The “law–code” relationship has its historical perspective. On the one hand, it is entangled in rivalry between customary law and statutory law, characteristic of the history of law in mediaeval and early modern Europe, and, on the other hand, it touches upon the very definition of law and diverse perspectives of describing its phenomenon, mainly the extent to which components supporting the evaluation of law and describing the context in which it is made and applied are inherent in law. This issue will be dealt with in brief below. The education of lawyers and ways of preparing them to practice legal professions has a similar historical dimension to it (the question of whether the education should be academic or strictly professional). This issue also deserves a few words.

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To begin with, let us refer to the well-known definition of law which opens the first volume of *Digesta* and is attributed to Celsus, the outstanding Roman lawyer of the first half of the second century AD: “*ius est ars boni et aequi*” (“law is the art of the good and equitable”). Celsus was not the first to link law with equity. Many authors before him had done so, such as Terence, or, particularly, the author of *Rhetorica ad Herennium* – attributed for a certain time to Cicero – who claims that law is based on the right and good (“*ex aequo et bono ius constituit*”<sup>2</sup>). Also after Celsus many lawyers and philosophers had a similar perception of the essence of law. However, the definition proposed by Celsus is unrivalled and tends to be quoted most often when it comes to pondering on the nature of law. Let us throw in two more thoughts from Celsus (who stood out among Roman lawyers with the boldness of his statements and the ability to define ideas): “*Scire leges non hoc est verba earum tenere, sed vim ac potestatem*” (“To know the law is not merely to understand the words, but as well their force and effect”)<sup>3</sup> and “*Incivile est nisi tota lege perspecta una aliqua particula eius proposita iudicare vel respondere*” (“It is not artful to judge or to counsel based on a snippet of

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<sup>2</sup> Rhet. ad Her. 2.13.20.

<sup>3</sup> D.1.3.17.

the law, without taking into consideration the law in its entirety”).<sup>4</sup> We will find them both useful in our considerations.

The postulate of goodness and equity may be analyzed from various vantage points. It can be viewed mainly in philosophical terms and be derived from the concept of justice (*iustitia*), which means seeking to implement the principles of goodness and equity (Ulpian writes that justice is “constans et perpetua voluntas ius suum cuique tribuendi” – “the constant and perpetual will to render to every man his due”).<sup>5</sup> One can ponder to what extent the notions of goodness and equity are categories of philosophy of law, but they can also be viewed simply as a directive for the resolution of a specific case: thus, it is not about looking for a general definition of goodness or about determining a general definition of equity but about resolving a particular case on the basis of those categories. This would be a very practical approach, which actually prevailed among Roman lawyers. *Aequitas* is an argument they use in discussing at length specific cases, an element taken into consideration in preparing and issuing specific legal verdicts. What Celsius meant saying that law is an art (*ars*) should also be understood along these lines. As Marek Kuryłowicz writes: “To the Romans [...] *ars* meant art as a practical skill, as a kind of technique of applying law.”<sup>6</sup> According to Ulpian, the directives that accompanied this were as follows: “honeste vivere, alterum non laedere, suum cuique tribuere” (“to live honestly, to injure no one, to give every man his due”),<sup>7</sup> but for Roman lawyers those were not only timeless principles of decent conduct, *praecepta iuris*, i.e. precepts of law.

Ulpian, cited here multiple times, wrote that the object of jurisprudence was to always separate, in each specific case, the right from the wrong, the permitted from the forbidden, and to look for the good.<sup>8</sup> Marek Kuryłowicz notes that “this way, the activity of lawyers becomes a real legal knowledge, based on a living reality”<sup>9</sup> and not on theoretical deliberations, which never had many enthusiasts in Rome. The philosophy of law never evolved there, while some texts, by Cicero for example, became a source of inspiration to future generations of philosophers of law. Let us quote a fragment of one of his most famous statements:

There is a true law, a right reason, conformable to nature, universal, unchangeable, eternal, whose commands urge us to duty, and whose prohibitions restrain us from evil. [...] in all times and nations this universal law must for ever reign, eternal, and imperishable.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>4</sup> D.1.3.24.

<sup>5</sup> D.1.1.10.

<sup>6</sup> Marek Kuryłowicz, *Prawo rzymskie. Historia, tradycja, współczesność*, Lublin: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Marii Curie-Skłodowskiej, 2003, p. 36.

<sup>7</sup> D. 1.1.10.1.

<sup>8</sup> D. 1.1.1.

<sup>9</sup> Kuryłowicz, *Prawo rzymskie...*, p. 37.

<sup>10</sup> Cic. *rep.* 3.22.33, in: Marcus Tullius Cicero, *The Political Works of Marcus Tullius Cicero [...]*, transl. Francis Barham, London: Edmund Spettigue, 1841–1842, here vol. I, ad. loc.

It is worth adding a belief worded elsewhere that not every decision or resolution of public bodies deserves to be called law:

[...] those who have written down orders that were ruinous and unjust to their peoples [...] provided something other than laws.<sup>11</sup>

To Roman lawyers (also to Cicero acting both as a court advocate and a politician) the notions of goodness, equity, and justice had primarily a very concrete dimension. Ernst Levy is right to state that “natural was to them not only what followed from physical qualities of men or things, but also what, within the framework of that system, seemed to square with the normal or reasonable order of human interests and, for that reason, not in need for further evidence.”<sup>12</sup> In this sense, anyone dealing with law, if they follow common sense, will know what is right in a given case, and thus can fairly resolve a case, that is, apply law.

All those statements are clearly indicative of a way of understanding law as a method of resolving various practical problems based on the criteria of goodness, equity, and justice. Specific rules of conduct, rules of practice, or even specific formal templates of judicial decisions, such as those contained in the Praetor’s Edict (a document declaring the rules and form of legal protection to be afforded by the praetor concerned; from the times of Emperor Hadrian, the Praetor’s Edict became *edictum perpetuum*, acquired an immutable character), did not replace law but they only enabled it to be correctly recognized and applied. This way of understanding law was not altered by *leges*, or *senatus consulta*, i.e. norms established by authorized bodies, such as the Senate, popular assemblies (*comitia*), or *concilia plebis*. In fact, the statutes were relatively few and practically did not cover such important areas of private law as parental authority, property law, or contractual obligations.

The situation would change with the development of imperial constitutions which became an autonomous source of law, their effective force being derived from Ulpian’s formula “quod principi placuit legis habet vigorem,” which expressed the emperor’s legislative authority. The emperor’s will becomes identical with the content of law. In other words, law in a domain managed and agreed by lawyers becomes an imperative imposed by the ruler, thus operating as a tool of the policy he pursues. The formula “princeps legibus solutus est,” according to which the ruler is not bound by law, means that law is no longer autonomous and becomes a manifestation (attribute) of sovereign authority. Many centuries later, the French thinker Jean Bodin, in his fundamental treatise *Six livres sur la République* (1576) would combine the notion of inalienable and indivisible sovereignty with the making of law.

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<sup>11</sup> Cic. *leg.* 2.5.11, in: Marcus Tullius Cicero, *On the Laws*, transl. David Fott, Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 2014.

<sup>12</sup> Ernst Levy, “Natural Law in Roman Thought,” *Studia et Documenta Historiae et Iuris* 15 (1949), p. 7.

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The two Roman traditions would continue in the European Middle Ages, and then in the modern era. Both of them would be developed by a community forming a distinct social group preoccupied with law and assuming the role of “priests of law” – lawyers. The two traditions mentioned above, continued in that community and initially supported by a scholastic method of interpreting texts, would lead to the gradual separation of the world of ethical values (such as goodness and equity) from the world of strictly legal norms. The process would be strongly associated with a growing competition between customary law, arising from the German (or, to use Karol Modzelewski’s wording, barbarian) legal tradition, and statutory law, created by European rulers. Customary law would eventually lose the rivalry: imperial legislative powers would turn out to be more attractive to monarchs than a mere exercise of judicial power based on the existing body of customs, and, additionally, Roman law adopted starting in the twelfth century would make it possible to describe much more effectively the institutions of a developing economy. In either case, glossators, and then post-glossators (commentators) would supply extensive and increasingly detailed legal analyzes, which would, over time, become binding rules. This was the case, for example, with Accussis’ *Glossa ordinaria*, which was treated by the courts as the ultimate legal authority, as later reflected by the saying “quidquid non agnoscit Glossa, non agnoscit Curia” (“what the gloss does not recognize, the court does not recognize”). As Katarzyna Sójka-Zielińska writes:

The cult of ancient authorities was not conducive to efforts towards a freer interpretation of the Roman traditions. The existing texts were subjected to extensive exegesis, futile disputes were fought over individual words by those yet unable to rise above casuistic thinking, to see a forest of general issues above trees of detailed questions.<sup>13</sup>

With such a method of interpretation, the literal text of law would gradually replace (and consequently express) its essence. In extreme cases, this would lead to legal pettifoggery, skillful use of legal tricks, involving breakneck interpretations derived from linguistic interpretation combined with thinking based on strict logical rules. This method led to completely arbitrary judgments, often disregarding the actual sense of justice, or enabled lawsuits to be protracted endlessly by legal juggling. In both cases, *bonum* and *aequitas* had to yield to procedural effectiveness and legal tricks. What is worse, those reprehensible practices led to a change in the image of law itself, which was perceived, in the first place, through lawyers’ conduct. This is why Shakespeare proposed in *Henry V* that the first thing to do to repair of the world should be to “kill all the lawyers,” and Rabelais mockingly described in his *Gargantua and Pantagruel* a lawsuit where the judge, having accumulated heaps of paper filled with arguments of the attorneys of

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<sup>13</sup> Katarzyna Sójka-Zielińska, *Drogi i bezdroża prawa. Szkice z dziejów kultury prawnej Europy*, Wrocław et al.: Ossolineum, 2010, p. 46.

both parties on opposite ends of the tables, pronounced sentence by rolling dice. Thus it is not without reason that the increasingly common criticism of lawyers and the law they applied would become one of the reasons for a great codification movement which developed in the latter half of the eighteenth century, calling for a return to the basic principles of law.

What became the source of inspiration for seventeenth- and eighteenth-century authors, in line with the philosophical spirit of the time, was the law of nature, which referred to the supreme values expressed by law or characterising law. One of the foremost promoters of the idea, Hugo Grotius (in his treatise *On the Law of War and Peace*, 1625), proposed that the legal system should be based on four elementary principles which included: preservation of property, the perpetrator's obligation to repair the loss or injury caused, *pacta sunt servanda*, and punishment for offences committed. For his part, Montesquieu (in his main work *On the Spirit of the Laws*, 1748) developed a catalogue of circumstances which the rational law-maker should take into consideration to be able to ascribe the attribute of equity to a law being made.

The advocates of codification were guided by the desire for law to be approved and applied on the strength of its arguments, with no need for any interpretation. As Frederick the Great wrote, providing patronage for the codification of Prussian law:

If I achieve my final goal, many a learned lawyer will be deprived of the allure of their mysteriousness, will be forced to shut down the store of their legal subtleties, and the whole bunch of existing advocates will become useless.<sup>14</sup>

It soon turned out that the judge should be allowed a margin of freedom. Even under the Prussian code (*Allgemeines Landrecht für die Preußischen Staaten*), judicial interpretation was eventually allowed, contrary to the intentions of Frederick II, albeit as an exception. In general, however, it was assumed that the degree of detail of the regulatory framework would allow the right solution to be found for each case without having to resort to rules of general application.

This conviction was also shared by the authors of the Napoleonic Code. This is why Napoleon, having read the first commentary on his civil code, which contained scholarly interpretations of the text, is said to have cried: "Mon Code est perdu!" It should be noted, however, that also in France there was no shortage of authors who harboured no illusions about the completeness of the civil code. Friedrich von Savigny invokes a statement by a French lawyer, Bouley, which is worth quoting:

It is said that never, or almost never, in no lawsuit can an absolutely clear and precise legal text be cited, so a decision can always rely only on common sense and equity.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> Kabinettsordre of 1780, quotation translated from: Friedrich von Savigny, *O powołaniu naszych czasów do ustawodawstwa i nauki prawa* [original German title: *Vom Beruf unserer Zeit für Gesetzgebung und Rechtswissenschaft*], transl. into Polish Kazimierz Opalek, Warszawa: PWN, 1964, p. 114, n. 65.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 102, n. 44.

However, to many lawyers, but also lawmakers, this perspective seemed highly dangerous, and it is them who finally set the development of the nineteenth-century legal thought on the positivist track. In addition, the nineteenth-century perception of Montesquieu's doctrine, developed especially in the United States, but also in France and in the German Confederation, led to the conviction that the executive had to be strictly bound by law to avoid the danger described by Montesquieu himself – referring to the reign of Louis XV – of a situation where “in a monarchy he who governs believes himself to be above the law.” The doctrine of the rule of law (*Rechtsstaat*) which stemmed from this triggered the process of “juridicization” of life, where anyone using law, which means the civil servant as well, receives precise and unambiguous tools with which to act, and the citizen is given the necessary guarantees of freedom. This way of viewing law and describing its function was complemented by defining law solely in terms of a command of sovereign power (as “a rule laid down for the guidance of an intelligent being by an intelligent being having power over him,” as John Austin wrote<sup>16</sup>), and subject to sanctions.

Paradoxically then, the codification movement, while resting on the foundation of the law of nature and referring to essential principles of law, soon severed itself from its roots, becoming aware that the general character of the laws of nature gave rise to the danger of return to vague and arbitrary application of law. What became known as the “exegetical school” of law stemming from the main civil codes of the time, turned out to be in contradiction with the claims at the root of the great codification efforts. “I don't know civil law, I teach the Napoleonic Code,” one of the fathers of the exegetical school, French lawyer and professor of university in Paris, Jean-Joseph Bugnet, is reported to have said. This quotation perfectly expresses the objectives that the exegetical school set for itself. As Adam Słomiński wrote:

The consequence of this theory having been adopted by legal science was a change in legal science – a *par excellence* social science – into of geometry of sorts which did not bother to consider whether this or that resolution of an issue met the needs of life, and if it was just, and taking care only of the symmetry of construction – and eventually this led to a rift between science and practice, between the law taught at university and the law applied in practice.<sup>17</sup>

Another consequence, resulting from the analytical concept of jurisprudence in John Austin's approach, which predominated the thinking of European lawyers for many decades, was the dogmatic conception of law (the sovereign's command), irrespective of whether it is qualified as good or as bad. As it was aptly put by John Kelly, “what was originally projected as a stable statement of natural law, ended in natural law's eclipse.”<sup>18</sup> Guido Fassò commented on this as follows:

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<sup>16</sup> John Austin, *The Province of Jurisprudence Determined*, London: John Murray, 1832, p. 10.

<sup>17</sup> Adam Słomiński, *Kodeks Napoleona przed sądem czasu*, Warszawa: Druk Synów St. Niemiry, 1911, p. 14.

<sup>18</sup> John Kelly, *A Short History of Western Legal Theory*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992, p. 313.

[...] the initial assumption on which this process rested was that the legislator need only translate into the form of statute the precepts of reason, and that this positive law would be no more than the public declaration, the ascertainment with obligatory force, of natural law. What actually happened was that the source of law was seen to be the legislator’s will; and that natural law, after being for a short time hailed as the very essence of the code, was soon forgotten, then rejected and mocked.<sup>19</sup>

The analytical theory evolved at its fullest in Hans Kelsen’s “pure theory of law,” sometimes referred to as normativism. In Kelsen’s approach, law belongs to the sphere of “ought” (*sollen*), hence it does not describe any real world (*sein*). The world of obligations is filled by various “ought-sentences” between which logical relationships develop, and those relationships can be examined and analyzed. Law understood this way has nothing to do with morality or with any other legitimate basis, and the legal system is built on a hierarchy of norms, i.e. a norm is valid only because it conforms to a higher-level norm. A system created this way is fully autonomous and may be filled with norms with a highly diversified substantive content. If we were to look for references to the world of music, the concept of ought-sentences, being identical with law, is reminiscent of the mathematical description of music proposed by Pythagoreans or by Leibniz. Certainly enough, law consists of ought-sentences in the same sense as music consists of sound waves which can be described mathematically, but there is more to its phenomenon.

The end of the nineteenth century and the twentieth century saw a dynamic development of legal theories. A large part of them emerged in opposition to the Austinian and Kelsenian vision of law, thus they took into account – as constitutive elements of the definition of law – also factors related to the person of the judge, as well as the rules and principles of law, determining or expressing a certain system of values accepted in a particular society. There is no room here for a full presentation of those concepts.<sup>20</sup> Let us mention, as the foremost ones, the “free law movement” (which assumes that if “no command can be taken from the statute, then the judge shall pronounce in accordance with the customary law which he as a legislator would adopt” as provided in Article 1 of the Swiss Civil Code of 1912<sup>21</sup>); the school of “legal realism” with the concept of Oliver Wendell Holmes (1841–1935), Associate Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States, who wrote that “the object of legal study was simply the prediction of the

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<sup>19</sup> Guido Fassò, *Storia della filosofia del diritto*, Bologna: Il Mulino, 1966–1970, vol. 3, p. 26, quoted after Kelly, *A Short History...*, p. 313.

<sup>20</sup> John Kelly suggests that – apart from social, political, and economic factors – such development of legal thought is related to “the explosion in higher education: foundation of new universities, the growth of new law schools, the establishment of new law journals, the association of academic promotion with volume of publication and [...] the large increase in law-school staff numbers. [...] In other words, far more people now have the time, the means, the professional incentive as well as duty, and sometimes also the political motive to speculate on the nature and the roots of law, apart from merely teaching students the cases, statutes, and constitutions which formally compose it” (Kelly, *A Short History...*, p. 358).

<sup>21</sup> *The Swiss Civil Code of December, 1907 (effective January 1, 1912)*, transl. Robert P. Shick, Boston: The Boston Book Company, 1915.



incidence of public force through the instrumentality of the courts,”<sup>22</sup> to which Jerome Frank (1889–1957), legal philosopher and federal appellate judge, responded saying “that the centre of the legal world is not in the rules but in specific court decisions (i.e. judgments, orders, and decrees) in specific lawsuits;”<sup>23</sup> and finally legal science as viewed by Herbert L.A. Hart<sup>24</sup> and its critical assessment by Ronald Dworkin,<sup>25</sup> where the issue of the position of the principles of law in the legal system and their relation to the rules of law became an important area of dispute. Hart accepted a situation where a judge, dealing with a “difficult case,” i.e. an unusual legal case where routine application of a norm could lead to injustice, was allowed to go beyond the applicable laws and solve a case referring to general principles. Dworkin considered legal principles as an inherent part of law, which effectively meant that in a particular case the judge remained within the framework of the legal system and did not create any new law. “I call a ‘principle’ a standard that is to be observed, not because it will advance or secure an economic, political, or social situation deemed desirable, but because it is a requirement of justice or fairness or some other dimension of morality,”<sup>26</sup> he wrote. It is not an ostensible controversy and, above all, it is not neutral to the concept of teaching law.

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Apart from great codifications and a change in the way the role of law was seen in terms of the functioning of the state and its bodies, the Age of Enlightenment also brought about the development of various institutions involved in teaching law and educating future lawyers. Importantly, the methods of that education largely stemmed from the assumptions of the exegetical school mentioned above. One example may be the reform of legal education in Austria undertaken by Franz Zeiller in 1810 in view of the entry into force (in 1811) of the Austrian Civil Code (ABGB). It was aimed at preparing judicial and legal staff for the application of the new law. Therefore, the courses were designed as a purely technical exercise and stripped of all additional subjects (so as to avoid unnecessary confusion, as it was said). What followed was a disastrously low standard of the Austrian legal personnel and deepening isolation of legal science in Austria from other European countries, which necessitated numerous modifications of the curriculum in the latter half of the century with a view to expanding students’ horizons. Similar reforms were also tackled in other countries, e.g. in France. Also the French legal landscape was initially completely dominated by the exegetical school and it was not until the end of the nineteenth century that the law curriculum started to be filled with content of a more general nature. On the whole, it can be noticed that wherever thorough reconstruction of the existing law was embarked on, an urgent need

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<sup>22</sup> Kelly, *A Short History...*, p. 366.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 367.

<sup>24</sup> Herbert L.A. Hart, *The Concept of Law*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1961.

<sup>25</sup> Ronald Dworkin, *Taking Rights Seriously*, London: Duckworth, 1978.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 22.



arose to train sufficient numbers of judicial staff capable to efficiently implement new laws and regulations. To some extent, this had an overall impact on the legal education model which spread throughout Europe, and which remains the prevailing model of training legal personnel to this day with no major modifications. What emerged as a commendable exception was the School of Law established in the Duchy of Warsaw, which sought to maintain the right proportion between dogmatic and general subjects in its curriculum from its inception. This line of education was continued at the Faculty of Law and Administration into which the School was transformed upon the establishment of the University of Warsaw (1816).

The question of an appropriate design of the legal curriculum was revisited many times in Poland. In the interwar period, it took the form of a famous dispute between Oswald Balzer and Juliusz Makarewicz over the place of historical legal subjects in the university curriculum. Balzer would have them at the beginning of the course of study as an element of general education, a necessary ingredient of academic training, whereas Makarewicz was in favour of more professional education and therefore wanted to locate historical legal subjects, as optional courses, at the end of the curriculum, positioned as an addition to education instead of being its essence. In the background, the major question remained of whether the lawyer was to be merely an able juggler skillfully extracting appropriate provisions from codes, statutes, and regulations, or a cultivated person who has a profound understanding of the context in which law operates and is aware of the objectives of law in general and its specific provisions in particular. Many years ago, Juliusz Bardach summing up a conference of law historians in Karpacz (1964), wrote: "The objective of legal studies is to educate someone who is not a legal technician but a graduate with a sufficient level of theoretical and scientific background and a well-established minimum of general legal culture,"<sup>27</sup> which, as he wrote elsewhere,<sup>28</sup> consists of historical legal knowledge, sociological and economic knowledge, as well a general knowledge of the cultural context in which law functions, or is expected to function, as a phenomenon of culture. Bardach's proposal remains valid. Today's education of lawyers in Poland is reminiscent of laborious practising of scales and passage working order to achieve high finger efficiency and be able to effectively operate the keyboard, yet without the ability to imagine the work as a whole and bring all the magic from the score, without a sufficient knowledge of musical literature and musical forms.

Law is the art of solving disputable issues, restoring disturbed order and conferring a particular status on people (i.e. defining the roles they play within a particular legal order). Law usually also sets the path leading to a change of established rules. The resolution of issues is entrusted to individuals who are believed, for a variety of reasons, to be able to do so (because they express the will of the gods, because they are of authoritative standing, because they have been designated by the right people, because we have agreed that, as they meet certain official requirements, they can be entrusted

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<sup>27</sup> Juliusz Bardach, "Nauki historycznoprawne i ich miejsce w systemie kształcenia prawniczego," *Czasopismo Prawno-Historyczne* 17.2 (1965), p. 333.

<sup>28</sup> Juliusz Bardach, *Themis a Clio czyli prawo a historia*, Warszawa: Wydział Prawa i Administracji Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego, 2001.

with such a task). Their decisions could be accidental but usually this is not the case. The effectiveness of their actions arises from the fact that their decisions are predictable to some extent, and sometimes even anticipated. Thus they act within the framework of certain rules, their source as well as their manifestation being the repetitiveness of verdicts or procedures. This is why, on the assumption of office, the Roman praetor announced the rules under which he would provide legal protection to the citizens of Rome. This is why, when resolving a dispute at an assembly in the Frankish and Lombard states, reference was made to the existing customs. In both cases, it was not just a mechanism of recalling a long-established rule. What remained the essence of law was the resolution of a dispute or conferring a particular status (role) on a person, but the formal fabric which surrounded it, and which included also the practice of reminding the rules, was not without influence on the effectiveness of legal action. The formalism of decision-making was of a religious origin and had an air of magic about it (arising from the belief in transforming the reality by means of magic charms or other formulas). That external fabric ensured effective action but it did not determine the substantive verdict.

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The very brief overview of the main currents of legal thought shows how tools designed to organize and improve the storage of memory of appropriate solutions, giving them a specific form or describing relevant procedures supporting the modification of norms, have come to the fore over the centuries, reducing within the legal system and eventually pushing to the side-lines what is in fact the essence of justice. The essence, to borrow from Celsus once again, is the quest for a good and equitable solution. Laws set the framework for the quest but do not relieve the lawyer from undertaking it. Likewise, the score determines the flow of music but does not replace it: the player must contribute his own imagination and musical sensitivity to perform a piece. Just like a musician whose ability to read the score and operate the keyboard is necessary for a piece of music to come to existence in space, also the lawyer must be able to read laws and apply them in an efficient manner, in order to arrive at the right solution drawing on his general knowledge and cultural background. In ancient Rome, looking for an equitable solution was a natural thing for lawyers. Today, as a result of the changes occurring over centuries, mentioned above, with legal services acquiring a mass character and in the face of their standardization (something unavoidable given the circumstances), one may have the impression that the lawyer's main task is to find an objectively appropriate legal provision for a specific case. At this point, it is worth recalling the wise words of Celsus: "To know the law is not merely to understand the words, but as well their force and effect,"<sup>29</sup> and always remember that looking for an equitable solution is invariably the elementary responsibility of every lawyer.

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<sup>29</sup> See above, n. 3.

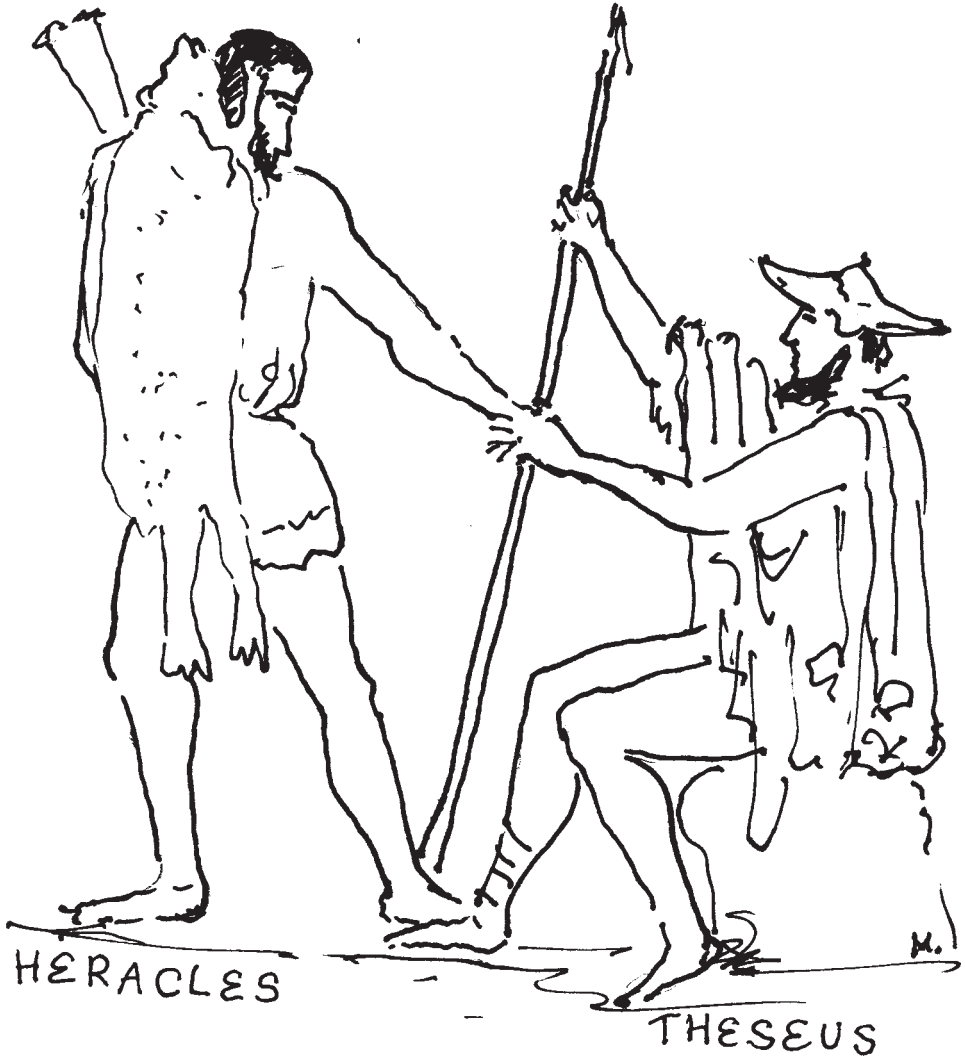
Referring to similarities between law and music in this context is not a mere play on original associations. This juxtaposition of two areas which are apparently very distant from each other yet obviously belong to the world of art is underpinned by the belief that this may help to understand what law is and what constitutes its essence, and therefore how law should be taught for those entering the legal professions to be able to distinguish external form and technical skills from its content. To be able – following Arthur Rubinstein’s advice – to take care of the “music” of law.

Translated by Ryszard Guz-Rudzki



Elżbieta Wesołowska

**Being Friends with Theseus  
– But Which One?**



## Being Friends with Theseus – But Which One?\*

Friendship, a relation based on true, mutual goodwill, has always been the subject of reflection and interest for thinkers and writers.<sup>1</sup> For the ancients, friendship was delightful literary and mythological theme as well as a subject for ethical reflection. It remains still today issue of interest, open to interpretation.<sup>2</sup> However, in a volume on this topic I find it awkward to dwell on this matter too much. So let's say briefly that there were many definitions of friendship in Antiquity, originating in specific philosophical orientation.<sup>3</sup> Besides, there were significant differences among ancient definitions of friendship, especially in two aspects:

a) The issue of emotional relationships in friendship was sometimes understood differently in Greece as in Rome.<sup>4</sup> On one side not only Roman utilitarian pact (“do

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<sup>1</sup> At least a few publications among the abundant literature on this topic should be listed: Gabriel Herman, *Ritualized Friendship and the Greek City*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987; David Konstan, *Friendship in the Classical World*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997; Antoni Swoboda, *Pojęcie przyjaźni w listach św. Paulina z Noli i św. Sydoniusza Apolinarego: studium porównawcze* [An Idea of Friendship in the Letters of St. Paul from Nola and St. Sidonius Apolinarius], Poznań: PWT, 1995; Joanna Sowa, *Między Erosem a Arete. Przyjaźń w etyce Platona i Arystotelesa* [Between Eros and Arete. Friendship in the Ethics of Plato and Aristotle], Łódź: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Łódzkiego, 2009; Reginald Hyatte, *The Idealization of Friendship in Medieval and Early Renaissance Literature*, Leiden: Brill, 1994; Suzanne Stern-Gillet, Gary M. Gurtler, SJ, eds., *Ancient and Medieval Concepts of Friendship*, Albany, N.Y.: University of New York Press, 2014; Ross S. Kilpatrick, *The Poetry of Friendship. Horace, Epistle I*, Edmonton: The University of Alberta Press, 1986.

<sup>2</sup> See for instance Alan Loy McGinnis, *The Friendship Factor. How to Get Closer to the People You Care for*, Augsburg: Fortress, 1985, and Jan Yager, *When Friendship Hurts: How to Deal With Friends Who Betray, Abandon, or Wound You*, New York: Touchstone, 2002.

<sup>3</sup> Therefore, one should talk about the meaning of friendship by the Epicureans, Socrates' followers, Peripatetics, and the Stoics. For a good overview of the ancient and later views on the subject, see Konstan, *Friendship in the Classical World*, passim.

<sup>4</sup> In her interesting book, *Między Erosem a Arete*, Sowa points to the thin line between friendship and infatuation.

ut des”),<sup>5</sup> and Cicero’s concept about the friend as an “another self”;<sup>6</sup> on the other, a strongly emotional bond as for instance in the case of Achilles and Patroclus.<sup>7</sup> These two mythological figures were the best known, but not every hero was lucky enough to be portrayed by Homer himself! Already the case of Orestes and Pylades appears more complex, because Pylades, at least at the beginnings of his literary career,<sup>8</sup> was actually a shadow of Agamemnon’s son (i.e. Orestes) and his life was strongly, indeed almost organically, bound with the fate and existence of Orestes.<sup>9</sup> Undoubtedly Plato as well as Aristotle were advocates of the presence of strong emotions in friendship.<sup>10</sup> Even now we may argue that friendship can be similar to love, but only when it is reciprocated. Otherwise, there is no friendship.<sup>11</sup>

b) The way in which friends should be chosen were also explained in different ways: here we can mention views held by the Stoics and Seneca. The Stoics were strong supporters of symmetry among friends in regard to their welfare.<sup>12</sup> Since Seneca was more interested in the process of gaining friends, he compared – rather controversially – a Stoic sage to a sculptor who shapes his apprentice into a friend, which, according to Bernard Collette-Dučić, does not yet contradict the Stoic view on the equality of people linked by friendship.<sup>13</sup>

In his treatise *Laelius de amicitia* Cicero attempts, in an understated way, to make a subtle distinction between a friendship that is overwhelming and grave and one that is commonplace and ordinary.<sup>14</sup> He calls the former one “amicitia vera et perfecta,” and the latter “amicitia vulgaris aut mediocris” being sometimes utilitarian in nature. Only the first connection is a virtuous friendship and such a friend can be called “other

<sup>5</sup> See Konstan, *Friendship in the Classical World*, p. 81.

<sup>6</sup> It is Roman poetry which offers a *locus communis* describing a friend as a half of our soul (“dimidium animae meae”), see for instance Hor. *carm.* 1.3.

<sup>7</sup> At this point one should mention the famous three attempts by Achilles to embrace the ghost of his friend killed on the battlefield. However, scholars nowadays agree that in the case of these two heroes Homer did not suggest any homosexual relationship, see for instance the resolute opinion expressed by Robin Fox, *The Tribal Imagination: Civilization and the Savage Mind*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2011, p. 223. However, in the post-Homeric period such opinions have been raised (Plato, Xenophon, Lucian, and for the first time Aeschylus in the preserved fragments of *Myrmidons*). Many fiction writers also followed this path, for instance Shakespeare in *Troilus and Cressida*.

<sup>8</sup> See Aeschylus’ *Libation Bearers*, where Pylades appears as a *persona muta*.

<sup>9</sup> However, it is worth noting that Pylades’ character develops from a silent companion of the son of Agamemnon (i.e. Orestes) to an equal partner in dialogues and the plot of Euripides: *Iphigenia in Tauris* and *Orestes*.

<sup>10</sup> Cf. Sowa, *Eros and Arete...*, passim.

<sup>11</sup> Cf. *ibidem*, p. 1.

<sup>12</sup> Cf. Margaret Graver, *Stoicism and Emotion*, Chicago–London: University of Chicago Press, 2007, pp. 181–182.

<sup>13</sup> Cf. discussion by Bernard Collette-Dučić (“Making Friends: The Stoic Conception of Love and Its Platonic Background,” in: Stern-Gillet, Gurtler, eds., *Ancient and Medieval Concepts of Friendship*, p. 105) with Graver’s opinion (*Stoicism and Emotion*, p. 184). But the question of the benefit for the sage still exists, so the answer is, that the sage’s love for and friendship with such young people provide him with welcome opportunities to practice his own virtues (see Stern-Gillet and Gurtler’s *Preface to Ancient and Medieval Concepts...*, p. xi).

<sup>14</sup> See Collette-Dučić, *op. cit.*, p. 153. He is following Aristotle in his conception of perfect friendship.



self.” Seneca goes in the same direction, but rather more indirectly. In his reflections on memory he writes about what fame after death matters, which is grateful remembrance among the virtuous, as opposed to notoriety among common crowds.<sup>15</sup> And who should remember us if not those who loved us, i.e. our friends. Cicero applies more emphasis here stressing that even death in such cases may be happy (“illorum beata mors videtur”).<sup>16</sup>

Let’s us omit here another aspect of friendship, namely trust. Although it is really worth investigating as a whole, in the case of Theseus we have insufficient evidence of this factor and its significance in mutual relations.<sup>17</sup>

### Who Is Theseus? A Man or Semi-God?

Theseus, the greatest mythical hero of Athens is a controversial figure, to some extent perhaps even “broken,”<sup>18</sup> which was often the fate of individuals elevated above the people. Theseus, after all, was undoubtedly a very prominent figure. He may even be called, on a somewhat smaller scale, the equivalent of Heracles.<sup>19</sup> He freed the world from many awful villains,<sup>20</sup> killed the insatiable Minotaur, descended to Hades with

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<sup>15</sup> Indeed, he taught that what is valuable is not notoriety among the general public, but fame among the best (*Ep.* 102.17–19), see also Elżbieta Wesołowska, “Pamięć w rozważaniach Seneki Filozofa” [Memory in Seneca the Philosopher’s Considerations], *Eos* 85.1 (1998), pp. 23–33.

<sup>16</sup> Jacques Derrida, *Oligarchie: wymienianie, wyliczanie, obliczanie* [Oligarchies: Naming, Enumerating, Counting], Polish transl. Adam Dziadek (excerpt from “Politiques de l’amitié”), *Poznańskie Studia Polonistyczne* 17 (2012), p. 155. However, Derrida primarily pursues his own line of thought indicated in the title of the essay, treating Cicero in a rather utilitarian manner.

<sup>17</sup> Whereas we recall here Heracles’ first wife, Megara’s attitude in Euripides towards the protracted visit in Hades of her husband. It is an extremely interesting gradation of longing, hope for his return, and finally despair. The wife of the hero knows that her husband is invincible and he always comes back from the most difficult expeditions. However, Hades, where the hero travelled, and his prolonged absence are the reasons why Megara has lost hope of his safe return home. Phaedra’s initial situation in Senecan tragedy is different. Her husband went to the Underworld as a robber and an adventurer. For that reason his expedition is doomed, and not just because of the fact that he descended to the world of the dead. This is how the Roman playwright outlines the situation, possibly following the example of Euripides in his first, lost tragedy on the subject. Besides, both Phaedras have vested interest in their husbands not returning home from Hades...

<sup>18</sup> The term used by Natalia Antoszewska, *Odys, Jazon, Tezeusz: piękni bohaterowie* [Odysseus, Jason, Theseus: The Broken Heroes], Poznań 2014 (typescript of the MA thesis).

<sup>19</sup> In the biography of the hero Plutarch claims that instead of sleeping Theseus spent nights fantasizing about the deeds of Heracles, while during the day, jealousy drove him out of the house (Plut. *Thebes*. 6.8).

<sup>20</sup> In his *Life of Theseus* (11.3) Plutarch writes that the hero “fought against villains and punished them in the same way they tormented others.” The ancient author considers this behaviour fair.

his friend Pirithous to abduct the wife of the king of the Underworld himself. At the same time he could be cruel,<sup>21</sup> ungrateful,<sup>22</sup> and careless.<sup>23</sup>

### Theseus' Self-Sufficiency<sup>24</sup>

The self-sufficiency is what probably distinguished him most from the son of Zeus (i.e. Heracles). Heracles, in turn, always had to rely on himself,<sup>25</sup> while in many cases Theseus had to accept a smaller or greater assistance from others, twice from women! The most famous of these instances is obviously the story of Ariadne, to whom the hero owed gratitude for getting him out of the Labyrinth. Had it not been for her skein of thread, he would not have been able to find a way out of the winding corridors of the building in which the Minotaur was entrapped; his life would have ended there, despite the fact that he managed to kill the monster.<sup>26</sup> Another benefactress in his life was the old woman Hecale, who offered him shelter the night before his fight with the terrible Bull of Marathon and thus strengthened his forces before this difficult trial.<sup>27</sup> However,

<sup>21</sup> Driven by jealousy, he issued a death sentence on his son, without trying to find the truth about the alleged rape committed by the young man on his stepmother. In the Euripidean tragedy he is somehow “absolved” due to interference of the divine forces. Namely of Aphrodite who wanted to punish Hippolytus for being insensitive to love. In this tragedy both Theseus and Phaedra are being manipulated by the goddess for her own purpose, and thus partly deprived of free will.

<sup>22</sup> The most famous example of this ingratitude probably is abandoning Ariadne, to whom he owed so much, during his return from Crete, see Elżbieta Wesołowska, “Ariadne, Medea and Gratitude,” in: Maria G. Iodice, Mariusz Zagórski, eds., *Carminis personae*, Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 2014, pp. 85–93.

<sup>23</sup> Judging his behaviour from the human point of view, we can say that he caused the suicide of his father carelessly forgetting to change the color of the sails when returning from Crete. Seeing the black sails, the old Aegeus was certain that his son had died. We could say that if we forgot the significant words uttered by the abandoned Ariadne. The girl curses the hero (Catull. 64), and the curse must be fulfilled, cf. Anna Engelking, *Klątwa. Rzecz o ludowej magii słowa* [Curse: About the Folk Magic of the Word], Warszawa: Funna, 2000, passim. About the gods' support in the curse, see Esther Eidinow, *Oracles, Curses, and Risk among the Ancient Greeks*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007, p. 145.

<sup>24</sup> I do not touch here the question of self-sufficiency concerning a sage or simply a human being in respect of his need of friendship, especially because this theme is too wide and disputable.

<sup>25</sup> He was an illegitimate son of Zeus, but his father did not protect him. It is Amphitryon, his stepfather, who takes care of him in the Attic tragedy and names him a son. On the other hand he certainly was often the target of Hera's hatred, therefore his name (“Glory of Hera”) could be taken ironically. He acted alone, with the exception of the fight against immortal Hydra during which he was helped by Iolaus.

<sup>26</sup> Thus, in some way, Ariadne wrongly accused herself (e.g. in Catull. 64) of her brother's death. She only helped the Athenian to escape from the trap, while he killed the Minotaur without anyone's assistance. This is a special moral version of *hysteron proteron*.

<sup>27</sup> See the preserved fragments of the epyllion *Hecale* by Callimachus referring to this issue. One would risk a hypothesis that Hecale's old age has a double meaning here. On the one hand, old age gives her wisdom that comes from life experience. On the other hand, it excludes any sexual connotations of their night together, which was essential in the moments before the trial, cf. John G. Younger, *Sex in the Ancient World. From A to Z*, London–New York: Routledge, 2006, p. 2. The “impossible eroticism” of this scene is supported also by the fact that perhaps Hecale perceives the young man's resemblance to her long-dead husband, cf. *The Poems of Callimachus*, translated with an introduction, notes, and glossary by Frank J. Nisetich, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001, p. 9.

when the hero and his friend descended to Hades in the infamous attempt to abduct Persephone, it seemed that he crossed all lines, including the limits of arrogance.<sup>28</sup> Leaving aside for a moment the somewhat stereotypical concept of this ultimate ancient guilt (*hubris*), we could say that Theseus had a strong, almost uncontrollable desire to “go beyond.”<sup>29</sup> After all, hardly anyone ever returned from this terrible Labyrinth to the world of the living.<sup>30</sup> He could only be saved by someone quite extraordinary. Who else but Heracles? Curiously, this happened as if by accident, coinciding with Alcides<sup>31</sup> stay in the Underworld.<sup>32</sup>

Thus, Theseus is not self-sufficient, he is simply human in his moments of weakness and doubt. Maybe because of this fact, gratitude was not one of his strengths either. After all, he abandoned Ariadne at Naxos, while returning to his country.<sup>33</sup> Again, we could claim that gratitude particularly to a woman was for him simply an unbearable burden.<sup>34</sup> Hecale, in turn, died before the hero returned after his trial of strength; Callimachus mentions in his partially preserved epyllion that the young man buried the old woman with dignity<sup>35</sup> and called *Hecalean* an Attic district (deme) in the tribe Leontis in her honour. In his *Life of Theseus* (14.2) Plutarch also described the legend.

### Theseus as a Subject and Object of Friendship

In this short paper I would like to take a closer look at Theseus in the role of friend, and more precisely as a subject and an object of friendship. This role of the hero appears in as many as four ancient tragedies that survived to our times. We will attempt to find the qualities he reveals in relations of friendship acting both as the object and as the active

<sup>28</sup> This is why they were imprisoned in the Underworld.

<sup>29</sup> Cf. Thomas Bernhard, *Wittgensteins Neffe*, Frankfurt am Mein: Suhrkamp, 1982, used in the Polish edition as *Bratanek Wittgensteina*, transl. Marek Kędzierski, Kraków: Oficyna Literacka, 1997, p. 75, according to Agata Barelkowska, “Przyjaźń w cieniu śmierci” [Friendship in the Shadow of Death], *Poznańskie Studia Polonistyczne* 17 (2010), p. 84.

<sup>30</sup> Michał Głowiński, in his essay “Labyrinth, przestrzeń obcości” [Labyrinth, a Space of Otherness], in: *eiusdem, Mity przebrane. Dionizos, Narcyz, Prometeusz, Marchoń, Labyrinth* [Myths in Disguise: Dionysus, Narcissus, Prometheus, Marchoń, Labyrinth], Kraków: Wydawnictwo Literackie, 1994, pp. 176–177, wrote about a particular metaphor of the labyrinth as a prison. Such katabases can include only descents similar to the one of Orpheus and Aeneas, the partial descent (*nekyja*) of Odysseus and in some sense that of Sisyphus. And of course the one of Dionysus with Xanthias in *The Frogs* by Aristophanes...

<sup>31</sup> Heracles' name – the grandson of Alcaeus, his maternal grandfather.

<sup>32</sup> Heracles descended to the world of the dead in order to capture the three-headed dog, Cerberus. This gives us an opportunity to consider again the “otherness” of Theseus, for instance, in comparison with Prometheus, whom Heracles intends to free from the terrible torments on the slopes of the Caucasus, where Heracles killed the eagle torturing Prometheus (which was his punishment by Zeus for stealing fire from the gods and giving it to mortals). Prometheus was already aware that this would happen at some point (cf. Aeschylus, *Prometheus Bound*, 910–925).

<sup>33</sup> Catullus (64.123) calls him “immemori pectore coniunx.”

<sup>34</sup> See my article titled “Medea, Ariadne and...” on this topic. In addition, it may be a question of honour of a man and a hero as well as potential shame in the event it is lost or suffers damage.

<sup>35</sup> According to the moral code of the time he had to do it anyway.

subject. Our source material is composed of tragedies by Euripides, *Hercules furens* and a little bit *Hippolytus*,<sup>36</sup> and also the corresponding<sup>37</sup> dramas by Seneca, i.e. *Hercules furens* and *Phaëdra*. It is difficult to consider here the fundamental question whether the hero had friends at all and if so, actually how many. Let's then assume that Theseus has friends or at least one friend, because this is how Heracles is named in the texts of both authors. Accordingly, he has the right to claim this one friend.<sup>38</sup> We can add here that Seneca, in his letter IX to Lucilius, raises the question of how many friends the sage actually needs and finally he hesitates between one and none!<sup>39</sup>

### Theseus and Heracles in Four Tragedies

In the tragedy *Hippolytus* by Euripides, Theseus liberated from the Underworld returns to Athens, whereas Heracles is going to Thebes. However, when the crucial moment for the entire construction of the action comes, the latter hero appears on the stage having learned that Lycos lies in wait to kill Heracles' wife and children. The poet made sure to include an element authenticating the flow of dramatic time, because Theseus does not yet know about his friend's most terrible deed.<sup>40</sup> Thus, he appears on stage at the end of the tragedy<sup>41</sup> and saves the distressed hero from total despair, which could lead him to commit suicide.<sup>42</sup>

οἴμοι: τί δῆτα φείδομαι ψυχῆς ἐμῆς  
τῶν φιλάτων μοι γενόμενος παίδων φονεύς;  
κούκ εἶμι πέτρας λισσάδος πρὸς ἄλματα  
ἢ φάσσανον πρὸς ἦπαρ ἔξακοντίσας  
τέκνοις δικαστῆς αἵματος γενήσομαι;

Woe's me! Ah wherefore spare I mine own life,  
Who am found the murderer of my dear, dear sons,

<sup>36</sup> In fact we know very little about the earlier version of the *Hippolytus* by Euripides despite some details concerning the construction of the plot, cf. Seweryn Hammer, *O wplywie tragedii Eurypidesa „Hippolytos” na poezję hellenistyczną* [The Influence of the Euripidean Tragedy *Hippolytos* on Hellenistic Poetry], Poznań: Gebethner i Wolff, 1921, p. 5.

<sup>37</sup> I discount here the longstanding discussion about possible models for Senecan tragedies, cf. Richard Tarrant, "Senecan Drama and Its Antecedents," *Harvard Studies in Classical Philology* 82 (1978), pp. 213–262.

<sup>38</sup> Derrida, *Oligarchie...*, p. 152.

<sup>39</sup> Elżbieta Wesołowska, "Przyjaźń podług Lucjusza Anneusza Seneki" [Friendship in Lucius Annaeus Seneca], *Poznańskie Studia Polonistyczne. Seria Literacka* 17 (2010), p. 38.

<sup>40</sup> He is unaware that Heracles rendered mad by Hera's anger murdered Megara and their children.

<sup>41</sup> Both factors: the appearance of the Athenian late in the course of the action and his not quite current knowledge, have been, in my opinion, cleverly chosen to show the passage of time that Theseus needed for reflection.

<sup>42</sup> It is Seneca's Juno who says that only Hercules can defeat himself (Sen. *Her. Fur.* 85: "nemo est nisi ipse, bella iam secum gerat"). Thus she is wrong...

And rush not to plunge headlong from a cliff,  
Or dash a dagger down into mine heart,  
And make me avenger of my children's blood?<sup>43</sup>

The Athenian hero is thus cast in the role of *deus ex machina*. This is true particularly when we recall Heracles' solitude vis-à-vis the gods whom Theseus is to replace *hic et nunc*. However, this is not enough to justify the dramatic appearance of Theseus on stage. A length of time has already passed, the symbolic time that Cicero writes about in his discussion of emerging friendship. In fact, time is an indispensable requirement, hence the famous expression about the barrel of salt.<sup>44</sup> The Greek Theseus *en route* to Athens and then to Thebes matures into the role of a true, faithful, and grateful friend.<sup>45</sup> He has no possibility to risk his life to defend another, as was the case recently when he was himself desperate and begged for help. However, he can save the life of his benefactor and saviour in a persuasive way. He does that as best way he can in both dramas. He is much less convincing in this respect in Seneca's tragedy.<sup>46</sup> However, Heracles (and Hercules) abandons the thoughts of death.

The Greek Theseus returns home. Nevertheless, he could come to Thebes to rescue his friend, probably because the disaster of alleged rape did not await him at home. The Roman Theseus would not have been able to leave his home, where he imposed his own cruel order appointing himself the judge in his own case, and was then left completely alone to deal with his own misfortune facing the corpses of his wife and son.<sup>47</sup> Neither Heracles nor Hercules mention the services<sup>48</sup> rendered to Theseus. Theseus, in turn, fails to mention his lost Pirithous. Hypothetically, this could be justified at least in two ways:

a) Theseus was not Pirithous' true friend or, to put it differently, the bond between them was not symmetrical. It was rather Pirithous who dominated in this relationship.<sup>49</sup> His death frees the hero from excessive dependence.

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<sup>43</sup> Eur. *Herc.* 1146–1150. Greek and English text according to *Euripides in Four Volumes*, vol. III, transl. Arthur S. Way, Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1962, pp. 222–223..

<sup>44</sup> Cic. *Lael.* 67: “[...] verumque illud est, quod dicitur, multos modios salis simul edendos esse.” A barrel of salt is an extremely vivid and evocative image not only for constantly checking oneself and others in daily situations (the activity of adding salt is quantized and at the same time quite prosaic), but it is also a subtle reference to the passage of a longer period of time, since we consume very little salt “at once.”

<sup>45</sup> Risking a charge of anachronism, we could recall again Cicero's treatise on friendship where he emphasizes the role of time in building friendly relations (*Lael.* 67).

<sup>46</sup> Greek Theseus offers his friend purification and a ground for his house. Roman hero only promises to take him to Athens for purification from bloodguilt. In fact it is again Amphitryon, who appears as a real friend when threatening to die simultaneously with Hercules.

<sup>47</sup> His thoughtless cruelty is even more striking when we consider that he himself escaped death only recently. In addition, according to Seneca's concept, his Theseus is standing with Heracles all the time. Having been saved by him from death, he returns home, probably in a hurry, and torments his family. Is this another instance of a jealous imitation of Hercules in his madness by the Athenian hero?

<sup>48</sup> According to Senecan thought, we make people ungrateful by demanding gratitude, hence we must not do that (*De beneficiis*, passim).

<sup>49</sup> In the ancient sources we cannot find clear statements that the adventurous journey to Hades the two daredevils made was in fact Pirithous' idea. Nevertheless Heracles' failure to release him is significant.

b) Maybe that is why Theseus could not (or would not) persuade his friend to abandon such an absurd idea. Therefore, to some extent, he shared the guilt for his death. If we were to attempt finding a psychological motivation behind forgetting his lost friend, one could talk of a mechanism of denial of the act which the Athenian hero was ashamed of. Theseus is thus trying to break up with his past, but his past has no intention of breaking up with him. Seneca uses this precise moment in his tragedy *Phaedra*. The hero, overwhelmed by suffering, having lost all of his dear ones, desires to return to the Underworld, from where he miraculously escaped alive. He says these significant words:

Dehisce tellus, recipe me dirum chaos,  
Recipe. Haec ad umbras iustior nobis via est:  
Natum sequor, ne metue qui manes regis:  
Casti ibimus, recipe me aeterna domo  
Non exiturum.

Gape open, earth, take me in, more righteous; it is my son I follow. Fear not, you lord of the ghosts, I come with chaste purpose. Take me into that everlasting home, never to leave.<sup>50</sup>

It is also worth, in my opinion, to stress one crucial issue. Seneca alone constructed a continuous biographical link between his two tragedies discussed here.<sup>51</sup> It is in the Roman's tragedy that Theseus is saved by Hercules and escapes from the land of the dead, whereas in *Phaedra* he is just returning from the Underworld.<sup>52</sup> Euripides did not use that element, and in *Hippolytus* his hero is returning from Troezen. Thus the Roman and Greek Theseus faced with the senseless infanticide committed by Heracles are both different and similar.

They are different since the Greek Theseus faithfully runs to the hero to succour him in his adversity. The Roman hero, in turn, standing by Hercules at all times, is more static and more oriented towards narrative about the wonders of Hades. In both of these tragedies the hero does not devote time to remember his lost friend Pirithous. And yet, the same Theseus in Seneca, whose family lost all hope for his return, does not want to remember that his life was miraculously saved and does not want to respect the others' existence. He is brutal, filled with male rage and blinded by the belief in his

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<sup>50</sup> Sen. *Phaed.* 1238–1242; Latin and English text according to Seneca, *Hercules, Trojan Women, Phoenician Women, Medea, Phaedra*, ed. and transl. John G. Fitch, Cambridge MA–London: Harvard University Press (Loeb), 2002.

<sup>51</sup> Nevertheless not without certain ramification. Namely in *Hercules furens* Theseus is about to take the unhappy hero to Athens, but in *Phaedra* Hercules is absent.

<sup>52</sup> Perhaps one can trace the influence of Euripides and his earlier version of the *Hippolytus*, preserved only in fragments, the play that, as we know, inspired the Roman tragedian. It should be noted, however, that there is no evidence whether such was the order in which Seneca's tragedies were created. We can only speculate.

alleged loss.<sup>53</sup> Although Greek Theseus in *Hippolytus* is comparably savage, he has not just been released from Hades. Theseus in the Greek and Roman versions is a different, yet the same mythical figure. This is almost a model of the paradox called the “ship of Theseus.”<sup>54</sup>

But if one is to become friends with Theseus, then rather with his Greek, Euripidean version, although the risk would remain considerable that in the moment of an ultimate test the hero would only listen to the promptings of his own violent nature and will not follow the rules of true friendship in the search for common good, understood as a profit rather than excellence. And when he loses his friend, he would hardly be able to find free time to honour him even with just a remembrance.

Attempting to be fair to this ambiguous hero produced by the Greek and Roman way of thinking, we should keep in mind that “each” Theseus does not abandon a friend in need who is completely alone, if it does not violate the hero’s safety or honour. Whereas Roman hero, obsessively focused on the future, can only then step back from his fixed path for a moment. And in Euripides only the hero has time for reflection about the friend’s duties, being able to return and become support for the friend in need he was indebted to, as he clearly says.<sup>55</sup>

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<sup>53</sup> Senecan Theseus feels that he lost his wife, yet she is alive as opposed to the Greek drama, where she committed suicide before Theseus reached the palace. In both tragedies she falsely accused her stepson Hippolytus of raping her.

<sup>54</sup> The paradox is whether the identity of a subject, whose all elements have been replaced, remains unchanged (see Plut. *Thes.* 23.1) and it is of interest even now.

<sup>55</sup> Eur. *Herc.* 1222–1224.





Kamil M. Wielecki

**On a Friendship That Has Been Love**



Kamil M. Wielecki

## On a Friendship That Has Been Love

Uncle Kolia and Aunt Mantia – that is how I used to call them in Russian. But in Polish, I called them differently – “my grandparents from Moldova.” We first met in Autumn 2002. Along with a fellow student of ethnography, we came to a remote village, looking for people of Polish origin, who were supposed to be living there. Aunt Mantia, we were told, was one of them. We found the house where she lived with her husband, and asked them if we could have a conversation. They invited us in with open hearts. We spent around three hours with them that day, talked, ate a lot, drank their home-made wine, and even danced. Having met them for the first time, I felt like I had found soulmates. That is why I came back there a few times. If it was not a friendship, it was love. Or it was love which was followed by a friendship.

### I.

Originally, I wanted to devote this text only to Uncle Kolia. It was supposed to be a commemoration, as he passed away in 2008. Later on, I realized that the image I would have painted in this way would not be comprehensive. The longer I thought about the specific relationship that existed between us despite generational differences, the more important Aunt Mantia appeared to me. Only taken together, do their stories show how difficult the life of old people in post-Soviet republics could become. Only taken together, might the cases of Uncle Kolia and Aunt Mantia express both the trivial and eternally valid fact that it is human bonds that help you the most in coping with great difficulties.

As I argued elsewhere,<sup>1</sup> the inhabitants of contemporary Moldova, especially the older ones, have a number of justified reasons to look back at the Soviet past nostalgically. Thus, one can hardly blame many of those for whom neoliberal democracy has become

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<sup>1</sup> Kamil M. Wielecki, “*Eta strana umierajet*. O upływie czasu w odczuciu człowieka starego,” *Etnografia Polska* 51.1–2 (2007), pp. 47–73. English translation: Kamil M. Wielecki, “*Eta Strana Umerae*”. Elderly Peoples’ Perceptions of the Passage of Time”, *Etnografia Polska* 51.1–2 (2007), pp. 47–73, <http://www.etnografiapolska.pl/volume-51-2007.html> (consulted Jan. 15, 2015).

a pejorative term, the synonym for chaos and corruption. In this paper – which is of both personal and scholarly character – I would like to discuss another issue: I follow the stories of Aunt Mantia and Uncle Kolia, and my personal attitude to them, in order to show the dignity of many former Soviet citizens. The dignity that was both lost and preserved. What is more, my aim in presenting these stories is also to cast some light on connections between individual biographies and great social and economic processes.

## 2.

They were both sixty-three when we met in 2002. Taking into consideration the period and the country, this was judged to be a very advanced age.<sup>2</sup> Uncle Kolia had a colourful life behind him. In ethnic terms, he was Moldovan or Romanian – as a matter of fact, he was not sure about these categories and used them interchangeably. This situation was characteristic of the country, in which even the most radical nationalists struggled with a certain ambiguity: to build a strong national state or join Romania.<sup>3</sup>

Uncle Kolia was born and lived in his village. As a teenager, he went to Vorkuta, following his father. As he revealed, his father had had a “political trial” and was sent to a labour camp. The father was sentenced to twenty-eight years in prison but was released after seven. Later on, when he reached adult age, Uncle Kolia himself worked a few years in a mine in Vorkuta. However, he could not sit still in one place and started to wander to different corners of the USRR. He served in the army in Kharkov, studied medicine in Ashgabat (without graduating), lived in Leningrad for three years. Eventually, in 1986 he came back to Moldova and worked in the city of Bălți. Having retired, he came back and settled in his native village again.

He was not successful in his private life: before marrying Aunt Mantia, he was married three times and had two daughters but had hardly any contact with them. This was partially due to his character, but also to the fact that the daughters had to leave the village in order to find employment. The elder moved to Bălți and the younger went to Moscow. Thus, Uncle Kolia became lonely and this was probably why his life became miserable. With no work and nothing to occupy him, he drank heavily. As Aunt Mantia recalled, when they started to date, Uncle Kolia – despite owning a house and a plot of land – used to live like homeless person. It was she who pulled him out of the depression.

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<sup>2</sup> Cf. indexes of average life expectancy:

*Health Profile Moldova*, <http://www.worldlifeexpectancy.com/country-health-profile/moldova> (consulted Jan. 15, 2016); *Moldova – Life Expectancy at Birth*, <http://www.indexmundi.com/g/g.aspx?c=md&cv=30> (consulted Jan. 15, 2016). In the 2000s the average life expectancy in Moldova was 64 for men and for women 71.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Kamil Całus, “W cieniu historii: stosunki rumuńsko-mołdawskie,” *Prace OSW* 53 (2015), pp. 10–33, 51–64, [http://www.osw.waw.pl/sites/default/files/prace\\_53\\_pl\\_stosunki-rumunsko-moldawskie\\_net\\_0.pdf](http://www.osw.waw.pl/sites/default/files/prace_53_pl_stosunki-rumunsko-moldawskie_net_0.pdf) (consulted Jan. 15, 2016); Jarosław Derlicki, “Czyje państwo i czyj nacjonalizm? Dylematy tożsamości w Mołdawii,” *Etnografia Polska* 51.1–2 (2007), pp. 7–22; Ignacy Józwiak, “Między Rosją a Rumunią – koncepcje narodu mołdawskiego,” *Etnografia Polska* 51.1–2 (2007), pp. 25–45.

## 3.

Contrary to Uncle Kolia's, one might call Aunt Mantia's life quite stable. She did not travel anywhere but had lived in the same village all her life. However, she got married very early – at the age of 15 – a union arranged against her will. Once, she was invited to the dances by a man from the village who was a few years older than she. There, directly from the dances, the man kidnapped her and took 100 kilometers away to his family. It happened according to the custom of bride kidnapping, that is kidnapping used as a method of marriage. It took a whole week for her parents to find her. But her fate was already sealed: as she had spent the week in a foreign house, all village people thought she had actually lived with the man who kidnapped her. Thus, in fact, she had no choice but to marry him. Otherwise, she would be socially condemned and very likely would have great problems in finding another husband. Nevertheless, as she declared, she loved her husband in spite of the way their marriage had begun. They had one son.

In terms of her ethnicity, or national identification, Aunt Mantia's situation was even more complicated than that of Uncle Kolia. As she said, "from my father's side, my ancestors were Polish. But from my mother's side, they were Orthodox." This demonstrates that if you were Catholic, you were perceived in the village – and in the region in general – as a Pole. Being Orthodox Christian, in turn, pointed to Ukrainian ethnicity. The amalgamation of religion and ethnic origin, and different implications stemming from this entanglement, are characteristic of Poles living both in Moldova and the so-called Eastern Borderlands (*Kresy*).<sup>4</sup> In general, borderland is a space, in which a dynamic intercultural exchange takes place and where various national, cultural, and civilizational identifications are possible.<sup>5</sup> Living in such a borderland was problematic for Aunt Mantia herself. On the one hand, her father was a Pole and thus she was Polish and Catholic, since it is accepted that you inherit ethnicity from your father's lineage. On the other, however, her mother was Ukrainian and Orthodox. Aunt Mantia herself did not speak Polish – and, in fact, she shared this feature with her Polish ancestors, who came from the region of Podolia. Aunt Mantia did not remember anybody from her family who could speak Polish. In her internal Soviet passport, she was described as Ukrainian.<sup>6</sup> Nonetheless, Aunt Mantia and other Slavic-speaking population of the

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Ines K. Ackermann, *Granice języka: samookreślenia Polaków na Białorusi i Litwie*, Warszawa: Wydawnictwo DiG, 2007; Jarosław Derlicki, "Narodziny czy odrodzenie? Polska tożsamość w Mołdawii," *Etnografia Polska* 47.1–2 (2003), pp. 171–184; Edward Walewander, ed., *Polacy w Mołdawii*, Lublin: Stowarzyszenie "Wspólnota Polska," 1995.

<sup>5</sup> Jan Kieniewicz, *Wprowadzenie do historii cywilizacji Wschodu i Zachodu*, Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Akademickie Dialog, 2003, p. 206; idem, "Borderlands and Civilizational Encounter," *Memoria y Civilizacion* 8 (2005), pp. 21–49.

<sup>6</sup> The internal passports in the USSR (i.e. personal IDs, not travel documents, which in Russian are called *foreign passports* – or in a perhaps better translation, *abroad passports*) had a column stating the ethnic belonging of a citizen. In some situations, this column proved to be very important. For instance, I heard stories, that people changed their ethnicity in documents in order to apply to a university. If you were Russian or Moldovan, you got additional points in the recruitment process. If you were Polish or Jewish, you did not and some faculties were closed to you. In the internal passports issued in post-Soviet republics, the ethnic column was usually deleted.

village in a similar position did not care much about what the documents said. They declared themselves as *khokhly* or *khokhliaki*. In general, these terms denoted local people of Ukrainian origin. *Khokliatski* – the language the Slavic population of the village spoke – was a mixture of Russian and Ukrainian with slight touches of Polish.

Aunt Mantia's husband died in the early 1990s and she became a widow. What is more, her son emigrated to Portugal for economic reasons. As a consequence, she was left alone. Notwithstanding the obvious personal costs of loneliness, it is particularly difficult to be a lonely woman living in a rural area – whether in Moldova, Ukraine, or Poland. On the one hand, Aunt Mantia was respected in the village. She used to work as a nurse in a hospital in a local administrative centre. She knew how to do injections and other minor medical procedures, and thus she was often asked for help. She was even appealed to in urgent cases, because an ambulance could not come to the village on time. On the other hand, however, she was treated with suspicion by other inhabitants of the village, especially women. A lonely woman is likely to seduce other women's husbands – that is a local commonplace truth. This truth, just like all other stereotypes, is insensitive to individual cases. Commonplace opinions about her, however, were not the biggest Aunt Mantia's hardships. First of all, she had a house to maintain and a plot of land to cultivate. This was a real challenge for her.

#### 4.

And so, being two people that were lonely and in trouble, Aunt Mantia and Uncle Kolia decided to live together. It was Uncle Kolia who moved to Aunt Mantia's because his house was nearly in ruins. After a few years, in the same year 2002 when we met, they arranged their wedding – both at the registry-office and in church. The latter implied Uncle Kolia's conversion to Catholicism, a circumstance which was important for Aunt Mantia and the priest rather than to Uncle Kolia himself, because he was not a very religious person. Both Aunt Mantia and Uncle Kolia laughed a lot at the fact of “marrying one another in the old age” but this marriage resulted somewhat naturally from the course of their lives.

Their life together was not without problems, though. In fact, Uncle Kolia was not an easy man to live with. He was fantastic if you came there as a guest. He was a smart and witty guy, with whom you never got bored. He kept telling funny stories from his rich life and was extremely companionable. He had also a skill of concisely getting to the core of a discussed issue, by which he inspired you to think further. However, he certainly overused alcohol. He was also a womanizer. Surprising as this may sound, his age had not tempered his *libido* and Aunt Mantia was often ashamed of his deeds. Last but not least, he was not a hardworking person. Perhaps because of age and illnesses, he already did not feel well at the time we met, however, it was Aunt Mantia alone – as she told me – who during the summer time brought several hundred kilogrammes of maize from their plot. The same would happen with the harvesting of grapes. I was really touched when – crying – she told me once how difficult it was for her to live

with Uncle Kolia. It was then that I realized how their ordinary, everyday life looked when I was not there.

Nonetheless, they managed together to build something which made you want to come back. To come back to the village which sank in mud – almost literally so – and where poverty and human misery were striking. By keeping a good spirit despite of all difficulties, they did not burden you with their problems. I cherish several bright images from my stays at their house: baking bread together, shooting Uncle Kolia's rifle, eating dozens of dumplings – taken straight from a big bowl, making mulled wine by putting an electric heater directly into a glass and adding there some honey... Once, as I was leaving, Uncle Kolia walked with me four kilometers up to the main road to see me off. To go this distance was a challenge for him and we had to rest a few times along the way.

However, the most important in this relationship was for me probably the knowledge that I can come to them whenever I want. It was only later that a telephone line was extended to the village. Before, there was almost no possibility to let them know about your arrival. But you could just come, lay down your rucksack, and say that you want to stay for a week. “The kids have come!” – was their joyful reaction when I came once in such unexpected manner with a friend of mine.

I call this relationship friendship because we could count on each other and we supported each other as much as we could. Moreover, this relationship lasted for a longer time. To certain extent, it still lasts, since – although we have not seen one another for a few years – I call Aunt Mantia from time to time. The talks with her are of great value to me.

5.

A lesson which can be drawn from the stories of Aunt Mantia and Uncle Kolia is two-fold. First of all, it teaches us about human dignity. A story of former Soviet citizens can be told as one of dispossessed people. As a result of perestroika and the dissolution of the USSR, they became dispossessed of their workplaces, properties, social status, and networks.<sup>7</sup> The Soviet world – which was understandable, well-ordered, and predictable – got rapidly replaced with post-Soviet chaos, in which individuals had to face basic, existential uncertainty, as they were dragged by uncontrolled market and political forces.<sup>8</sup>

The clash with the new reality resulted for masses of citizens of postsocialist countries also in a loss of dignity. Aunt Mantia and Uncle Kolia were unique – because of their

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<sup>7</sup> Caroline Humphrey, *The Unmaking of Soviet Life: Everyday Economies after Socialism*, Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2002, pp. 21ff.; Joma Nazpary, *Post-Soviet Chaos: Violence and Dispossession in Kazakhstan*, London: Pluto Press, 2002, pp. 13–16. Cf. Micheal Burawoy, “Transition without Transformation: Russia's Involutionary Road to Capitalism”, *East European Politics and Societies* 15 (2001), pp. 269–290; David A. Kideckel, “The Unmaking of an East-Central European Working Class,” in: Chris M. Hann, ed., *Postsocialism: Ideals, Ideologies and Practice in Eurasia*, London: Routledge, 2002, pp. 114–132.

<sup>8</sup> Nazpary, op. cit.; Kamil M. Wielecki, *Coping with Uncertainty. Petty Traders in Post-Soviet Russia*, Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang Editions, 2015, pp. 13–23.

individual life stories, personalities, etc. – but to certain extent at the same time also typical. People like them used to be citizens of an empire: an empire which was founded not only on political and military power but on a moral order, too. The political system of the Soviet Union was said to be the most progressive, just, and upright in the world. Aunt Mantia and Uncle Kolia enjoyed a decent standard of living, an ascribed position in the society, and stable workplaces, which entitled them to a number of rights. All of this was gone with the downfall of socialism. As for Uncle Kolia and Aunt Mantia, once they retired, they themselves felt unwanted and cast off.

A meaningful example was that to the village inhabitants, starting from the 1990s, humanitarian aid distributed by the Catholic Church became of existential importance. On the one hand, it was a positive thing that at least someone supported these people. On the other, however, the very fact of needing and receiving support was humiliating for many. “They give us aid, as though we were beggars!” – stated Uncle Kolia pitifully, sitting on an empty barrel of sunflower oil they got from the Church. In this way, he compared the past – in which he could get by on his own easily – with the present in which his pension money did not even guarantee an existential minimum.

The desperate situation did not pertain only to villagers, though. In general, Moldova suddenly became the poorest and the least developed country in Europe – a fact which was accompanied by a collapse of social services and a dramatic rise in corruption and crime. What is more, the newborn country was haunted by frequent political upheavals, including the war with Transnistria.<sup>9</sup> To be a citizen of the Soviet Union could constitute a source of pride. To be a citizen of Moldova, brought no dignity as it meant being a citizen of a country in ruins.

This situation was especially painful because Aunt Mantia and Uncle Kolia became old and lonely. If there is nothing extraordinary about the former state – after all, everybody gets older with time – the latter might be perceived as characteristic of the external circumstances in which their old age came. Here comes the second lesson we can draw from their stories – that so-called ordinary people might offer us an insight into the big processes that shape social world. In other words, this lesson is about connections between individual and society, local matters and global forces, the micro and the macro scale.<sup>10</sup>

In the village, in which Aunt Mantia and Uncle Kolia lived, middle-age people were virtually absent. The majority of inhabitants belonged to the older generation. There were also some kids but what was lacking was the generation that should connect grandparents with their grandchildren. Out of 100 houses in the village, 30 stood

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<sup>9</sup> *International Human Development Indicators*, <http://hdr.undp.org/en/countries> (consulted January 15, 2016). See also Khalid Malik, *The Rise of the South: Human Progress in a Diverse World. Human Development Report 2013*, New York, N.Y.: United Nations Development Programme, 2013, pp. 143–146; Witold Rodkiewicz, ed., *Transnistrian Conflict after 20 Years: A Report by an International Expert Group*, Warsaw, Chisinau: OSW, Viitorul, 2011, [http://www.osw.waw.pl/sites/default/files/transnistrian\\_conflict\\_after\\_20\\_years.pdf](http://www.osw.waw.pl/sites/default/files/transnistrian_conflict_after_20_years.pdf) (consulted Jan. 15, 2016).

<sup>10</sup> Finding such connections and bringing different oppositions into a dialogue is necessary if one wants to grasp the flux of social world. Cf. Michael Burawoy, *The Extended Case Method: Four Countries, Four Decades, Four Great Transformations, and One Theoretical Tradition*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 2009, pp. 8–9.



empty. It was not a coincidence that Aunt Mantia's son went to Portugal and one of the Uncle Kolia's daughters worked in Moscow. It was also not by chance that – apart from the unwilling Uncle Kolia – there was nobody to help Aunt Mantia with harvesting. The lack of middle-age people was characteristic of the whole Moldova, which in the aftermath of the fall of socialism and economic decline suffered from huge emigration. From ca. 1,65 million people in the working age in the 2000s around 600 thousand were estimated to live and work abroad.<sup>11</sup> In the village this phenomenon was visible not only in the number of empty houses: the middle generations went to work and thus it was the older one that took care of children. If numbers of people who left are possible to estimate, one cannot assess social and personal costs of children who are brought up without their parents.

For Aunt Mantia and Uncle Kolia, the emigration of their children was also the source of a personal, psychological suffering. In their perception, it was something unnatural in the circumstance that their children were forced to go abroad and to face there underprivileged status of unwanted immigrants. This was particularly grim for Aunt Mantia whose son – as an illegal immigrant – found himself at the bottom of social hierarchy.

\*

If the decades that passed since the dissolution of the Soviet Union brought an end to the *Homo sovieticus* or *the red man*,<sup>12</sup> they brought also an end to everything for which this man was worth of respect: compassion for those who suffer, faith in ideals, and a pinch of optimism that prevailed in the face of all the brutality of everyday life. Aunt Mantia and Uncle Kolia kept some of these features. Despite all the difficulties they had to struggle with, they did not give up and that was something impressive. Whether it was owing to the friendship between them or to the strength of their characters, they made the ends meet and kept a good spirit while coping with great challenges of everyday life. This was the source of their dignity.

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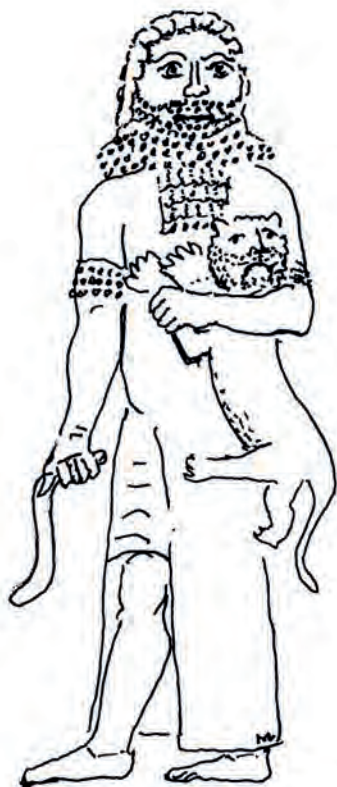
<sup>11</sup> *Migration Policy Centre: Moldova*, June 2013, [http://www.migrationpolicycentre.eu/docs/migration\\_profiles/Moldova.pdf](http://www.migrationpolicycentre.eu/docs/migration_profiles/Moldova.pdf) (consulted Jan. 15, 2016); Jacek Wróbel, "Unia Europejska a Mołdawia," *Prace OSW* 13 (2004), pp. 22–23, [http://www.osw.waw.pl/sites/default/files/prace\\_13\\_2.pdf](http://www.osw.waw.pl/sites/default/files/prace_13_2.pdf) (consulted Jan. 15, 2016).

<sup>12</sup> Svetlana A. Aleksievich, *Vremia Second Hand. Koniets krasnogo cheloveka*, Moskva: Vremia, 2013.



Maria Wiśniewska

**Friendship in the Theatre  
of Everyday Life**



Maria Wiśniewska

## Friendship in the Theatre of Everyday Life\*

The stories of Gilgamesh, the ruler of the Sumerian town of Uruk, found on clay tablets in Mesopotamia millennia after they were written, are part and parcel of the history of European literature, “side by side with works of such magnitude as Homeric tales, the Scandinavian *Edda* and the Finnish *Kalevala*.”<sup>1</sup> The stories, collected in *The Gilgamesh Epic*, are the earliest literary masterpiece known to humanity, while Gilgamesh is the protoplast of tales about heroes who “in many areas of life are attributed the role of originator and teacher of the humankind.”<sup>2</sup> The life of Gilgamesh is intertwined with that of his friend Enkidu, created by gods as his *alter ego*:

[...] Gilgamesh was being induced to change his conduct. [...] Enkidu, having repeated [...] the earlier allegations put forth by others, [...] made [him] reconsider and rectify his behaviour. [...] Righteousness curbed power and pride. [...] Ever since, Gilgamesh’s deeds reflected the views of Enkidu passed on to him in his admonitions, rather than those he himself had followed by the time they had met.<sup>3</sup>

Robert Stiller, Polish translator, writer, and linguist, observes that *Gilgamesh* “is not only a superb and vibrant work of literature. It is also the most powerful and the most evocative message of a great culture, transmitted to us from millennia ago.”<sup>4</sup> We can safely say that this is also the most powerful and evocative truth about friendship, transmitted to us from millennia ago:

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\* The title paraphrases the Polish version of the title of Erving Goffman’s *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*, Edinburgh: University of Edinburgh, Social Sciences Research Centre, 1956.

<sup>1</sup> Krystyna Łyczkowska, “Wstęp” [Introduction], in: *Epos o Gilgameszu*, transl. into Polish by Krystyna Łyczkowska, Piotr Puchta, Magdalena Kapeluś, Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Agade, 2010, p. vii.

<sup>2</sup> Ibidem, p. ix.

<sup>3</sup> *Gilgamesz. Epos starożytnego dwurzecza* [Gilgamesh. The Epic from the Ancient Land between the Two Rivers], re-edition, Polish translation and introduction by Robert Stiller, Warszawa: Państwowy Instytut Wydawniczy, 1980, p. 32.

<sup>4</sup> Ibidem, p. 33.

Although its content and form are changing, friendship has since Antiquity remained one of the major relations of interpersonal space. When asked in the language of Georg H. Mead about our 'significant others,' most of us will indicate our next of kin and friends. Friendship is the secret of a happy life.<sup>5</sup>

Having realized that in our social reality we are but "lodgers of a certain unique place in interpersonal space, a node in the network of interpersonal relations"<sup>6</sup> and that "all that is internal and everything external is intertwined in an unending chain,"<sup>7</sup> we arrive at the conclusion that our happy life depends on its harmonious adjustment to the lives of others. A lack of harmony breeds conflict. Conflict does not assure happiness.

In the thicket of interpersonal relations through which we tread our way in life, friendship seems to be a unique "enzyme," an activator, or catalyst of the state of harmony. Let us try and follow this pattern of reasoning.

Mead also introduced the notion of the human self, which he defined as a mental process "capable of self-perception, with specified views on itself, consciously regulating its conduct via reflection, i.e., dialogue with itself resulting in a change of position."<sup>8</sup> According to Mead, the self is composed of the subjective *I* and the objective *me*. He saw the subjective *I* as an unpredictable, untamed, and creative aspect of the self, an emanation of our identity and a source of creative activity. As a behaviourist, he believed that this creative activity is predicated on our reaction to others. In turn, he saw the objective *me* as a "reflection of the generalized other." He treated the dominant expression of the subjective *I* over the objective *me* as a mechanism of social control, since the objective *me* makes the individual prone to self-criticism and conformism, which helps him or her live in the social world.<sup>9</sup> He wrote:

[...] social control, operating in terms of self-criticism, exerts [...] a profound and powerful impact on the individual's behaviour or conduct, helping integrate the individual and his or her actions with the organized social process of experiencing and behaving which they take part in. [...] Self-criticism is social in essence and a conduct regulated by self-criticism is in effect one controlled by society.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> A quote from chapter VI of a still unpublished book by Piotr Sztompka, titled *Kapitał społeczny. Teoria przestrzeni międzyludzkiej* [Social Capital. A Theory of Interpersonal Space].

<sup>6</sup> Piotr Sztompka, *Socjologia. Analiza społeczeństwa*, Kraków: Wydawnictwo Znak, 2012, p. 37.

<sup>7</sup> Randall Collins, *Interaction Ritual Chains*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004 [quoted after the Polish translation by Katarzyna Suwada: *Łańcuchy rytuałów interakcyjnych*, Kraków: Zakład Wydawniczy Nomos, 2011, p. 12].

<sup>8</sup> Jerzy Szacki, *Historia myśli socjologicznej*, Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN, 2011, p. 583.

<sup>9</sup> George Ritzer, *Classical Sociological Theory*, New York: Sage Publications, 2004 (ed. pr. 2000) [quoted after the Polish translation by Hanna Jankowska, *Klasyczna teoria socjologiczna*, Poznań: Wydawnictwo Zysk i S-ka, 2004, pp. 271–274].

<sup>10</sup> George H. Mead, *Mind, Self, & Society from the Standpoint of a Social Behaviorist*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1967 [quoted after the Polish translation by Zofia Wolińska, *Umysł, osobowość i społeczeństwo*, Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN, 1975, pp. 352–353].

Still, he observed that “social control [...] is far from enforcing a tendency to annihilate the human being or to destroy his or her self-conscious individuality; it really creates this individuality and is inextricably linked with it.”<sup>11</sup> George Ritzer interprets:

The subjective *I* and the objective *me* are therefore part and parcel of a social process and thanks to them both individuals and the society are able to perform more efficiently.<sup>12</sup>

Mead’s reflections on the mind, self, and society continue to inspire sociologists. Regardless of the perspective, of what we are and what place we occupy, our contribution to society depends on who we will encounter on our way directly or how we will define the “generalized other.” The generalized other is a stand of the entire community we operate within. In the process of generalization, Mead paid particular attention to the “significant others”; as above indicated, these include our family and friends.

We can therefore hold that friends have a powerful impact on the perception of our own “generalized other,” a kind of collective pattern which serves as a yardstick for our own conduct. Ray Pahl says as much:

Seeing ourselves through the eyes of our friends should encourage us to change or modify our behaviour. The way our friends interpret us helps us to interpret ourselves.<sup>13</sup>

Friendship is the link which connects us with another person. Of importance in this link are trust, loyalty, solidarity, reciprocity, respect, and justice. J.M. Reisman writes:

A friend is someone who wants to do good to another human being, derives pleasure from it, and wants the feelings to be reciprocated.<sup>14</sup>

Friendship is disinterested; it is not calculated and has no high expectations. Yet it is not autotelic as it expects reciprocity:

Friendship [...] is a higher category of interpersonal relations, a category of links of love. When we think about our dearest friends and genuine friendship, we do think about a certain form of love between people.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> Ibidem, p. 353.

<sup>12</sup> Ritzer, op. cit., p. 274.

<sup>13</sup> Ray Pahl, *On Friendship*, Cambridge, UK: Polity Press, 2000, p. 81.

<sup>14</sup> Quotation from Francesco Alberoni, *L'amicizia*, Milano: Garzanti, 1984 [quoted after the Polish translation by Marcin Czerwiński, *O przyjaźni*, Warszawa: Instytut Kultury, 1994, p. 20].

<sup>15</sup> Ibidem, p. 21.

This reciprocity, shifting the *I* into the *we*, is the power of friendship in the ongoing process of social harmonization.

How does such a friendship come about? Francesco Alberoni provides the following reply to the above question:

Friendship does not evolve from any acquaintance through successive small steps. We do not become friends of those we are the most frequently in contact with, or those we most often exchange favours with. [...] Friendship starts with discontinuity as a shift. There comes a moment when we feel an urge of sympathy, interest, some kinship with another person. [...] I will call this experience an encounter. [...] Friendship is finely woven out of encounters.<sup>16</sup>

It does happen in our social convoy. In the multitude of everyday matters and interpersonal relations it appears as a “moment of authenticity, a revelation of sense.” It introduces “order in diversity, in disorder.” It is a moment when we recognize our own identity:

The experience of authenticity is like setting to rights a field, the curbing of entropy. We likewise put in order what has been insatiable in us, our drives in a state of suspension. [...] The enlightenment gained thanks to a friend does not consist in teaching. It can be reached jointly, through the same conclusions, although the starting points are divergent. This is a convergence in truth.<sup>17</sup>

In this mutual convergence friends are like compasses which help themselves adjust their social position and behaviour with respect to others. These compasses, like Mead’s objective *me*, introduce *we* into their scope of vision:

As a reasonable individual I see the world as a theatre stage full of action, with myself and my goals taking pride of place. I try to maximize my capacities, to gain the resources for the realization of my goals, for winning others to my side and for cooperating with them in hurdling the obstacles piled on my way. Such an attitude focused on the *self* is deeply ingrained in our minds. The *self* reaches out into the future and exercises its rights. It has boundless ambitions and recognizes no limits, only obstacles. [...] I am also aware that I am in multiple respects dependent on others, so I need to seek their approval. While an attitude focused on the *self* aims to [...] eliminate the obstacles piled on its way by nature, an attitude focused on *we* seeks a [...] harmony with others and with the world.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> Ibidem, p. 25.

<sup>17</sup> Ibidem, p. 29.

<sup>18</sup> Roger Scruton, *The Uses of Pessimism and the Danger of False Hope*, London: Atlantic Books, 2010 [quoted after the Polish translation by Tomasz Bieroń, *Pożytki z pesymizmu i niebezpieczeństwa fałszywej nadziei*, Poznań: Wydawnictwo Zysk i S-ka, pp. 19–20].



During our lifetime, encounters with a friend help determine “invariables, necessary for any sense to remain in the human reality.”<sup>19</sup> While these invariables are often an obstacle to our *self*, we accept them in a dialogue with a friend because he or she is disinterested and honest, and therefore credible. In an individual perspective, friendship is a catalyst of a sense of happiness. In the social perspective, in turn, it becomes highly “useful.”

The moral values responsible for friendship are rooted in an attitude focused on *we*, i.e., me and my friend. In friendly relations we are prudent and constrained by all that can pose a threat to our friend’s wellbeing. Friendship is a unique “lesson” of existence in a human community, a “micro-school” of an attitude which:

[...] sees human decisions as situated, limited by place, time, and community, custom, faith, and law. Friendship prevents us from always plunging into the whirlpool of reality but makes us take a step back and reflect. It stresses the significance of limitations and borders, as well as reminds us of human imperfection and the fragility of real communities. It takes into account other people and other times in its decisions. [...] It is a voice of wisdom in a world of chaos.<sup>20</sup>

Alberoni notes that:

Contemporary society exchanges moral virtues for benefits and ideals for specialized services. [...] The values which humanity has dreamt of in the technological era become real provided people are treated as a means rather than an aim.<sup>21</sup>

In Goffman’s “theatre of everyday life” the human beings are tools in their own hands:

People act towards others as if each was their own public relations man. Each successive action is an event always meant to bring profit in terms of power, prestige, respect, and emotion. All that takes place between two persons boils down to [...] actions undertaken with a view to their result.<sup>22</sup>

Goffman assumes that people always know what they want. In reality, however, “human beings [...] are characterized precisely by not being aware of their objectives and by setting out in search for them.”<sup>23</sup>

Friendship is precisely a journey in search of sense, “woven out of encounters.” “We should therefore hope that the future of friendship is as bright as it has been long since

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<sup>19</sup> Ibidem, p. 20.

<sup>20</sup> Ibidem, pp. 22–23.

<sup>21</sup> Alberoni, op. cit., p. 127.

<sup>22</sup> Ibidem, pp. 125–126.

<sup>23</sup> Ibidem, p. 126.

Antiquity”<sup>24</sup> and that irrespective of the passage of time, friendship still has its place in “the theatre of everyday life.”

Marcin Turski contributed to the translation of the text

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<sup>24</sup> Sztompka, op. cit.

## **25th Anniversary of OBTA**



ORTA

The image features the word "ORTA" in a bold, black, hand-drawn font. The letters are thick and slightly irregular, giving it a rustic or artistic feel. Above the text is a decorative horizontal flourish consisting of a central bar with two large, symmetrical, swirling loops extending outwards, resembling a stylized scroll or a flourish from a calligraphic script. The entire graphic is centered on a plain white background.

## 25th Anniversary of OBTA

Twenty-five years. A quarter-century. A moment in the flow of millennia. An eternity in the eyes of a child. Simultaneously, a wink and foreverness for scholars who mature to discover the sense of life, but like children, never cease to wonder at the world around us. Indeed, during the last 25 years the world has undergone transformations on an unprecedented scale, but its Logos is still beyond our comprehension. The fundamental questions about human nature remain unanswered. Despite the huge technological leap, one of the most reliable ways of attempting to unveil the order of things still leads through the mirror of Classical Antiquity. Treated as a cultural experience, the ancient tradition has been a marker of changes across the globe, while our dialogue with the masterpieces of the past – whether in literature, music, or the visual arts – helps us to better understand the present as well as to shape the future with new hope.

The discovery of this potential for Eastern and Central Europe in the difficult period of striving for and rebuilding freedom after 1989 led Professor Jerzy Axer to the establishment of the Centre for Studies on the Classical Tradition in Poland and East-Central Europe (OBTA), approved unanimously by the Senate of the University of Warsaw in 1991, which then entrusted to Prof. Axer the function of OBTA's Director. From the very outset this pioneering initiative reached beyond the borders of one country and one discipline in the belief that the reception of Classical Antiquity is a phenomenon that should not be reduced to any political maps or scholarly divisions. On the contrary, it is a common experience, and one to be studied in broad international and transdisciplinary cooperation. For when looking in the reception mirror and comparing the various images emerging therein we can better understand each other, and this is crucial for the development of civil societies worldwide. Thus, OBTA's important mission (if we may use this now somewhat grandiose word) has always been to contribute not only to the research on the reception, but also to the popularization of the ancient tradition and to the transformation of the University in the spirit of liberal education.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> For more information see the volume *Antiquity and We at the Centre for Studies on the Classical Tradition*, ed. Katarzyna Marciniak, Warsaw: Faculty of "Artes Liberales" UW, 2013, available also at: [www.al.uw.edu.pl/antiquity\\_and\\_we](http://www.al.uw.edu.pl/antiquity_and_we). The present text, with some changes, accompanied the conference *Chasing Mythical Beasts... The Reception of Creatures from Graeco-Roman Mythology as a Transformation Marker*

Prof. Jerzy Axer's vision attracted scholarly and non-academic soulmates – indeed, AMICI – sharing his belief that it was possible to provide young people with an elitist education. We say “elitist” not in the sense of the material status of any of the groups involved, but as a complex process of demanding collaboration between professors and students who – in keeping with the idea of tutorship and mentoring – develop together and learn from each other. That is how many cutting-edge endeavours came into being in OBTA's environment, ones such as: the College of Inter-Area Individual Studies in the Humanities and Social Sciences (MISH), Modern Greek Philology, BA and MA Cultural Studies – Mediterranean Civilization, the International School in the Humanities (MSH) with its programmes aimed mainly at young faculty members from the countries once under Soviet domination, inter-university studies »Artes Liberales« Academy (AAL) under the agreement concluded between leading Polish universities, International PhD Programme (MPD), etc.

Over the years, OBTA also became a hub for research of an ever wider scope, Poland joined the European Union, and certain key institutional reforms within education took place. All this resulted in a natural metamorphosis of the Centre into the Institute for Interdisciplinary Studies “Artes Liberales,” in 2008. OBTA as the Centre for Studies on the Classical Tradition – with a slightly abbreviated name which better reflected its new-old functions – became a part of the Institute. OBTA's first Director in this embodiment was Prof. Jan Kieniewicz. Meanwhile the Institute developed further and on the 1st of October 2012 it was transformed to the Faculty of “Artes Liberales” with Prof. Axer as the first Dean.

Today OBTA is a permanent unit of the Faculty. The transdisciplinary projects being carried out at the Centre involve both national and international collaboration. We study the reception of Classical Antiquity across continents with our colleagues from North America, throughout Europe, Africa, Asia, and as far away as Australia and New Zealand. We combine the cultivation of the memory of the Masters of Classical Studies with scholarly endeavours, ventures of an educational character, and popularization exceeding the frontiers of the University. Today's OBTA wishes to continue the traditions of the Centre established in 1991, in line with Prof. Axer's faith that it is people who create an institution and never the other way round. We are also drawing on the potential of globalization, which gives the ancient tradition an unexpected opportunity to reach new circles of the recipients of culture on a scale that neither Alexander the Great or Caesar could dream of.

According to some scholars, 25 years was the legal age of maturity for a citizen in the Late Roman Empire. We accept the burden of adulthood. However, we are not going to resign from the child-like joy of making friends at the University, understood as a place where people striving for knowledge discover the world together and learn from each other, and keep the faith in each other. And this faith is the most important

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(Alexander von Humboldt Foundation Alumni Award for Innovative Networking Initiatives) which was one of the crucial events celebrating the 25th Anniversary of OBTA, see: <http://mythicalbeasts.obta.al.uw.edu.pl/conference-booklet/>.

idea laying at the foundation of Prof. Axer's and Prof. Kieniewicz's work. "If just one person believes in you..." – the lyrics of a children's musical we have discovered during one of our research projects express this idea,<sup>2</sup> combining the ancient with the modern, reflecting the wonderful wholeness of life. So, our adventure continues and there are still many worlds awaiting discovery. The fact that OBTA's first and still current address is ul. Nowy Świat [New World St.] may be more than merely a coincidence. On the 25th anniversary of OBTA, Professor Jerzy Axer's thought that the reception of the ancient tradition is a living matter and that it is worth returning to Classical Antiquity in search of a space for mediation and mutual understanding is as valid today as it was at the moment of OBTA's birth. We hope for many happy returns!

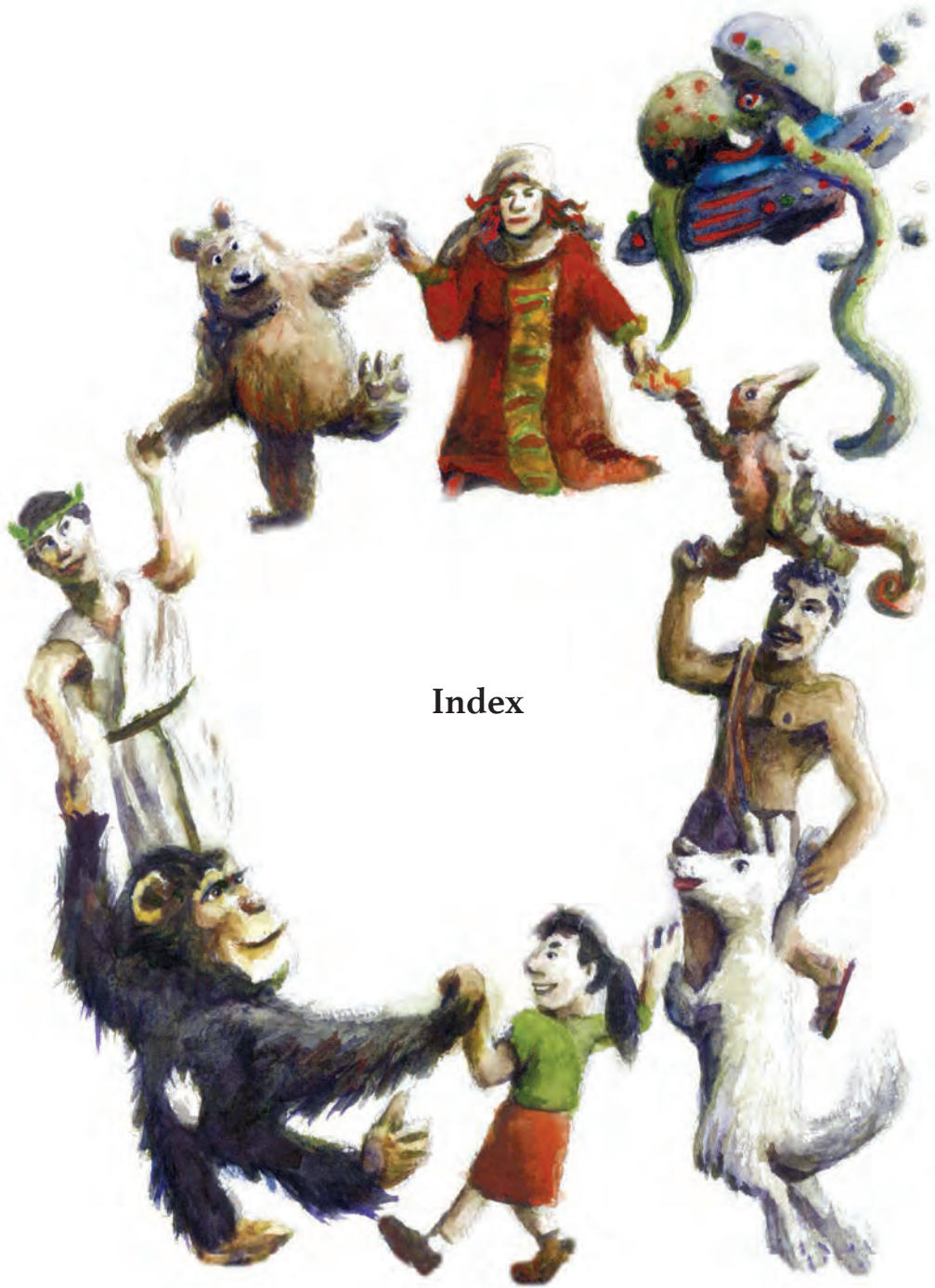
Katarzyna Marciniak

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<sup>2</sup> See the project *Chasing Mythical Beasts...* (above, n. 1), the song written for *Snoopy!!! The Musical* and performed in many installments of the Muppets (one of the most favourite songs of Jim Henson).







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